

**Exeter City Council  
Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery (RAMM)**

**Collections Development Policy 2014-2019**

**Name of museum:** Royal Albert Memorial Museum and Art Gallery (RAMM)

**Name of governing body:** Exeter City Council

**Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:** January 2014

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## Executive Summary

Collecting is ingrained in all accepted modern definitions of a museum. Indeed, the character of museums, especially 19th-century foundations like RAMM, are determined to a large extent by their past collecting activity, just as their future is determined by what they choose to collect. This document summarises RAMM's approach to collecting for the period 2014 to 2019.

RAMM owes the wealth of its extraordinary collections to its origins in the 1860s. Its predecessor, the Devon & Exeter Albert Memorial, was created through public subscription in the wake of Prince Albert's death. Civic leaders had been toying with the idea of a museum for several decades as there were important collections of artefacts and specimens in the city, such as those held by the Devon & Exeter Institution gathered by people who had lived or worked abroad and retired to Devon. These early donations helped to establish RAMM's reputation when it opened in 1868 around four subject areas that remain the fundamental building blocks of the modern collections: Antiquities (Archaeology and Local History), Art, Ethnography (World Cultures) and Natural History. Since 1870 RAMM has been a service of Exeter City Council and increasingly collecting in these four areas has been refined and formalised through a policy periodically ratified by elected members.

The current policy has been developed by the staff of RAMM and represents an important step forward from the previous Acquisition and Disposal Policy (2005-10 extended until 2013): a change signalled by the new name of Collections Development Policy. It has been informed by the enormous changes within the cultural sector, and society in general, since 2005 which increasingly question the virtue of museum's passively holding large reserves of objects and specimens with no obvious long-term research or artistic potential. In a harsh financial climate providing care for material of seemingly low cultural capital rightly deserves scrutiny. The new policy incorporates an added dimension to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy by including recommendations drawn from a root-and-branch analysis of what RAMM holds and why it is important. This is known as the Collections Review.

Like many museums, RAMM struggled for much of the 20th century with collections' information that was at best patchy, at worst non-existent. External funding received from 2001-10 allowed for comprehensive cataloguing of collections formed over the course of 150 years. This work indicates the museum's holdings are a little in excess of 1 million objects which are now represented by approximately 245,000 records on a collections database. Following on from the inventory project the logical next step was to review these holdings to determine their importance and help ECC establish a robust and sustainable Collections Development Policy to shape future work programmes and maximise public access and engagement. RAMM's award-winning Collections Review methodology produced a rapid snapshot of the quality of collections and related information based not on subjective curatorial opinion, but on a desktop assessment of the database records and immediately available resources. The result of the work is a 'league table' for RAMM's collections representing standards of collections' information and also (arguably) a guide to the quality of the museum's assets.

The new collections policy includes general principles on strategic, ethical collecting and subject statements for each of the collections (pp21-28). In addition to the four main subject areas we have included statements on cross-cutting themes such as social history. Although RAMM does not have a Social History collection it collects paintings, prints and drawings of local people (Art); local people's clothes and dress accessories (Costume) and local tokens and medals (Antiquities). Funding for new acquisitions in all areas is likely to be very limited between 2014 and 2019 but the museum is still offered numerous donations every year – an agreed policy allows us to politely refuse inappropriate gifts and focus our efforts on making key acquisitions that will improve the quality of collections and improve visitor experience.

The new elements of the Collections Development Policy include sections drawing on the Collections Review of 2012 which inform future priorities as well as identify groups for rationalisation and disposal. Previously, museums had a strong presumption against disposing of any collections, but in recent years ethical transfer or disposal which is not driven by financial motives has emerged as an appropriate measure when carried out in accordance with agreed codes of ethics (pp32-34)). Since re-opening in December 2011 RAMM has been building a growing reputation for contemporary art and the commissioning of new artworks. An explicit statement on acquiring contemporary art (p29) is a new departure for RAMM; as is the statement on the difficult issue of archiving digital media (p31).

Also encompassed within the Collections Development Policy is a guide to the conditions of deposit at RAMM of archaeological archives derived from developer-funded excavations (Appendix B). The considerable burden this places on local authorities and museum services led to a national debate in 2013 and talk of a crisis as archaeological units failed to deposit their finds in museums with full stores. In December 2010, on the termination of the last Acquisition and Disposal policy, RAMM ceased to accept archaeological archives as the stores were full and the box fees levied were inadequate to finance a new one. The new archaeological archives policy employs a more robust and sustainable financial model that will allow Exeter to safeguard its archaeological archives.

RAMM has been fortunate in benefitting from numerous, generous benefactors throughout its history – the world-class collections reflect Exeter’s good fortune. We are also indebted to a number of supporters who have assisted in our collections development in recent years. These include, but are not limited to, the Art Fund, Heritage Lottery Fund, Arts Council England, the Friends of Exeter Museums and Art Gallery, the V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the Headley Trust, the Acceptance in Lieu Scheme, Kent Kingdon Bequest, the Leche Trust, the Reynolds Chard Bequest, the Pilgrim Trust and the AG Leventis Foundation.

**Camilla Hampshire**  
**Museums Manager**  
**January 2014**

## **1. Museum's statement of purpose**

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum & Art Gallery (RAMM) is a service of Exeter City Council. It exists to enrich the lives of people living, working in and visiting Exeter by providing them with opportunities to be inspired, informed and entertained. The City's world-class collections are placed at the heart of everything the museum does. RAMM will acquire collections that document the natural and cultural history of Exeter set within its regional and national context as well as those that represent the City and region's connections across the world. The museum holds collections in trust for present and future generations, managing and caring for them for the public benefit.

### **Our Values:**

- We are enthusiastic about everything the museum has to offer.
- We are ambitious for the services and quality of what we do.
- We challenge ourselves in order to provide visitors with a wide range of different experiences.
- We are responsive to new ideas and views.
- We build on the museum's reputation by acting responsibly in everything we do.
- We are a friendly and welcoming service.

## 2. RAMM's collections

### 2.1 Overview

The Royal Albert Memorial Museum holds a varied collection containing over one million items. Our principal subject areas are:

**Fine and Decorative Art** – approximately 27,000 accession records refer to Devon and British oil paintings, drawings, watercolours from the 17th to 20th century, West Country silver, costume and textiles, glass and horology (clocks and watches).

**Ethnography** – approximately 10,500 accession records refer to ethnographic items from the Pacific, Africa, the Americas and Asia. RAMM's World Cultures collection is designated by Arts Council England as being of national importance under its Designation scheme.

**Natural History** – approximately 130,000 accession records refer to British and foreign specimens in the field of Botany (British), Geology (largely local) and Zoology (British and Foreign). Some of these records refer to more than one specimen, so the actual number of specimens is higher – estimated at 350,000.

**Antiquities** – approximately 53,000 accession records refer to Devon Archaeology, Numismatics (coins, tokens and medals), Architectural Fittings and Foreign Archaeology. Many of these records refer to group accessions (for example, one accession number may cover a box of many pot sherds) so the actual number of objects within Antiquities is significantly higher – estimated at 750,000.

Alongside (and sometimes within) the principal subject areas, RAMM's holdings also incorporate inter-disciplinary material such as social history, contemporary art and handling collections, together with a limited quantity of digital and analogue media.

Further detail is given in the following section.

### 2.2 Fine Art

The collections were not formed to any specific plan during the early years of the museum's history (1868-1912) but mainly constituted donations and bequests from key figures such as John Lane, Sir Harry Veitch and Kent and Jane Kingdon. Later it was realised that this policy was too narrow for a major regional museum and in 1968 the policy was broadened to take in the collecting of British art as a whole and European art whenever it proved financially possible. This ambition was not realised, partly due to financial issues, and collecting continues to be limited to donations, bequests and grant-aided purchases.

The collection currently includes material from the 16th century to the present. Now well documented, it comprises approximately 400 paintings, 2000 drawings and watercolours, 2800 prints and a small collection of sculpture.

The acquisition, preservation, documentation and display of local works, for example landscapes and portraits, can be of more importance for their topographical or historical significance than their artistic merit. RAMM has continued to acquire selected additions of work related to the region, such as Exeter and Devon landscapes; work with a connection to the region through ownership or provenance; and work by established professional artists born, trained or resident in the region, including artists-in-residence. Important recent acquisitions to this part of the collection include works by John White Abbot and Leighton Hall Woollatt.

The Fine Art collections are strong in 18th and 19th-century local artists - in particular Francis Towne, John White Abbott and John Gendall, representing Exeter and Devon topographical scenes. Since 2005, significant Devon artists of this period (pre-dating the 20th century), such as Francis Hayman, Benjamin Robert Haydon and Richard Cosway have been acquired via grant aid in order to extend and consolidate this already significant collection. These artists are either native to or have a tradition of working in Devon. Artists (of excellence and significance) beyond the above remit, including a John Opie portrait of Micaiah Towgood, have been acquired only via donation or bequest.

The representative collection of 20th-century paintings, prints and drawings has been developed, with the addition of works linking artists already featured (eg. Duncan Grant, Walter Sickert) and the groups and schools with which they were associated (eg. Bloomsbury, Camden Town, Euston Road). Recent acquisitions here included a David Bomberg landscape. Works by war artists have lately been consolidated by the acquisition of Leighton Hall Woollatt's Blitz scenes, among others.

Art photography remains under-represented in the collection. RAMM does not collect record photography, this being directed to Devon Heritage Services (DHS).

Works in RAMM's sculpture collection range from the medieval period onwards. The acquisition of sculpture is limited by size, storage and conservation factors. However important 20th century small-scale works include *Zennor* by Barbara Hepworth, *Carapace* by Michael Ayrton and *Triple Loop* by Bill Pye.

Works by present-day artists living or working in Devon, or depicting subjects or themes with Devon associations, include a Robert Organ landscape painting acquired in 2011.

## **2.3 Decorative Art**

The Decorative Art collections cover a broad field which divides naturally into a number of groups:

- Silver
- Pewter and other metalwork
- Ceramics
- Glass
- Civic regalia
- Furniture
- Horology
- Musical instruments
- Costume and textiles
- Lace
- Arms and armour

The summaries below cover the Decorative Art collections and Costume and textiles collections in turn.

