

ACQUISITION AND
DISPOSAL POLICY
2005-2008

Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service

CONTENTS

Foreword	3
Introduction	4
Section 1 – Existing collections	
1.1 Historic background to Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service	6
1.2 Current context to Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service	6
1.3 Ceramics	7
1.4 Arts	9
1.5 Natural History	11
1.6 Local History	13
Section 2 – Future collecting	
2.1 Overall areas for development	15
2.2 Ceramics	16
2.3 Arts	17
2.4 Natural History	19
2.5 Local History	20
Section 3 – Time and geographical area	22
Section 4 – Limitations	22
Section 5 – Other museums	22
Section 6 – Policy review procedure	23
Section 7 – Acquisitions not covered by policy	23
Section 8 – Acquisition procedures	23
Section 9 – Spoliation	24
Section 10 – Repatriation and Restitution	24
Section 11 – Management of archives	24
Section 12 – Disposal procedures	25

FOREWORD

The North Staffordshire Potteries are the only area in the UK to be so closely identified with one industry. Ceramic production has shaped the economic life, material culture and the landscape of Stoke-on-Trent in a way that is unique. A tradition of invention and creativity has evolved, against the unpromising backdrop of what Arnold Bennett described as 'a singular scenery of coal dust, potshards, flame and steam'.

This tradition is reflected in the collections of Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service, which offer richness, depth and diversity. The ceramics collection at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery is of national and international significance. The other key collections of arts, local and natural history, together with the branch museums, provide a wider cultural context for understanding and enjoying the heritage and creativity of the region, its industries, natural surroundings and people. Our collections offer a window into a wider world, alive with connectivity and diversity. All the collections have been *Designated* as outstanding.

The collections have developed over the years as a result of the forward-thinking efforts of museum officers, the generosity of many individual donors and the support of strategic funding agencies. We would like to thank all these people for their enthusiastic support and to reaffirm our commitment to build upon our existing strengths to further develop our collections for the future.

Ian Lawley
Head of Museums
2005

Museum: *Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service*

Governing Body: *Stoke-on-Trent City Council*

Date approved by governing body: *11 July 2005*

Date at which policy due for review: *July 2008*

INTRODUCTION

The overall aim of the Acquisition & Disposal Policy is to provide a framework to build on the strengths of our outstanding existing collections. This revision has been shaped by a more holistic approach to collections development across the Service, combined with debate prompted by national documents such as the Museums Association's 'Collections for the Future'.

It is envisaged that the current Policy is an interim document and this is reflected in its three year review period. The intention is to provide a basis for a much wider consultation process to happen concerning our future collecting directions. The vision is to establish a more defined, inclusive and collaborative approach to acquisition and disposal. Key areas identified for development over the next three years include:

- Clarification of interdisciplinary themes across collecting areas
- Greater importance placed on proactive contemporary collecting
- Practical approaches developed to represent diverse communities and faiths in collections
- Pinpointing specific collection areas requiring more rigorous rationalisation

High standards of collection care continue to be at the heart of developing our collections and these are outlined in the Collections Procedural Manual. Generally, items will be collected for the purpose of display, research or study. The Acquisition and Disposal Policy should also be viewed in tandem with the Service Plan for Stoke-on-Trent Museums which links to City Council corporate priorities:

Vibrant City – Thriving Communities

Collections are the basis for a lively and exciting programme of exhibitions, displays and events attracting visitors locally, nationally and internationally

(Generic Learning Outcome: Activity, Behaviour and Progression)

Building Safer and Stronger Communities

Collections inspire pride in the City's achievements and the creativity of its diverse communities and faiths

(Generic Learning Outcome: Enjoyment, Inspiration, Creativity)

Developing our Children and Young People

Collections provide a wealth of resource material for life long learning made accessible through a variety of methods appealing to all ages

(Generic Learning Outcome: Knowledge and Understanding)

Promoting Health and Independence

Collections encourage greater self esteem through involvement of individuals and communities in recording and representing personal histories

(Generic Learning Outcome: Attitudes and Values)

How we manage available resources

Collections maximize existing resources through the generosity of individual donors and grant giving institutions as well as through the development of staff knowledge and expertise

(Generic Learning Outcome: Skills)