### **2.3.1 Silver**

RAMM's collection of Devon silver is of international importance and dates from the medieval period to the present day. Most was acquired in the post war years through the Veitch bequest and more recently through the Reynolds Chard bequest. The Museum also has some important early church silver on indefinite loan from churches within the diocese. The collections at the Guildhall are mostly of a later date and with Civic associations.

An active collecting policy has been followed to acquire pieces with a Devon or an Exeter civic association. A major recent acquisition was two Elizabethan silver mounted tigerware jugs from Exeter, c1580-90, purchased in 2012 through the Reynolds Chard bequest and the V & A Purchase Grant Fund and the Art Fund.

### **2.3.2 Pewter and other metalwork.**

There is a small but interesting collection of 17th to 19th-century pewter, mostly of Devon manufacture. Despite a policy of active collecting where pieces have either a Devon or Exeter association, no suitable items have become available in the period 2005-2012.

### **2.3.3 Ceramics**

The ceramics collection is made up of English and continental material from the 17th century to the present day. Some is of a high quality but there are many gaps. The collections of studio and local Devon potteries are of national importance.

Between 2005 and 2012, RAMM's collecting policy allowed for acquisition of pottery from Devon and the South West of England by gift, bequest or purchase, and other English, continental and oriental pottery and porcelain by gift or bequest. However, no suitable items became available for acquisition during this time. Similarly, no suitable work by 20th century and contemporary potters became available in this period.

### **2.3.4 Glass**

The Museum has a large and representative collection of glass dating from the early 18th century based on the Clarke bequest of 1928. There are several pieces of special note such as the Joanna Southcott beakers and Charles II flute glass.

More recently, selective purchases of Devon, British and Continental glass have strengthened existing collections, including the acquisition of Steffen Dam's glass work *The Secret Life of Plants* (2010) through the ArtFund Collect scheme in 2011.

### **2.3.5 Civic regalia**

Exeter Civic regalia is amongst the most important in the provinces and includes several items such as the 15th-century Waits chains, which are of exceptional interest. A passive collecting policy of acquiring items by gift has been pursued in this area, with no new items acquired between 2005 and 2012.

### **2.3.6 Horology**

RAMM's collection of Horology embraces clocks, watches and clock and watch-making tools from the 17th to the 20th centuries. Most of the watch collection was bequeathed by C.R. Venn in 1928 and is one of the most important collections outside London, including several very rare time-pieces. More recent acquisitions, including an 18th-century watch by Henry Gard of Exeter, acquired in 2011, have filled some of the gaps in RAMM's collection.

### **2.3.6 Musical instruments**

RAMM holds a small, important collection of keyboard instruments in addition to some woodwind and string instruments dating from the late 18th century. The 17th-century virginals by Charles Rewalyn of Exeter and the Italian harpsichord 1782 are outstanding pieces. Owing to a lack of suitable storage space, musical instruments are only accepted if of very special interest, e.g. by a local maker. There have been no recent acquisitions in this area.

### **2.3.7 Arms and armour**

The small collection of armour and swords is based on local 17th and 18th-century material and a medium sized collection of firearms concentrates on local 19th-century manufacturers. No material was added to this collection between 2005 and 2013.

## 2.4 Costume and textiles

### 2.4.1 Costume and textiles

The textile collection contains about 15,000 items of costume and textiles (including the lace collection). It illustrates the types of clothes worn by local men, women and children from 1750 to the present day, with some much earlier examples of underwear, accessories and textiles. The collection is strongest in middle/upper class female clothing but is better balanced for more recent periods. The strength of the collection is the quantity of material with strong local connections, whilst the quality and quantity of items ranks it amongst the top ten costume collections in Britain. Many objects have been published.

During the 1980s the collection was developed to show the range of clothes worn by people of all classes in Exeter, with an emphasis on everyday and occupational dress. However, for the most part, the collection has tended towards luxury garments and accessories, particularly women's afternoon and evening-wear, wedding and special occasion dress. During the 1990s and early 2000s, collecting was limited to good pieces of lace with a local provenance. In recent years, wider collecting has resumed, with the emphasis on dress and textiles made or worn in Devon. There are also good collections of underwear, outer-garments and accessories with a comprehensive range of fans, hats and footwear.

Items have been collected where there is a good local provenance and where they fill collection gaps. Quality, 20th-century 'ready-to-wear' (as distinct from 'mass-produced') costume and couture clothing has been collected where there is a link to a local wearer or supplier.

### 2.4.2 Lace

The lace collection comprises around 2000 items of lace, documentation and equipment. It covers European and British laces (and allied techniques) from the 16th century to the present day. The Bury Palliser and Treadwin collections - both important 19th-century collections of English and Continental lace samples - were among the first collections to be given to the museum in the 1860s. They are unique to RAMM.

The lace collection aims to represent the techniques and designs of the major lace centres of Europe. Key pieces of local manufacture have been acquired by gift, donation or purchase, with recent acquisitions including historic, though not contemporary, pieces.

Between 2005 and 2010, funding to seek and purchase new acquisitions has been limited.

## 2.5 Ethnography

RAMM's ethnographic collections consist of some 12,000 items. The collections include items from many parts of the world and reflect acquisitions made during the time of British colonialism in the 18th and 19th centuries. When the museum opened in 1868 a number of significant donations were made. These include collections from:

- the Devon and Exeter Institution
- the Rev Henry Townsend, an Exeter-born missionary based in Nigeria. Townsend set up a mission in the new Egba city of Abeokuta in 1846. Some of the prestigious gifts he received went on display in the Great Exhibition of 1851
- the voyages of Captains Cook (1767-80), Bligh (1791-93), Vancouver (1790-95), Parry (1819-20) and Peard (1826-28) to the Pacific, Arctic and North West coast of America.
- John Gould Veitch on the HMS *Curaçoa* in 1865, who acquired weapons and barkcloth
- Vice-Admiral Henry Leah, who commanded the naval cruiser *Mildura* between 1870 and 1894 and acquired tools and costume from Vanuatu
- Hatton and Cookson trader Richard E Dennett, who donated a collection of religious items from central Africa, acquired via the coastal port of Cabinda, in 1899

- Edgar Dewdney, Lieutenant Governor for the North West Territories of Canada, who acquired Plains items and Blackfoot regalia obtained by Indian agent Cecil Denny, who was also one of the founding members of the North West Mounted Police. This last collection includes the regalia once owned by Treaty 7 signatory *Issapóómahksika* (or Crow Indian's Big Foot), which was sold to the museum in 1904.

Collection strengths are:

- Africa – Nigeria, Republic of Congo, Kenya and South Africa
- Americas – Arctic, Subarctic, NW Coast, and Plains region of the USA, Mexico, Guatemala and Amazonia
- Arab world - Oman
- Asia – India, Myanmar, China, Japan, Malaysia,
- Pacific – Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, New Britain, Australia, Polynesia

Many of these items were collected by residents local to the city of Exeter and the county of Devon; the majority being brought back as gifts, souvenirs and occasionally as trophies of conflict. They represent the connections made between local people and source communities in other parts of the world over the past 250 years.

Due to the significance of this material, in terms of historical, colonial and voyage contexts, the ethnography collections were awarded Designated status in 1998 by the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (the scheme is now managed by Arts Council England).

Acquisitions to enhance the existing collection continued from the 20th century to the present. Priority has been given to items which improve the quality and range of existing collections. Recent donations, which include Jevan Berrangé's donation of items from the Amazon region of Guyana and Brazil and John Lane's donation of Yoruba adire textiles have filled gaps in style and quality.

Similarly, Jenny Balfour-Paul's donation of barkcloth, the Elizabeth Norris donation of Asian embroidery and the Stephanie Odam donation of clothing from Oaxaca, Mexico have considerably enhanced existing material. Conall Macfarlane's gift via the Acceptance in Lieu scheme enabled the museum to acquire a Maori *mere pounamu* (greenstone weapon) to replace a badly fragmented example. This replacement now features in the permanent gallery in a display of Maori material acquired mainly during the New Zealand War.

Consideration is also given to selective acquisition of items for use in developing understanding between users of the museum and communities represented by the ethnographic collections. The commissioning of new artwork such as Rosanna Raymond's *Genealogy* in 2007 reflects the significance of bark cloth to Polynesian identity in the modern world. Sheila Unwin's significant donation of East African beadwork illustrates adornment as currency, social indicator and fashion, in contrast to existing examples from the 19th century. RAMM also acquired Suzuki Mutsumi's *Golden Field of Rice* (2009), a modern, vibrant artwork that reflects ancient technique with modern aesthetics, through the Art Fund Collect scheme in 2010. These items all reflect changing values through time.

Recent policy has enabled RAMM to acquire well-documented items by donation, bequest and exceptionally by purchase, where these items:

- were originally made and used by peoples in the indigenous communities of Africa, the Americas, the Pacific Islands, Australia and Asia
- and have been collected by people residing or having a significant connection with Devon and Exeter.

### **2.5.1 Recently repatriated items**

There have been unique circumstances where items formerly held by RAMM have been returned to source communities. For example, the bracelet and necklace believed to have been made by Tasmanian Aborigine Truganini were returned to Hobart, Tasmania in 1997.

### **2.5.2 Sacred items**

Within the ethnography collections a number of items have been identified as being sacred. This material has been recognised with the assistance of source (indigenous) communities in different parts of the world

### **2.5.3 Ethnography handling collections**

Since 2005, donations to RAMM have resulted in occasional contribution of authentic items into the ethnography handling collection. This museum educational resource is designed for public use. Recent contributions include Mexican clay spindle whorls, Aztec body stamps, Asian masks, Ghanaian kente cloth, Fijian barkcloth, Guatemalan costume and a Bogolanfini tunic from Mali.

Handling collections are not accessioned. RAMM's Handling Collections Policy is stated later in this document - see section 6.3.3.

## **2.6 Natural History**

RAMM's Natural History Collections are wide in scope. Important specific collections are mentioned in the relevant groups, which are:

- Botany
- Zoology (vertebrates, invertebrates)
- Geology (petrology, mineralogy, palaeontology)

These collections contain British and foreign material of high quality and scientific importance.

### **2.6.1 Botany**

The collection is a good reflection of the activities of collectors from Victorian times up to the mid 20th century. Specimens from early collectors such as D'Urban and Heirn are particularly data-rich. Both collections include local and national material. Some of Heirn's specimens have been published in *Flora of Devon* (1939) by Keble Martin and Fraser. Also of note are approximately 1000 seaweed specimens bound in three volumes from the collection of Amelia Griffiths and four volumes of *Algae Danmonienses* published by Amelia Griffiths' colleague Mary Wyatt.