*Sarah McHugh and Philippa Tinsley
Collections Development Officers
2005*

1.0 Existing Collections

1.1 Historic background to Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service

- **Designation:** In recognition of its collections of national and international importance, Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service was awarded Designated Status by the Museums & Galleries Commission in 1997. The award applies to all the Service's collections and sites at The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Etruria Industrial Museum and Ford Green Hall.
- **City:** The City of Stoke-on-Trent has a unique history and this is reflected in the development of its collections. Stoke-on-Trent comprises six towns - Tunstall, Burslem, Hanley, Stoke-upon-Trent, Fenton and Longton. During the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, collections developed in each of the six towns. In 1910, Federation saw the administration of the towns and their museums brought under the control of one authority, and in 1925, Stoke-on-Trent achieved the rank of a city. The City is part of 'The Potteries' – a term which refers both to the product and the place. Stoke-on-Trent's unparalleled heritage is founded upon the manufacture of ceramics for a world market and the development of key associated industries including steel and coal mining.
- **Early Museums:** The focus of many of the early museums was to help improve the standard of design in the pottery industry, primarily through the collection of ceramic material. Other strong collections of fine and decorative arts, natural history, archaeology and social history also evolved through generous gifts, bequests and purchases. At the outbreak of the Second World War, all the City's museums closed, with the exception of the Hanley Museum & Art Gallery, and the majority of the collections were put in storage.
- **First Post War Museum:** In a historic move, Stoke-on-Trent became the first authority in Britain to build a post-war museum which opened in 1956. It aimed to be the first phase in an ambitious project to house and display all the previously disparate collections. The second phase of the City Museum & Art Gallery was completed and officially opened by H.R.H. The Prince of Wales on 3rd June 1981. It received the prestigious Museum of the Year Award in 1982.
- **Collecting Policy:** The adoption of a formal collecting policy in 1982 provided a coherent framework for the further development of Stoke-on-Trent's museum collections. Since then, the Museums Service has sought to consolidate the strengths of its existing collections in order to best serve the expectations of its culturally diverse local community and national and international audience. The primary purpose of collecting and preserving material is to offer enjoyment, educational opportunities and information to current and future generations of visitors and other service users.

1.2 Current context to Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service

Today, Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service consists of The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, Gladstone Pottery Museum, Etruria Industrial Museum and Ford Green Hall.

- **The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery:** The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery (formerly 'The City Museum & Art Gallery') is the main multi-disciplinary venue and is the principal repository for the collections. It is an integral part of the Cultural Quarter in Hanley, the City Centre of Stoke-on-Trent.
- **Gladstone Pottery Museum:** Gladstone Pottery Museum is housed in a complex of buildings, the former Gladstone China Works, saved by The Staffordshire Pottery Preservation Trust in 1971. The Museum was brought under Stoke-on-Trent City Council management in 1994. It is a unique site and the last remaining complete factory with workshops, engine house and bottle ovens.

- **Etruria Industrial Museum:** Etruria Industrial Museum is centred on Jesse Shirley's Etruscan Bone and Flint Mill, a Victorian potters millers works with integral machinery, scheduled as an Ancient Monument in 1972. The maintenance and operation of the Mill's machinery is a key part of the interpretation strategy for the site.
- **Ford Green Hall:** Ford Green Hall is a seventeenth century house complete with period garden and eighteenth century dovecote. It was home to the Ford family for almost two centuries. The rooms are richly furnished with original and reproduction textiles, ceramics and furniture according to contemporary inventories.
- **Directorate of Regeneration & Community:** The Museums are part of Stoke-on-Trent City Council's Directorate of Regeneration & Community which: *"will lead and facilitate the development of an inclusive, successful and prosperous city, with an enviable and growing quality of life supported by high quality, cultural, economic development and information services for all, where people want to invest, work, live and visit"*.
- **Flagship Service:** Through its Museums Service, the City owns and preserves for future generations over 650,000 individual objects. Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service is renowned for high standards of collections care, a strong commitment to access and imaginative interpretation. Recognised as a beacon museum service, it is part of the West Midlands Hub.
- **Collections:** The central focus of the Service is its internationally significant holdings of ceramics but it also includes outstanding collections broadly categorized as arts, natural history and local history. Each collection is rich and diverse and can stand alone in importance. The collections as a whole, however, tell the unique story of Stoke-on-Trent, its industries, natural surroundings and its people, and as such are the pride of the City and an invaluable asset.