### **2.6.2 Zoology**

#### **(i) Vertebrates**

RAMM has a very good vertebrate collection. Birds are a particular area of strength with more than 7,500 study skins, 3,000 eggs and 2,000 mounts in the collection. The specimens are of native and exotic species with good global coverage and include those now extinct or exceedingly rare such as the kakapo, huia, ivory-billed woodpecker and passenger pigeon.

Other collections of particular interest include: 20 specimens from Ludwig Leichhardt's expedition, collected at Port Essington, Australia in 1884, 97 moa bones and more than 1,000 eggs donated by Solomon Caesar Malan in 1878. The vertebrate collection contains approximately 1,400 mammals as taxidermy, skins or skeletons. 60 of these specimens were collected by big game hunter Charles Victor Alexander Peel including RAMM's iconic giraffe as well as a polar bear and an African elephant. Reptiles, fish and amphibians are less well represented.

#### **(ii) Invertebrates**

RAMM's invertebrate collections include insects, arachnids, molluscs and echinoderms. Other invertebrate groups are represented but in smaller numbers.

The molluscs number approximately 60,000 individual specimens with good global and taxonomic coverage. Individual collections of note include: the Linter collection of approximately 14,000 exotic land snails; the Montagu collection of marine snails including type specimens and a small collection (approx. 280 specimens) made by CF Hemming in Somalia circa 1950.

In 1903 the collection of Percy Sladen collection was donated to RAMM. This comprises several thousand microscope slides and fossils from the collection of WB and PH Carpenter and over 2,500 dry and wet-preserved echinoderms. Some of these echinoderms were collected on the expeditions of HMS Challenger (1872-76) and HMS Lightning (1868). Scientifically valuable microscope slides of foraminifera are among those owned by Carpenter.

RAMM has excellent British and exotic butterfly collections numbering in the region of 80,000 specimens, many of which have been consolidated (organised taxonomically rather than by collector). British beetles and spiders are also an area of collection strength.

### **2.6.3 Geology**

The collections are strong in specimens from Devon and the South West of England, together with intermittent world wide coverage.

#### **(i) Petrology**

The strength of the collection is largely limited to the dominant granite and its thermally metamorphosed aureole rocks together with the Exeter Volcanic Rocks.

#### **(ii) Mineralogy**

Mineralogical specimens from the South West of England are well represented in the collections, with considerable amounts of foreign material.

#### **(iii) Palaeontology**

The palaeontology collections are extensive, with particularly important material from the local Cretaceous, Pleistocene and Triassic systems.

## **2.7 Antiquities**

The Antiquities collections cover a wide field which divides naturally into a number of areas. Summaries of some of the most important collections are given in each section. The collection comprises:

- Local archaeology
- Architectural fittings
- Local history
- Numismatics (coins, tokens and medals)
- Foreign archaeology

### **2.7.1 Local archaeology**

The collection is the largest and most important in Devon. Approximately 42,750 accession records refer to Devon and Exeter archaeology. Many of these records refer to group accessions (for example, one accession number may cover a box of many pot sherds) so the actual number of objects is significantly higher. There are an estimated 450,000 prehistoric, 40,000 Roman, 60,000 medieval and 60,000 post-medieval artefacts, together with over 500,000 animal bones from Roman, medieval and early modern deposits.

#### **(i) Exeter archaeology**

For a small city Exeter has been the subject of a huge amount of archaeological attention. The results of this work are deposited at RAMM. The archaeological holdings reflect the history of Exeter: from Roman military origins, a Roman civilian phase, post-Roman decline, Anglo-Saxon renewal, medieval growth, a Tudor and Stuart 'Golden Age' to a less prominent but prosperous Georgian and Victorian period.

Prehistoric evidence from Exeter is relatively sparse, although as development occurs on the margins of the city some significant finds have been uncovered.

The Roman collection includes finds made in the 19th century, the finds of the Devon Archaeological Exploration Society in the 1930s, Lady Fox in the 1940s to 1960s and, since 1970, dwarfing earlier collections, Exeter Archaeology. This includes a major ceramics collection and a significant series of small finds. Exeter's Roman Legionary Bath-House is of national importance.

The medieval and post-medieval holdings, mostly excavated in Exeter since 1970, form an extremely fine collection. Exeter has one of Britain's leading ceramics collections in this field, with major groups of glass, metal small finds, wooden objects, leather and bone objects. The collection attracts international interest.

#### (ii) Devon archaeology

Historically, RAMM has collected archaeological material from the whole of Devon; however, since the 1990s RAMM has cooperated with other museums in the area to agree collecting areas. Between 2005 and 2010, RAMM pursued an active policy to acquire archaeological finds from prehistory to the post-medieval period, whether excavated or chance finds, from our collecting area. This comprises the Local Authority areas of Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, Teignbridge, plus the eastern half of Dartmoor and the South Hams. (see Appendix B)

Prehistoric collections include palaeolithic handaxes from Broom; mesolithic finds from Westward Ho!, mesolithic and neolithic flint collections from Dartmoor, the North Devon coast and East Devon, the finds from the excavations at Hembury, Hazard Hill, Haldon and High Peak, which are crucial to an understanding of the neolithic in the South West; the principal finds from bronze age barrows in East Devon and others from Dartmoor and North Devon; most of the county's bronze age metalwork; and the iron age finds from Hembury, Seaton, Coffinswell and Blackbury Castle. Two large collections of fieldwalked flints, by Nan Pearce from Stockland and John Uglow from the Exe Valley, have potential for analysing prehistoric landscapes.

RAMM holds most of the Roman material from rural Devon, notably from the county's military sites, such as Tiverton, Honiton and Topsham and civil settlements, notably Holcombe Villa, Seaton, Topsham and Axminster.

RAMM collections contain important medieval and post-medieval finds from Devon towns such as: Topsham, Totnes, Ottery St Mary, Exmouth, Colyton as well as medieval church sites at Newenham Abbey, Exmouth, Stockland. There is further evidence from medieval settlements on Dartmoor

There are significant holdings from some of Devon's fine Tudor houses such as Dartington Hall and a large collection of decorative plasterwork from Berry Pomeroy Castle.

RAMM holds the archives of field records, site plans, photographs, etc., relating to sites from both Exeter and Devon.

In 2011 RAMM ceased to accept any archaeological archive deposits. This decision was taken in order to allow the museum to re-examine the nature, extent and sustainability of our collecting activity in light of future challenges.

#### **2.7.2 Architectural fittings**

The collections include important architectural fragments from city buildings dating from around 950-1800, some of them large items such as doorways, windows and ceilings. The best examples have regional and national importance as a record of building styles and methods, many of which have been lost during recent development. As with the archaeology collections they form an important element in the sense of place of a locality.

Items of particular note are an Anglo-Saxon granite cross shaft, a carved and painted wooden figure of St Peter, fragments of decorative plasterwork from houses in Exeter and Devon, and some fine examples of marbled and grained panels by the Exeter maker John Bradley. There is also a nationally important collection of late medieval ecclesiastical woodwork fragments from churches of the South West collected by Exeter-based Harry Hems.

### **2.7.3 Local history**

Items relating to the social and industrial history of Exeter form an important and much-used area of the museum's collections. These objects reflect the history of Exeter and its region from the 17th century onwards. They include artefacts relating to the city's institutions (the defences, religious institutions, the Guildhall, firefighting, the water supply for example), its foreign and regional trade (with highly important material from the operation of the custom port of Exeter), its industries, domestic life and topography (the last including a series of city models ranging in date from c.1820 to the 1970s).

### **2.7.4 Numismatics**

The coin collection comprises:

(i) Prehistoric, Roman, medieval and later coins found within the museum's collection area. This includes a number of significant hoards (most notably the iron age Cotleigh hoard, the late Roman Honiton hoard, Byzantine coins found by the River Otter, the Loxbeare hoard of Short Cross pennies and the Chudleigh hoard of gold Unites). There are significant antiquarian coin find collections, particularly those of W.T.F. Shortt and the Norton collection. These two are of note as they contain a number ancient Greek, Syrian, Egyptian and other eastern Mediterranean coins and Exeter has the highest number of these finds in the UK. More recent finds of coins from controlled excavations are of great importance in site interpretation.

(ii) Coins, tokens medals and paranumismatica issued in Devon. The most important elements here are the very fine systematic collection of the silver pennies struck at Devon's four Saxon and Norman mints (Exeter, Barnstaple, Totnes and Lydford), which includes some great rarities, and the sequence of Exeter's Civil War coinage. There are also good collections of Devon tradesmen's tokens of the 17th and 18th centuries, local medals, pub checks and badges, and a small collection of local banknotes.

(iii) The museum also holds a representative selection of typical British coins of Saxon to modern date. Quality is mixed.

(iv) A small collection of Classical coins.

### **2.7.5 Foreign archaeology**

RAMM has collections of prehistoric European, Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Greek, Cypriot, Etruscan and Roman material, the majority of which was collected in the 19th and very early 20th centuries. The core of the collection is formed by the Cobham collection of Cypriot antiquities, the Corkill collection of Mesopotamian cylinder seals and the L.A.D. Montague collection. The latter is a good example of a gentleman's antiquities collection, mostly purchased from dealers and including a Greek hoplite helmet said to be from the Battle of Marathon.

Other items include artefacts from many of the noted 19th and early 20th century archaeological excavations including: Spiennes, St Acheul, Swiss Lakes Villages, Babylon, Ur, Umma, Hissarlik, Pompeii, Volsinii, El-Hawawish, Akhmim and several sites excavated by the Egypt Exploration Fund.

As well as Claude Delaval Cobham, Norman Lace Corkill and L.A.D. Montague the collections contain material associated with Flinders Petrie, Leonard Woolley, Sir John Evans, Heinrich Schliemann, Giovanni Belzoni, W.S.M. D'Urban, Greville Chester.

Individual objects of interest include: the mummy of Shep en-Mut, a late 18th dynasty stone sculpture head possibly Tutankhamun or Horemheb, Coptic textiles and the hoplite helmet.

### 3. Collections Review 2011–13: Summary of findings

Between 2011 and 2013 RAMM undertook a root-and-branch review of its collections. By assessing immediately accessible information on provenance, significance and usage, the review objectively identified collections strengths and weaknesses and informed the themes and priorities for future collecting and disposal which make up the current policy.

Full details of RAMM's award-winning collections review methodology are available in a separate document. A summary is available on RAMM's website:

<http://www.rammuseum.org.uk/collections/collections-review>

As part of the collections review, detailed findings and analysis were brought together in an internal report. The section that follows is a broad overview of the key points in relation to each main subject area<sup>1</sup>.

**Important:** It should be noted that the Collections Review Preliminary Assessment, based on a 'desktop' assessment of the collections archive, considered the quality of immediately accessible information on provenance, significance and usage rather than collections' intrinsic quality.

#### 3.1 Fine Art

The 2012 Collections Review Preliminary Assessment appears to confirm the strength and quality of RAMM's collection of paintings from all periods. In addition, 16th to 18th and 19th century drawings performed relatively strongly.

Collections that performed more modestly in the preliminary assessment included sculpture, prints from the 16th to 19th centuries and 20th century drawings.

The weaker performing parts of the fine art collection, according to the preliminary assessment findings, included photographs, 20th century prints and a large collection of prints and drawings for which no date was recorded in the collections archive.

#### 3.2 Decorative Art (excluding Costume and textiles)<sup>2</sup>

The 2012 collections review preliminary assessment confirms the strength of RAMM's collections of silver, horology and British and studio ceramics. In addition, glass and the small collection of musical instruments performed strongly.

Decorative art collections that performed more modestly in the preliminary assessment included toys, dolls and games, firearms, arms and armour, metalwork (excluding silver) and foreign ceramics.

The review noted that a number of South West museums hold large ceramics collections. The curator of art commented that RAMM's collection of foreign ceramics comprises 'typical rather than outstanding examples of type'.<sup>3</sup>

The weaker performing parts of the decorative art collection included some rather disparate groups of publications, personal ephemera (the latter often relating to key collectors) and personal objects. The furniture collection and small group of woodwork items also performed weakly.

#### 3.3 Costume and textiles<sup>4</sup>

The collections review preliminary assessment, based on the collections archive, confirms the strength of RAMM's collections of lace and other textiles. A group of more than 500 fashion plates

and illustrations was another strong performer, alongside equipment and materials and accessories for the head or face (mainly hats and hair ornaments).

As a whole, the costume and textile collections performed less strongly in the preliminary assessment than other elements of decorative arts.

Costume collections that performed more modestly include dress, personal objects and ornaments and periodical publications – RAMM holds a large selection of back issues of *Vogue*, for example.

The weaker performing parts of the costume and textile collection, according to the preliminary assessment findings, were gloves, shoes and hosiery, uniforms, outerwear and protective wear including shawls, underwear and nightwear, non-dress main garments and miscellaneous accessories.

### **3.4 Ethnography**

The 2012 collections review preliminary assessment confirms the strength of RAMM's ethnographic collections from Polynesia, Melanesia and Australia. These are closely followed by moderately strong collections from West and East Africa and East Asia.

Collections that performed more modestly in the preliminary assessment included those from Micronesia, Southern and Central Africa, South East Asia and North America.

None of RAMM's ethnographic collections performed particularly weakly in the preliminary assessment, with the exception of the South American material. In addition to the South American collection, those appearing towards the lower end of the scale in this collections archive-based assessment were North Africa, Central America and South Asia.

### **3.5 Natural History**

The 2012 collections review preliminary assessment confirms that RAMM's Natural History collection is strong in Microscope slides, Photographs and Plants, closely followed by Molluscs.

Collections that performed modestly well in the preliminary assessment included Echinoderms, Mammals and Lepidoptera.

Collections achieving an average (median) performance included Birds; Triassic and Permian fossils; Palaeocene and Holocene fossils, Minerals, Rocks and Reptiles.

Towards the lower end of the scale, in this collections-archive based assessment, were Fish, Arthropods, Coleoptera and Amphibians. Many of the fossil groups also appeared towards the lower end of the scale.

### **3.6 Antiquities**

The 2012 collections review preliminary assessment confirms the strength of the Exeter Archaeology excavated during the 1945-1990 period and the Devon Numismatics collection. Devon Social and Industrial History also performed strongly.

Devon and Exeter Archaeology excavated before 1945, and Foreign Archaeology, were also in the top half of the Antiquities 'performance' table.

The collections that performed more modestly in the preliminary assessment included Exeter Archaeology excavated since 1990, Devon Archaeology excavated during the 1970s and '80s, and Architectural fragments.

Collections appearing toward the lower end of the scale were Devon Archaeology excavated between 1945 and 1969 and Numismatics whose provenance was unclear at the time of the 'desktop' assessment. The weakest performing collection was Devon Archaeology excavated since 1990.

## 4. Collections Development Plans

The response to the 2012 Preliminary Collections Assessment included the formulation of a Collections Development Plan for each collection. The plan set out the actions necessary to increase collections knowledge and maximise the public benefit of under-used parts of collections. The collections development plans form the basis of work plans for the coming few years.

### 4.1 Fine Art

Priority work on the Fine Art collection will focus on improving understanding of approximately 1600 prints and drawings for which no date was recorded in the immediate collections archive in 2012. Almost half of this material involves natural history subject matter, with the majority being botanical in nature.

#### (i) East India Company botanical drawings

In 2013, a national expert in botanical prints and drawings was commissioned to review and research this material. The resultant report opens up possibilities for increased public engagement with these pieces in the future.

A set of 80 botanical drawings was donated by the Cresswell family to RAMM in 1927. Initially held as herbarium archival material, their importance and rarity has only come to light with the Collections Review.

Many of these drawings are of high quality and obviously attractive but they are also historically significant. By Indian artists, they were commissioned by the British East India Company, probably under the supervision of the Calcutta Botanic Garden. In the late 18<sup>th</sup> and early 19<sup>th</sup> century the Company set out to record the complete flora of India for the advancement of botanical science and for commercial exploitation. RAMM's set of drawings relate to several printed publications of the time, including *Plants of the Coast of Coromandel*, *Hortus Bengalensis* and *Flora Indica*. As far as is known, RAMM is the only non-national UK collection to hold original drawings from this group, the others being at Kew, the British Museum and the Natural History Museum.

#### (ii) Further development priorities for the existing Fine Art collection

- deepening documentation for 19th century portrait prints, posters and miniatures
- conservation work on miniatures
- developing opportunities for improving public access to prints and drawings (undated group, 2012), David Roberts Prints (Egypt series, see below), 20th century posters (see below) and prints and miniatures (see below)

#### (iii) David Roberts prints

RAMM is fortunate in having a complete set of 240 lithographs of David Robert's travels in Egypt and the Holy Land. This is one of the few richly hand-coloured first editions in a UK public collection. Roberts (1796-1864), a leading topographical artist, toured the Middle East in 1838-39 and the prints were published between 1842 and 1849. These are widely regarded as the most important pictorial record of the region from the era of 19th century 'romantic topography' and as some of the technically finest lithographs ever made. They also played a crucial role in the expansion of tourism in Egypt following the Napoleonic wars and the early excavations of Belzoni and others.

#### (iii) 20th century posters:

RAMM has a collection of about 60 posters from the 'golden age' of modernist graphic art (1920s – 1940s). Largely from a single private collection, donated in 1988, these include iconic examples by

leading designers of the era, including Edward McKnight Kauffer, Tom Purvis and Anna Zinkheisen. Virtually none have been on public display at RAMM. As far as is known, this is the only significant collection of its type in the region. Most of these are in good condition with little fading and are now extremely rare.

## 4.2 Decorative Art

Priority work on the Decorative Art collection (excluding Costume and textiles) will include the selective transfer and disposal of furniture not connected to major RAMM donor Kent Kingdom.

Further priorities for 2013-2018 include:

- deepening understanding of RAMM's firearms, arms and armour, including reviewing these in the context of collections elsewhere
- selective transfer or disposal of European ceramics.

## 4.3 Costume and Textiles

Improving the quality and depth of information in the accessible collections archive will be an important area of work for parts of the costume collection in 2013-2018.

As part of the collections development plan for Costume and Textiles, a national expert in shawls and stoles was commissioned to research and improve our understanding of 135 shawls and stoles of Indian and European manufacture<sup>5</sup>.

Further priorities include:

- deepening and making accessible the documentation for the costume collection as a whole, and gloves, shoes and hosiery in particular
- improving public access to shawls and stoles, as a result of expert research and review,
- improving public access to gloves, shoes and hosiery as a result of expert research and review and deeper, more accessible documentation
- conserving and improving storage of photographs, albums and the Southcott and Herbert archives.

## 4.4 Ethnography

As part of the collections development plan for Ethnography, a series of specialist external consultancies were commissioned to improve understanding of areas of the collection which have recently been less well-used. These assessments reviewed:

- Weapons, shields, body ornaments and textiles from Ethiopia and Somalia<sup>6</sup>
- Central American costume<sup>7</sup>
- Personal ornaments, clothing and textiles and mica paintings from India<sup>8</sup>
- 19th century Chinese texts.<sup>9</sup>

The resultant reports open up possibilities for further research and increased public engagement with these collections in the future, including:

(i) Chinese texts: further specialist research into scientific books written in Chinese by Western authors (late 19th and early 20th centuries); an 18th century set of books on Chinese coins; the first Chinese language newspaper published in Hong Kong and a copy of the 'Bowring Treaty' printed in the Chinese language (possibly unique).

(ii) India collection: further research into a Mysore photograph album with carved cover, possibly unique in the UK and a man's robe or *choga*, which is directly linked to the Indian Mutiny of 1857-

58; interpretation of items including a Tibetan woman's outfit from Darjeeling (themes of identity and displacement) and personal ornaments (theme of protection). A number of paintings on cloth, featuring Krishna and the Gopis (cowherds) are not felt to be artistically or historically important but can be used as a storytelling device.

(iii) Central American textiles: further research into male garments described as 'gaucho' to determine whether from Mexico or Argentina; research into embroidered leather coat; study days for NADFAS, Embroiderers' Guild, Guild of Spinners, Weavers and Dyers.