1.3 Ceramics

Historic background to collections

The origins of the ceramics collection go back to 1835 when the Mechanics' Institute in Hanley received a gift of pottery from the manufacturer and collector, Enoch Wood. The aim of the Institute was to create *"a depot of the best specimens of porcelain manufacture, obtained from all countries where excellence could be found"*. By 1847, the town of Stoke-upon-Trent also had a museum, The Athenaeum, whose purpose was to *"create a museum containing specimens illustrative of the rise, progress and present position of the Potters' Art"*.

The first museum to be publicly funded was the Wedgwood Institute in Burslem which opened in 1869 and was dedicated to the *"industry, genius and virtue"* of Josiah Wedgwood. Its first collections were of 18th century wares attributed to Wedgwood and his contemporaries.

During the course of the evolution of the six towns into the City of Stoke-on-Trent, these museums and other smaller ceramic collections were amalgamated to form the foundation for future collecting.

Summary

Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service houses the finest collection of Staffordshire ceramics anywhere in the world, reflecting the City's heritage as the centre of the English ceramics industry. It also includes the most comprehensive collection of British 20th century studio ceramics. The ceramics

collection is recognised as the most important of the collections held by Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service. It is central to a visitor's perception of the Potteries' products and skills as well as engendering pride and a sense of place.

Existing strengths:

- **Industrial pottery:** The largest and most comprehensive collection of 18th century to present-day industrial pottery in the country. This is a unique collection since it does not concentrate purely on design-led works but includes typical wares by a wide variety of manufacturers in Staffordshire.
- **Heavy industrial ceramics:** Gladstone Pottery Museum - the most complete surviving example of a Victorian Pottery factory – houses a particularly strong collection of heavy industrial ceramics. The Museum focuses on how people made pottery in the days of coal fired bottle ovens. Representative examples of the products of the companies which manufactured on this site are collected. There are 4,000 photographs of pottery workers and interior pottery factory views. The major collection of ceramic sanitary ware was recently re-displayed in the new gallery, "Flushed with Pride".
- **Ceramic century archive:** The establishment of the Ceramic Century archive has been an important recent development. This is a video oral history collection of in depth interviews with local people about their working lives in the twentieth century.
- **20th – 21st Century studio pottery:** The largest collection of studio pottery in the country. The Bergen Collection of Pioneer Studio Pottery, the Pinchen Collection and the Lindridge Collection of post-war studio pottery are particular highlights. There is also a good collection of works by Alan Caiger-Smith.
- **Contemporary ceramics:** The nationally significant Contemporary Art Society Special Collection has developed since 1999 through lottery funding from Arts Council England. It focuses on groundbreaking artists whose work challenges traditional divisions between ceramics, fine art and textiles with relevance to existing collection strengths. It includes examples by Grayson Perry, Richard Slee and Carol McNicoll.
- **Minton wares:** Recent major acquisitions have enhanced the collection of important exhibition pieces, including examples from the former Minton Museum. Significant international designers are represented including August Pugin, Louis Solon, Joseph Arnoux and Christopher Dresser. It is complemented by an archive of designs by Louis Solon.
- **Figures:** A large and representative collection of figures from the mid 18th to mid 20th century with many factories covered. The Elizabeth Marianne Wood Collection of 18th and 19th century figures and the Pugh Collection of Victorian Staffordshire portrait figures are particularly significant, as are the Keiler Collection of Cow-Creamers and the Davies Collection of Frog Mugs. There is also the Sheldon gift of post-war Royal Doulton figures.
- **Printed pottery:** Blue and full-colour printed wares from the 19th century, forming the best collections of multi-coloured printed wares in the country.