(iv) Further priorities identified in the collections development plan

- Ensuring object information is captured fully, accurately and consistently on RAMM's collections database, across all of the ethnographic collections
- Continued liaison with legitimate source communities and fair representation in the interpretation
- Research and evaluation of Blackfoot collection (North America), with active participation of representatives from Blackfoot nation in Canada. Funding from the Leverhulme Trust has been secured to carry out a major programme with national and international partners between 2013 -14.
- The Fiji Art Research project (Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded programme) enables RAMM to better interpret this underused collection (18 items displayed out of 131 items).
- Projects to increase public engagement with material reviewed by specialist consultants (Ethiopia, Somalia, Central America, South Asia, China).
- Targeted research and review of material from Sudan, South America, Melanesia and Micronesia (some of the low-scoring groups in preliminary assessment).
- Exhibition proposal development involving Central and South American material (low-scoring groups) with external partners such as National Museums Liverpool and Pitt Rivers Museum, Oxford.

## 4.5 Natural History

Two specialist external consultancies have improved understanding of areas of the collection which have recently been less well-used:

- Jurassic fossils whose provenance or significance was unclear at the time of preliminary assessment<sup>10</sup>
- A further 1000 fossil specimens whose geological period or significance was unclear at the time of the preliminary assessment. These included 110 fossils collected by one donor, Miss J E Linter (1844-1909).<sup>11</sup>

The resultant reports open up possibilities for further research and increased public engagement with these collections in the future.

Further priorities identified in the collections development plan for Natural History are:

- Further review of Geology collections, in particular Devonian, Carboniferous, Cretaceous, Cambrian, Ordovician and Silurian fossils.
- Assessment of the provenance and condition of more than 2000 spirit-preserved specimens. Remedial conservation of important specimens in order to make this material more accessible and usable
- Document Arthropods donated by Dave Bolton in order to create a reference collection for study and public enquiries
- Improve documentation of Fish and Invertebrates.

## 4.6 Antiquities

Priorities identified in the collections development plan for Antiquities are:

- Link collections database records for Devon Archaeology since 1990 to archaeological reports and research, Archaeological Data Service (ADS) and Devon Heritage Environment Record (HER)
- Increase digital access to Devon archaeology through projects such as Moor Stories and Time Trail
- Correct documentation for local numismatics objects that have been mis-identified as non-local
- Significance assessment of Roman coins by external expert
- Expert appraisal of antiquarian numismatic paperwork to discover any links to RAMM's collections
- Link collections database records for Devon Archaeology 1945-1969 to archaeological reports, published references and research and HER records
- Link collections database records for Exeter Archaeology since 1990 to information held on file, paper documentation and published research
- Research by external specialist into local production and patterns of trade in clay pipes
- Formulate a collection and rationalisation strategy for clay pipes
- Link collections database records for Devon Archaeology 1970-1989 to archaeological reports, research and HER records
- Correct documentation to separate Social and Industrial History items with local connections from those that don't
- Link collections database records for Architectural Fragments to information held on file, paper documentation and published research
- Specialist research into Hems collection of ecclesiastical woodwork to establish exact provenances
- Crowd-sourcing project to identify Hems material in local churches
- Link collections database records for Foreign Archaeology to information held in paper documentation, research and publications
- Further research into Cypriot and Greek ceramics
- Research into human and animal mummies
- Research into Egyptian lithics
- Continue to add research on Cypriot and Greek collections to websites and blog
- Link collections database records for pre-1945 Exeter Archaeology to information held on file and published research
- Research into animal bone assemblages from archaeological sites
- Research into analysis and interpretation of flint scatters found in Devon
- Research into the development of Devon towns through their archaeology

As one of the high priority projects within the Collections Development Plan for Antiquities, RAMM is piloting an online research prospectus.<sup>12</sup> This sets out to link the museum's less well-known research collections directly with researchers and academics in universities and research institutions.

## 5. Plans for use of existing collections

### 5.1 Fine Art

The East India Company drawings, David Roberts prints and 20th century posters are being considered as exhibition material. In each case, public display will be planned in conjunction with improved documentation and photography following a further research phase (particularly in the case of the East India Company drawings which offer opportunities to develop partnerships with groups such as the Royal Botanic Gardens and Royal Horticultural Society).

### 5.2 Costume and Textiles

The Costume and textiles collection is frequently the subject of research by students and volunteers. The collection has been re-housed in purpose built storage and is being re-organised and re-packaged to improve accessibility.

Continuing in-house and external research is important. Work on the database and digital media will enable improved dissemination of the collections.

There are plans for online exhibitions, engagement activities, training and community workshops as well as for progressing partnership projects. Proposals are being developed for exhibitions in the main galleries and rotation of current displays.

### 5.3 Ethnography

The Collections Development Plan (see section 4) has captured part of the work that is needed. There is potential for developing many other parts of the collection, even those that have scored highly in the Review but have been little used because of a lack of opportunity for collections research leading to limited interpretation. Examples include African beadwork and the Melanesia collection.

### 5.4 Natural History

Priorities for future use of RAMM's Natural History collections during 2013-18 include:

- Following review and treatment of spirit-preserved material, add specimens to RAMM's online collections database, Collections Explorer. Explore potential for display and loan of these specimens.
- Public engagement work with the Sladen Collection, linked to Devon's marine environment
- Increased use of Geology collection for learning and engagement.

### 5.5 Antiquities

Priorities for future use of RAMM's Antiquities collections during 2013-18 include:

#### *Recent Exeter Archaeology:*

- Include on Time Trail website and SW Collections Explorer online database
- Proposed exhibitions on Devon in the Roman World and Exeter Bodies
- Collections research prospectus

#### *Devon Archaeology:*

- Moor Stories web access project, partnering with the University of Exeter
- Exhibition proposal on Roman Britain / Europe
- Collections research prospectus

#### *Architectural fragments:*

- Include material on Moor Stories, Church Detective, Time Trail websites

#### *Foreign Archaeology:*

- As above, continue to add research on Greek and Cypriot collections to website and blog.

## **6. Themes and priorities for future collecting**

### **6.1 General principles**

Our approach to collecting is shaped by our organisational purpose and values and our responsibility to manage collections ethically, legally and effectively, within the resources available and in line with the distinctive character of our museum, always for the public benefit.

We collect in accordance with 10 general principles:

6.1.1. We collect strategically and ethically, in order to further our organisational purpose.

6.1.2. Acquisitions should contribute to the exploration of themes, issues, events or people important to the natural and cultural history of Exeter, set within its regional and national context, or the city and the region's connections across the world.

6.1.3. As part of the process of considering an item for the collection, we take into account the potential of the item to stimulate discussion and new perspectives and to help personalise the making of meaning.

6.1.4. We take a focussed, responsive approach to collecting, within the resources available to us.

6.1.5. Whilst we emphasise the interconnectivity and diversity of our content, we do not aspire to build a comprehensive collection covering all areas of material culture.

6.1.6. We balance further collecting with the imperative to better understand and make use of existing collections.

6.1.7. In considering an item for our collection, we take into account the need for collections information, collections care and collections access.

6.1.8. We seek to fill gaps in our collection only where this will strengthen existing collections themes, enrich visitor experience, or contribute to opportunities for discussion and debate.

6.1.9. We will acquire an object only if it has clear potential for display, interpretation, research, learning, access or outreach.

6.1.10. We will not acquire material whose care and conservation needs are out of proportion to its potential for display, interpretation, research, learning or outreach.

#### **Relevance to RAMM**

6.1.11. The museum's collections staff must demonstrate that a proposed acquisition has significance and value to RAMM because it is consistent with the general principles above.

The Subject Statements (pp22-31) outline the current position and specific themes and priorities for each subject area.

## 6.2 Themes and priorities for future collecting: Subject statements

### 6.2.1 Fine Art

Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established collection themes set down in 2.2. A particular focus for the next five years will be:

(i) Nicholas Hilliard

A particular artist who should be represented in the collections is Nicholas Hilliard (1547-1619), an important miniaturist born in Exeter. His work commands prices far beyond the normal resources of the museum and special efforts would have to be made to acquire a work if the opportunity arose.

(ii) Portrait miniatures by Devon artists

Four of the most important artists in the history of the portrait miniature were Devonian – Hilliard and the 18th century contemporaries, Richard Cosway, Richard Crosse and Ozias Humphry. Though their careers were based in the capital, each maintained strong connections to the South West and secured numerous commissions in the region. RAMM's collections do not adequately represent their achievements: there are no works by Hilliard, none by Humphry, a single small format miniature by Crosse, and only a single miniature by Cosway (acquired in 2010). Surprisingly, Cosway and Crosse are both represented by oil portraits – a self-portrait of each and a full length by Cosway of the young Sir Henry Carew of Tiverton in Van Dyck costume.

(iii) Contemporary art collecting is dealt with in a separate section (see p29)

### 6.2.2 Decorative Art

Selective acquisitions may be made on the basis of the established collection themes set down in 2.3. A particular focus for the next five years will be:

(i) Silver with a Exeter or Devon association

(ii) Filling gaps in British ceramics collection, including 20th-century and contemporary potters

(iii) Filling gaps in horology collection.

### 6.2.3 Costume and Textiles

(i) Costume items with strong local provenance and which fill gaps in existing collection (Exeter and Devon); Early Devon-made pieces; designers/makers with a local connection (all periods)

(ii) European lace items which fill gaps in existing collection: Early pieces, particularly Devon-made; 16th and 17th-century Continental laces.

### 6.2.4 Ethnography

(i) A historic photographic archive relating to the collection to aid in interpretation.

(ii) The specialist assessment of Central American textiles suggested several potential additions that would fill gaps in this particular collection: a contemporary blouse from Mexico or Guatemala, woven hair cords from Guatemala and a *quechquemiti* (closed shoulder cape) a contemporary spindle, samples of work incorporating brown cotton and pieces using the techniques of gauze-woven cloth, ikat (tie-dyed) thread and embroidery.

(iii) Due to the Designated nature of RAMM's World Cultures collection, there are exceptional circumstances in which the museum may act as an externally approved repository of last resort for ethnographic items with no Devon or Exeter connection.

(iv) Items of religious significance, items of power and items that were proven to be acquired unethically will be treated individually to reflect the concerns of their source communities. Sacred items will only be acquired if there is strong provenance and it causes no offence for the museum to care for them. Such objects will be acquired, displayed or made accessible in a manner which respects the belief systems of those communities.

(v) The following collections will *not* be subject to further collecting between 2014 and 2019:

- collections which have been accessed and commented on by specialists and where no strength has been highlighted.

## **6.2.5 Natural History**

### **General principles for Natural History collecting**

(i) In addition to legal restraints on collecting natural history material, i.e. wildlife protection legislation (see Section 11 'Acquisition Procedures'), RAMM undertakes always to observe good conservation practice when collecting.

(ii) RAMM recognises the importance of fieldwork to collect natural history material. In the past, natural history specimens have been collected by fieldwork, particularly from within Exeter and surrounding areas. In 2013-18, in a national context of public funding constraint, RAMM is unlikely to be in a position to undertake its own fieldwork. The museum will instead seek to acquire appropriate local specimens resulting from fieldwork undertaken by third parties.

(iii) RAMM will continue to accept appropriate acquisitions by donation or bequest, or from third-party fieldwork. As a general rule RAMM will only actively seek locally relevant and well provenanced material (known collector, collection location and date). Local relevance for natural history specimens is considered in geographical terms – Devon, Exeter - or from a historical perspective (local collector, collector relevant to RAMM and its history, or local historical event).

(iv) Foreign material will be considered if of very good quality and if it complements RAMM's existing collections.

(v) New acquisitions should not duplicate existing material unless particularly noteworthy or intended to replace poor quality specimens.

(vi) Consultation will be undertaken with Bristol Museum and Art Gallery, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery and other Accredited museums in the South West region wherever appropriate.

### **6.2.5.2 Botany**

(i) Future collecting will aim to stay abreast of taxonomic developments within indigenous taxa.

(ii) Foreign material may be accepted where it complements existing collections, e.g. economic botany, such as vegetable substances.

(iii) Objects with a particular geographical association beyond Exeter but within Devon will only be acquired following consultation with relevant museums.

(iv) RAMM will actively collect wild species new to Devon, including spreading UK natives and 'alien' introductions.

(v) RAMM will actively seek historic and modern specimens to provide voucher coverage (reference specimens) for Devon.

### 6.2.5.3 Zoology

#### *Vertebrates*

(i) The aim of future collecting is to build up a comprehensive collection of British vertebrate fauna with emphasis on specimens from Devon and adjoining counties, and to strengthen the foreign material.

(ii) Historic foreign vertebrate material will only be acquired to build on existing collection strengths.

(iii) Of modern British vertebrate material, little can be collected in the field and some purchased. Most will be acquired by obtaining animals killed accidentally or collected under licence for research purposes.

(iv) To avoid duplication, the collection will be developed in consultation with other museums which are following a similar programme of active acquisition. For material beyond the county of Devon, consultation will be with Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery.

(v) In 2013 -18 RAMM will pursue examples of the following vertebrate material:

- Birds & mammals – actively collect locally significant material and modern research material collected under licence.
- Reptiles & amphibians – actively collect locally relevant examples of native and introduced species that occur in Devon in order to produce a reference collection (6 out of 7 amphibians and 4 out of 6 reptiles that are native to the UK are found in Devon). RAMM seeks to replace existing poorly preserved examples already held in the collection.
- Fish – locally relevant skeletal material.

#### *Invertebrates*

(vi) The focus of future collecting will be British invertebrates. Collecting will be through fieldwork by third parties.

(vii) Only exceptionally will foreign invertebrate material be collected.

(viii) Consultation will be with Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, The Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon, and Bristol City Museum and Art Gallery.

(ix) RAMM is actively seeking to increase the following invertebrate collections:

- Echinoderms – actively seeking to acquire preparations that have been missing from *Sladen's Study* for many years. Also looking to fill gaps in the British echinoderm collection, particularly with Devon specimens.
- Molluscs – Actively seeking to fill gaps in existing British freshwater, terrestrial and marine collections with Devon specimens (where possible), as well as collecting examples of new species to the county.
- Arthropods – RAMM holds very diverse arthropod collections and seeks to fill gaps in many areas. The following are areas of particular interest:
  - a) spiders – wet preserved specimens of British species. Ideally the collection should focus on local specimens and include examples of both sexes. Species

new to Devon are also desired. A list detailing gaps in this collection can be supplied on request.

- b) insects – actively seeking specimens of local relevance to fill gaps in the consolidated British collections and as voucher specimens. Species new to Devon and colour variants are of particular interest. Well-provenanced foreign butterflies which fill gaps in the existing collection may be considered.

#### **6.2.5.4 Geology**

(i) The aim of future collecting is to build up reference material with particular emphasis on Devon examples. Good quality material for teaching and handling collections is also sought.

(ii) Areas of particular interest to RAMM in 2014-2019 are:

- a) specimens from the World Heritage coast
- b) specimens, particularly Triassic reptiles, from the Otter Sandstone near Sidmouth and material from other Permian / Triassic sources in the South West (Torbay / Somerset).

#### *Petrology*

(iii) The aim of future petrology collecting is to build up reference material with particular emphasis on Devon examples. Only well-documented significant local material will be collected and this work will be carried out in consultation with museums in the geographical area and those holding related collections.

(iv) There is some scope for the collection of other local igneous rocks to fill parts of the geological history of Devon.

(v) There is scope for building up a systematic collection of sedimentary rocks to illustrate the stratigraphy of the county and link with the local fossil collection.

(vi) There may be a case for acquiring one or more simple, good quality petrological microscopes and thin section (slides) of local rocks for use with visitors.

#### *Mineralogy*

(vii) Additions to the mineralogy collection are likely to be limited to donated material from South West sources rather than direct collection.

(viii) Mineralogical material related to industrial use would be appropriate, including the redevelopment of the Hemerdon Tungsten prospect.

(ix) A good sequence of material to update the collection from the Bovey Tracy ball clay deposits would be useful.

(x) Mineralogy collecting will be carried out in consultation with Royal Cornwall Museum, Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, the Museum of Somerset and Dorset County Museum.

#### *Palaeontology*

(xi) The aim of future palaeontological collecting is to fill gaps in the reference collections, particularly related to material from the World Heritage Coast (in co-operation with other interested Accredited museums).

(xii) Microfossils are important in parts of the Devonian and Carboniferous: Conodonts (tooth-like assemblages now known to belong to an animal), Acritarchs (spores of plants), Ostracods (minute crustaceans). These microfossils are preserved in sedimentary rocks where macrofossils are absent or unsuitable for correlation. The preparation and extraction of these fossils requires

specialist treatment, but local examples, for example from academic sources, would be useful for display purposes.

### *Geology handling collections*

(xiii) In order to build a more extensive Geology handling and loans collection, RAMM will acquire specimens from within Devon to improve the range and quality of well-documented, accessible, scientifically interesting items. Items for the handling collection will not be accessioned.

#### **6.2.5.5 Standards and criteria for Natural History collecting**

- (i) Any new acquisition must comply with current legislation. This includes, but is not limited to:
- CITES - the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
  - Conservation of Habitats and Species Regulations, 2010
  - Human Tissue Act, 2004
  - Misuse of Drugs Act, 1971
  - Protection of Birds Act, 1954
  - Wildlife and Countryside Act, 1981

(ii) Specimens should be identified to species level and herbarium specimens should be mounted.

(iii) Zoology

#### *Vertebrates*

Specimens will usually only be accepted if already prepared as taxidermy, skins, skeletons or preserved in spirit.

- Birds & mammals - all preservation types considered
- Reptiles & amphibians – all preservation types considered.
- Fish – locally relevant skeletal material will be considered.

#### *Invertebrates*

Specimens should be identified to species level and appropriately housed and preserved.

Echinoderms – dried and wet preserved specimens will be considered.

Molluscs – specimens preferably dried, but wet preserved specimens will be considered.

Arthropods – spiders – wet preserved specimens.

- insects – papered (ie. un-set or un-mounted) butterflies and moths will be considered only in exceptional circumstances.

(iv) Geology

Only well-documented, significant local material will be considered for addition.

#### **6.2.5.6 Natural History areas not subject to further collecting in 2014 - 2019**

Some areas of RAMM's natural history collections are not being developed. It is unlikely that RAMM will add to them, except where the acquisition would be of exceptional relevance to RAMM, local people or to the local area. Areas which are not a priority for collecting in 2013-2018 are:

- Fish – prepared as taxidermy, casts or preserved in spirit.
- Marine invertebrates (excluding molluscs and echinoderms) – RAMM does not seek to duplicate the excellent collection held by Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery.
- Microscope slides
- Magic lantern slides, photographs and glass plate negatives depicting natural subjects – will only be accepted if they are of direct relevance to RAMM's collections.

- Publications – will only be considered if particularly old, rare or of direct relevance to RAMM and its collections.
- Notebooks and journals – RAMM will only accept collecting and field notes that directly relate to specimens present in the collection or that relate to one of RAMM's important historic donors. Offers of other biological records will be referred to an appropriate biological records centre.

## **6.2.6 Antiquities**

### **6.2.6.1 Local archaeology**

(i) RAMM will consider acquiring items of non-professionally recovered archaeology. Where archaeologically significant local items are offered, which are not classed as treasure, the Museum may acquire them subject to the circumstances of their recovery. If they have been responsibly recovered, for example accidental finds from back gardens, are well provenanced and the donor has clear title, they may be accepted. In all cases acquisition of such items will be subject to consideration of condition, contextual information and relevance to the collections. Where the Museum wishes to acquire a find classed as treasure (as defined in the 1996 Treasure Act) it will follow the procedures as set out in the Treasure Act Code of Practice (see Treasure Act Code of Practice, paragraph 60).

(ii) RAMM will work with neighbouring museums (Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery, Torquay Museum, Museum of Barnstaple and North Devon) to ensure that collection activity is not duplicated. Where a museum has long-standing collections interest it is recognised that the museum should maintain that collecting practice. For instance, Torquay as a repository for palaeolithic material from caves sites or RAMM as a repository for mesolithic sites of the North Devon coast.

(iii) RAMM does not collect archaeological material from outside Devon.

(iv) Developer funded archaeology (see Appendix B for full details)

RAMM is the coordinating museum for developer funded archaeological archives for the Local Authority areas of Exeter, East Devon, Mid Devon, Teignbridge, plus the eastern half of Dartmoor and the South Hams. (see Appendix B for full list of parishes).

RAMM will no longer seek to hold all of a site archive from a developer funded archaeological excavations from within the collecting area. The museum will work with the planning archaeologist and contracting unit to aid with the formation of a site archive. The time taken by the museum to contribute to the formation of the archive will be charged to developers.

Only artefacts of an exceptional nature will be accessioned into the museum collections. The remaining material will be subject to agreed sampling and disposal strategies and the resulting archive will be placed into deep storage off site. This will be at the expense of the developer. Any artefacts accessioned into RAMM will be subject to a one-off box fee that will be increased on an annual basis to reflect increasing overhead costs and inflation.

RAMM will no longer accept the paperwork associated with a developer funded archaeological excavation. Contracting units will be asked to deposit a digital archive with the Archaeology Data Service hosted by the University of York.

### **6.2.6.2 Architectural fittings**

(i) The Museum strongly discourages the removal of historic architectural fittings from their original buildings. However, in circumstances where such pieces will certainly be removed, or already have been removed, ecclesiastical or secular woodwork with Devon provenances will be acquired by purchase, gift or bequest, subject to their historic importance and with consultation with relevant

local museums outside Exeter. Items relating to Harry Hems and his workshop are of particular interest.

(ii) It is not realistic for RAMM to collect large architectural items owing to storage constraints. If the museum becomes aware of endangered architectural items, the Local Authority Archaeologist and Historic Environment Record will be contacted. Where practicable, attempts will be made to find alternative homes for significant items.

#### **6.2.6.3 Local history**

(i) Only items with a unique local Exeter association or origin will be considered as additions to this collection.

(ii) RAMM does not undertake so-called 'contemporary collecting' - the collecting of a representative sample of contemporary goods and objects in use in Exeter today.

(iii) We will work with other museums in the region to ensure that Devon's unique social history is reflected in museum collections. Torquay Museum has an especially good collection of 18th and 19th century rural Devon items, while Plymouth City Museum and Art Gallery has a large and broad ranging social history collection, including many more contemporary objects. The full network of Devon Museums can be accessed at [www.devonmuseums.net](http://www.devonmuseums.net).

(iv) Large scale industrial history items are not collected because of the lack of special resources needed to care for and store this material. If the Museum becomes aware of endangered industrial history within the local area the relevant archaeological bodies will be contacted e.g. Local Authority Archaeologist and Historic Environment Record, English Heritage.

#### **6.2.6.4 Numismatics**

RAMM will pursue an active policy of acquiring Prehistoric, Roman, medieval and later coins found within the museum's collection area and coins, tokens, medals and paranumismatica issued in Devon. With regard to Anglo-Saxon and Norman pennies of the Devon mints, the intention is to acquire a sample of each die of each mint in as good condition as can be afforded. There will be an emphasis on acquiring rarities, academically interesting pieces and pieces with particular points of interest. For the Exeter Civil War issues, the aim is to acquire an example of each die in as good a condition as can be afforded. There will be consultation with other local museums whenever an opportunity for acquisition arises.

#### **6.2.6.5 Foreign archaeology**

There is no intention of obtaining significant new collections within this area. New acquisitions, however, will be considered if artefacts are known to have come from the major donors of material already held in the collection e.g. Claude Delaval Cobham, Lt. Col. L.A.D. Montague, Dr. N.L. Corkill.

## 6.3 Interdisciplinary collecting

Alongside our principal subject specialisms, RAMM is interested in multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary work. In line with the eclectic character of our public-facing offer, our acquisitions take in contemporary art, digital and new media, user-generated content, social history and handling material, as well as our fundamental specialisms.

### 6.3.1 Social history

RAMM does not have a discrete collections category for social history. However, several of the main collections categories touch upon this field. For example, the Antiquities collection includes considerable local history holdings, the Art collection includes paintings, prints and drawings of local people and the Costume collection includes a substantial quantity of dress worn by a range of Exeter residents.

(i) RAMM's collecting of social history will be limited to items with clear connections to Exeter and Devon in terms of design, production or use by people living or working in Exeter, past or present.

(ii) RAMM will not collect mass-produced items unless they strongly meet one or more of the other points in this Collections Development Policy.

(iii) The objective of collecting social history items in any collections category is to enrich visitor experience (physical or virtual), introduce additional voices and stimulate discussion and new perspectives and to help personalise the making of meaning.

(iv) Social history acquisitions to any collections category must contribute to the exploration of themes, issues, events or people important to the natural and cultural history of Exeter, set within its regional and national context, or the city and the region's connections across the world.

(v) In the case of oral history, material will be acquired with due regard to the codes of practice and ethical guidelines established by the Oral History Society and comparable professional bodies.

(vi) Any social history material added to RAMM's collections will comply with the Accreditation Standard for Museums.

(vii) Archival material unrelated to RAMM's collections will be referred to Devon Heritage Service or other relevant record office.

### 6.3.2 Contemporary art

In recent years, RAMM has been developing a reputation for integrating, exhibiting and commissioning contemporary art. Since 2012 this work has been guided by a Contemporary Art Panel (CAP).

(i) On occasion, RAMM may acquire and, if appropriate accession, contemporary art. Collecting will be informed by the following documents:

- 'Essence of RAMM' (2013)
- 'Framework for programming contemporary art at RAMM' (2013)

(ii) Contemporary art acquisitions must contribute to the exploration of themes, issues, events or people important to the natural and cultural history of Exeter, set within its regional and national context, or the city and the region's connections across the world. Contemporary art acquisitions may also expose museum history and processes and engage in the dynamic between disciplines.

(iii) Methods for acquiring contemporary art may include:

- Purchase, bequest or donation (including donation in lieu of tax)
- Commissioning work
- Acts of repatriation
- National collecting or commissioning schemes – e.g. Art Fund Collect.

(iv) As with other collections categories, any contemporary art acquisitions will be assessed in the context of their needs for display or storage space, ongoing care and maintenance and other potential future costs of acquisition.

(v) Funding will inform the rationale for collecting contemporary art, as investment will be required for ambitious projects to be realised.

### **6.3.3 Handling collections**

(i) RAMM may acquire objects, artefacts and specimens for use in handling activities with audiences and participants. The objective of this collecting is to further RAMM's statement of purpose.

(ii) Handling material must contribute to the exploration of themes, issues, events or people important to the natural and cultural history of Exeter, set within its regional and national context, or the city and the region's connections across the world.

(iii) Methods for collecting handling material must comply with the acquisition procedures described in section 10.

(iv) Material for the handling collection is not accessioned.

(v) Material for the handling collection is documented and managed in accordance with SPECTRUM procedures and standards.

### **6.3.4 User-generated content (UGC)**

(i) On occasion, RAMM may acquire (but not accession) content generated by its users (physical or virtual participants). The objective of this collecting is to enrich visitor experience (physical or virtual), introduce additional voices, stimulate discussion and help personalise the making of meaning.

(ii) The decision to acquire user-generated content will be made at the development phase of any new project.

(iii) Any acquisition of user-generated content will be carried out within resources. Material will be archived in one media format and RAMM makes no commitment to retaining material beyond the natural life of the format in which it is archived.

(iv) Acquisitions of user-generated material must contribute to the exploration of themes, issues, events or people important to the natural and cultural history of Exeter, set within its regional and national context, or the city and the region's connections across the world.

(v) Methods for collecting user-generated material must comply with the acquisition procedures described in section 10.

(vi) Any formally acquired user-generated content will become part of RAMM's archive. It will not be accessioned.

(vii) Archived user-generated content will be managed in accordance with the SCAM Code of Practice on Archives in Museums (2002), the consent of the subject and with due regard to the ethical guidelines established by the Oral History Society where appropriate.

### **6.3.5 Analogue and digital media**

Analogue and digital media are an essential part of museum practice today. For the purposes of this policy, analogue and digital media includes (but is not limited to) film, animation, video, audio, photography and internet-based work.

(i) On occasion, it may be appropriate for RAMM to acquire (but not accession) digital or analogue media content. The objective of collecting here is to broaden audiences and access, enrich visitor experience (physical or virtual), introduce additional voices and stimulate discussion and new perspectives and to help personalise the making of meaning.

(ii) Any acquisition of digital or analogue media content will be carried out within resources. Material will be archived in one media format and RAMM makes no commitment to retaining material beyond the natural life of the format in which it is archived.

(iii) Digital and analogue media acquisitions must contribute to the exploration of themes, issues, events or people important to the natural and cultural history of Exeter, set within its regional and national context, or the city and the region's connections across the world.

(iv) Acquired digital and analogue content should be authentic and distinctive; enriching experience rather than replicating real objects, opening up access rather than providing instruction.

(v) Any digital and analogue acquisitions will become part of RAMM's archive. They will not be accessioned.

(vi) Archived digital and analogue content will be managed in accordance with the SCAM Code of Practice on Archives in Museums (2002) (See Section 14).

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

### **7.1 General principles**

#### **7.1.1 Increasing the public benefit of collections**

Responsible, curatorially-motivated disposal takes place as part of RAMM's long-term collections policy, in order to increase the public benefit derived from the collections. Any decision to dispose of or change the status of an object will be made within the wider framework of this Collections Development Policy.

#### **7.1.2 Disposing ethically**

Any decisions to dispose of an object will be made in line with the Museums Association (MA) Code of Ethics (2008) and MA Disposal Toolkit<sup>13</sup>. Motivation for disposal and method of disposal will be strictly in accordance with clauses 15 (e) and 15 (f) on page 38.

#### **7.1.3 Permissible outcomes of disposal**

Any disposal will be based on clearly expressed and interrogated outcomes. The following outcomes will be permissible:

- To improve access to the item, increasing public enjoyment and engagement.
- To provide better context for the item.
- To enable improved care of the item.
- To enable continued retention of the item within public museum collections or the wider public domain.
- To remove a hazard posed by the item.
- To free up resources to better care for and utilise other parts of the collection for public benefit.

Repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains is a separate field and is addressed in Section 13.

#### **7.1.4 Permissible types of material for disposal**

In order to achieve the outcomes listed above, RAMM may consider the following types of material for potential disposal or transfer:

- Items that fall outside this Collections Development Policy.
- Items for which there is little likelihood of future use within the context of RAMM.
- Items for which RAMM is unable to provide adequate care or curation within reasonable resources.
- Items which duplicate material in RAMM's or other institutions' collections.
- Items which lack adequate provenance or context and where the possibility to acquire provenance or context is limited within reasonable resources.
- Items which pose a threat to health and safety.

The Subject Statements (p33-34) outline the current position and specific themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal for each subject area.

## **7.2 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal: Subject statements**

### **7.2.1 Fine Art**

The Collections Development Plan for Fine Art identifies the following areas for rationalisation:

- Duplicate prints
- Dartmoor photographs
- European ceramics
- Documents (theatre programmes, letters, election posters)
- Publications

### **7.2.2 Decorative Art**

The Collections Development Plan for Decorative Art identifies the following areas for rationalisation:

- Furniture (excluding pieces connected to key RAMM donor Kent Kingdon)
- European ceramics.

### **7.2.3 Costume and Textiles**

The collections development plan for costume and textiles identifies the following areas for rationalisation following further research and review:

- Gloves
- Stockings
- Post-1970 periodicals
- 20th century hairdressing items and cosmetics
- School uniforms.

### **7.2.4 Ethnography**

#### **7.2.4.1. Rationalisation**

The Collections Development Plan for Ethnography identifies the following areas for rationalisation:

- Contemporary souvenirs from North East Africa
- Russian items obtained from the Crimean War
- Items from various European countries
- Two examples of chain mail armour from Korea

Specialist assessments of aspects of the ethnographic collection identify the following areas for potential rationalisation:

- Anklets and bracelets from India, including several duplicates
- Various South East Asian weapons e.g. Malay kris
- Items that are in bad repair and are not good examples of their kind.

#### **7.2.4.2 Repatriation and restitution of objects**

There are unique circumstances where items from the ethnographic collection are returned to source communities. Returns are dealt with on a case by case basis. Legitimate source community representatives, sometimes working with official Government departments for the nation concerned, should contact the museum directly where clear cases for return exist or where initial enquiries may be made.

Repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains is a separate field and is addressed in Section 13.

### **7.2.5 Natural History**

The Collections Development Plan for Natural History identifies the following areas for rationalisation:

- Spirit collection: poorly persevered (often in Phenoxetol), poorly provenanced and irrelevant specimens identified as part of a review of the spirit-preserved collection
- Magic lantern slides (in conjunction with RAMM's Antiquities department)
- Unaccessioned plants with poor data
- Unaccessioned molluscs with poor data
- Poorly provenanced and damaged large crustacea
- Birds' eggs with poor data
- Recent, mass produced publications
- Unaccessioned, poorly provenanced, poor quality or irrelevant geological material.

Specialist assessments of Jurassic fossils with unclear provenance, and others whose geological period or significance was unclear at the time of the preliminary assessment, identify the following areas for potential rationalisation:

- Selected chalk fossils
- Selected corals
- Potten (Bedfordshire) specimens
- Red chalk cretaceous fossils
- Maltese echinoids.

Please refer to consultants' reports for full details and cautionary advice<sup>14</sup>.

### **7.2.6 Antiquities**

The Collections Development Plan for Antiquities identifies the following areas for rationalisation:

- Recent Devon or Exeter archaeological archives with small collections of finds that form typical assemblages
- Transfers of archaeological archives to other bodies such as English Heritage
- Apply sampling/retention strategies to pottery and building materials from larger Roman and later sites in Devon (medium priority)
- Apply sampling/retention strategies to collections of faunal remains from archaeological sites
- Apply sampling/retention strategies to collections of clay pipes from archaeological sites
- Social history, items not relating to Exeter or Devon

## 8. Limitations on collecting

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Accreditation Standard. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

### 8.1. Collecting policies of other museums

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

**Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):**

**A la Ronde** Exmouth, Devon  
**Allhallows Museum** Honiton, Devon  
**Arlington Carriage Museum** Barnstaple, Devon  
**Arlington Court** Barnstaple, Devon  
**Ashburton Museum** Ashburton, Devon  
**Axe Valley Heritage Museum** Seaton, Devon  
**Axminster Museum** Axminster, Devon  
**Branscombe Old Bakery** Seaton, Devon  
**Braunton & District Museum** Braunton, Devon  
**Brixham Heritage Museum** Brixham, Devon  
**Buckfastleigh Museum and the Valient Soldier Heritage Project** Buckfastleigh, Devon  
**Buckland Abbey** Yelverton, Devon  
**Burton Art Gallery & Museum** Bideford, Devon  
**Castle Drogo** Exeter, Devon  
**Coldharbour Mill Working Wool Museum** Cullompton, Devon  
**Coleton Fishacre House & Garden** Dartmouth, Devon  
**Combe Martin Museum** Combe Martin, Devon  
**Cookworthy Museum of Rural Life** Kingsbridge, Devon  
**Crediton Museum & Heritage Centre** Crediton, Devon  
**Dartmoor Prison Museum** Princetown, Devon  
**Dartmouth Museum** Dartmouth, Devon  
**Dawlish Museum** Dawlish, Devon  
**Devonshire Collection of Period Costume** Totnes, Devon  
**Elizabethan House** Plymouth, Devon  
**Exmouth Museum** Exmouth, Devon  
**Fairlynch Arts Centre & Museum** Budleigh Salterton, Devon  
**Finch Foundry** Okehampton, Devon  
**Flete** Ivybridge, Devon  
**Holsworthy Museum** Holsworthy, Devon  
**Ilfracombe Museum** Ilfracombe, Devon  
**Killerton House** Exeter, Devon  
**Knightshayes Court** Tiverton, Devon  
**Lyme Regis Museum** Lyme Regis, Dorset  
**Lyn & Exmoor Museum** Lynton, Devon  
**Markers Cottage** Exeter, Devon  
**Morwellham Quay Open Air Museum** Tavistock, Devon  
**Museum of Barnstaple & North Devon** Barnstaple, Devon  
**Museum of British Surfing** Braunton, Devon  
**Museum of Dartmoor Life** Okehampton, Devon  
**Newton Abbot Town & GWR Museum** Newton Abbot, Devon

**North Devon District Council Museum Service** Barnstaple, Devon  
**North Devon Maritime Museum** Appledore, Devon  
**Overbecks Museum** Salcombe, Devon  
**Plymouth City Museum & Art Gallery** Plymouth, Devon  
**Salcombe Maritime Museum** Salcombe, Devon  
**Saltram House** Plymouth, Devon  
**Sidmouth Museum** Sidmouth, Devon  
**South Devon Railway Museum Trust** Buckfastleigh, Devon  
**South Molton & District Museum** South Molton, Devon  
**Tavistock Museum** Tavistock, Devon  
**Teignmouth and Shaldon Museum & Historical Society** Teignmouth, Devon  
**Thelma Hulbert Gallery** Honiton, Devon  
**Tiverton Museum of Mid Devon Life** Tiverton, Devon  
**Topsham Museum** Exeter, Devon  
**Torquay Museum** Torquay, Devon  
**Torre Abbey (Torbay Council)** Torquay, Devon  
**Totnes Elizabethan House Museum** Totnes, Devon  
**Totnes Fashion and Textile Museum** Totnes, Devon  
**University of Exeter, Bill Douglas Centre** Exeter, Devon

**Specific reference is made to the following records offices and archives:**

**Devon Heritage Services**  
**Plymouth and West Devon Record Office**  
**Somerset Heritage Service**  
**Cornwall Record Office**

## **9. Policy review procedure**

The acquisition and disposal policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. The date when the policy is next due for review is noted on the first page of this policy.

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the acquisition and disposal policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

## **10. Acquisitions not covered by the policy**

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.

## **11. Acquisition procedures**

- a) The museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- b) In particular, the museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).

- c) In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.
- d) So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.
- e) The museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures. In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996.
- f) Any exceptions to the above clauses 11a, 11b, 11.c, or 11.e will only be because the museum is:
  - o acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
  - o acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded
  - o acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin
  - o in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.
  - o In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.
- g) As the museum holds human remains under 100 years old, it will obtain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004.
- h) As the museum holds 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.

## 12. Spoliation

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

### **13. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains**

The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 15a-15d, 15g and 15o/s below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

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

### **14. Management of archives**

As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, its governing body will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (third edition, 2002).

### **15. Disposal procedures**

#### *Disposal preliminaries*

- a. The governing body will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency.
- b. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- c. The museum will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.
- d. When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

#### *Motivation for disposal and method of disposal*

- e. When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 15g-15s will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.
- f. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

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

- g. Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and

other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

### *Responsibility for disposal decision-making*

- h. A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.
- i. Exeter City Council's Head of Service and Portfolio Holder for Economy have delegated decision-making power with regard to disposals. In the event that the Head of Service and Portfolio Holder for Economy have concerns about a proposal to dispose, the decision will be made by the Full Scrutiny Committee of the Council.

### *Use of proceeds of sale*

- j. Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from Arts Council England.
- k. The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

### *Disposal by gift or sale*

- l. Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- m. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's *Museums Journal*, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- n. The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

### *Disposal by exchange*

- o. The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- p. In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or unaccredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 15a-15d and 15g-15h will be followed as will the procedures in paragraphs 15p-15s.
- q. If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- r. If the exchange is proposed with a non-accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will make an announcement in the *Museums Journal* and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- s. Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

### *Documenting disposal*

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

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1. 'Preliminary Collections Assessment: RAMM's Fine Art, Decorative Art and Ethnographic Collections' Claire Gulliver & Amal Khreisheh, 2012, updated with Natural History findings, 2012
  2. Ibid
  3. J Madin, Curator's response to Preliminary Collections Assessment of Foreign Ceramics, 2012
  4. 'Preliminary Collections Assessment' Gulliver/Khreisheh, 2012
  5. 'Review of Shawls and Stoles at RAMM', Meg Andrews, 2013
  6. 'RAMM Collections Review 2012-2013: Somalia', Nicola Stylianou, 2013 and 'RAMM Collections Review: Ethiopia', Nicola Stylianou, 2013
  7. 'Central America: Mexican and Guatemalan Textiles Collection Review', Chloë Sayer, 2013
  8. 'RAMM: India Collection Review', Emma Martin, 2013
  9. Report, Paul Bevan, 2013
  10. 'RAMM Collections Review Report: Assessment criteria design/assessment of Jurassic fossils', Nigel Larkin/Dean Lomax, 2013
  11. 'Exeter Collections Review Fossil Provenance/Review report', Nigel Larkin/Dean Lomax, 2013
  12. The pilot phase of the collections research prospectus is supported by the Esmee Fairbairn Collections Fund
  13. 'Disposal Toolkit: Guidelines for Museums' Museums Association, 2008
  14. 'Exeter Collections Review Fossil Provenance/Review report', Nigel Larkin/Dean Lomax, 2013 and 'RAMM Collections Review Report: Assessment criteria design/assessment of Jurassic fossils', Larkin/Lomax, 2013