- **Tiles:** The main focus of the collection is over 1000 industrially made, mass produced, ceramic floor and wall tiles, reflecting the heyday of tile making in Stoke-on-Trent from 1840 -1910. There are also important examples from the pre and post Victorian era including examples by August Pugin, Christopher Dresser and John Moyr Smith. A substantial part of the collection is on show in the new Tile Gallery at Gladstone Pottery Museum.
- **Early 19th century porcelain:** Mason, New Hall, Ridgway and many other manufacturers.
- **18th century stonewares:** The salt-glazed stoneware collection acquired from descendants of the Wood family is a highly important group as it is strongly associated with the factory Wedgwood family of the Big House Burslem.
- **18th century lead-glazed wares:** Predominantly the Hulme and Carllich Collections supported by other smaller holdings
- **17th and 18th century slipwares:** A fine collection of extant pieces, including inscribed examples with dates, supported by excavated wares from the City. One of the key works, and iconic symbol for The Potteries Museum & Art Gallery, is the rare late 17th century Staffordshire slipware owl jug.
- **Near Eastern earthenwares:** An important collection of wares from the 8th century onwards.
- **Italian maiolica:** The fourth best collection in the country after the Victoria & Albert Museum, British Museum and Ashmolean Museum, Oxford.
- **Other significant collections:** These include Far Eastern porcelains and stonewares, South American earthenwares, Mediterranean antiquities, wares produced by the Stoke-on-Trent Schools of Art, 19th century earthenwares, early 20th century crested wares, 19th century lusted wares, art pottery, and national and local commemorative wares from the 18th to 21st centuries.

1.4 Arts

Historic background to collections

In comparison to similar cities, the fine art collection in Stoke-on-Trent was late in developing. The major impetus for developing an art collection happened in 1926, when Dr. John Russell gave his collection of impressionistic paintings to the City on condition that it built an Art Gallery. The Russell Art Gallery opened in 1927 in two rooms adjoining Hanley Museum. Subsequently, Hanley became the centre for temporary art exhibitions in the Potteries. During the later years of the twentieth century, the City Museum & Art Gallery established itself as a key regional arts venue with 'Glory of the Garden' funding. Its lively programme of exhibitions and residencies continues to influence contemporary arts collecting.

Fine art, textiles and other non ceramic decorative art holdings are defined by the generosity of individual donors for example Dr. W. D Wilkins' bequest of prints, jades and ivories in 1964. A key costume collection is Lady Bagot's gift of over 1000 items of clothes, accessories and jewellery.

Summary

Initially developing in a fragmentary fashion, the arts collections have established an overall sense of coherence and direction through a more interdisciplinary, thematic approach. Within the collection as a whole are smaller collections and individual works of national importance. There is a strong emphasis on supporting and interpreting contemporary practitioners through collecting and making links with historical traditions.

Existing strengths:

- **Contemporary art and craft:** The nationally significant Contemporary Art Society Special Collection has developed since 1999 through lottery funding from Arts Council England. It focuses on groundbreaking artists whose work challenges traditional divisions between art and craft with relevance to existing collection strengths. It includes examples by Grayson Perry, Gavin Turk and Jacqui Poncelet.
- **20th century british painting:** Key movements and influences are represented in this area:
 - French influenced early twentieth century painting including Slade School artists and the Scottish Colourists.
 - Urban and industrial painting including the Camden Town School
 - British Surrealists from Conroy Maddox to Eileen Agar.
 - Works given by the War Artists' Advisory Committee.
- **Prints:** One of the key areas of the collection, the prints provide a wider international and historical perspective to the twentieth century British paintings. The print collection covers European and Japanese printmakers from the sixteenth century to the present day. A particular highlight is the complete series of Francisco de Goya's 'Los Proverbos'. Areas well represented include:
 - Nineteenth century French prints including works by Eduard Manet, Toulouse Lautrec and Degas
 - Nineteenth century Japanese woodcuts
 - British twentieth century prints including works by Henry Moore, Laura Knight, Eric Gill and James Whistler
- **Local artists & designers:** Historical and contemporary work by local, national and international artists connected with North Staffordshire and its related industries. There is a strong collection of pictures by pottery designers such as Grete Marks and Gordon Forsyth. Contemporary artists include Terry Shave and Stephen Boyd.
- **Local scenes by visiting artists:** Depictions of the changing local landscape by visiting artists from the eighteenth century to the present day. Examples include works by John Constable, Michael Aryton and Julian Trevelyan.
- **Watercolours & drawings:** The collection charts the development of British watercolour painting from the 18th century to the present day. It includes works by JMW Turner, Samuel Palmer, Francis Towne and David Jones.
- **Designs and illustrations:** This area includes designs linked to the ceramics collection such as the Louis Solon drawings collection. The major collection of architectural drawings by Sir Charles Barry and others of the Trentham Hall Estate, Staffordshire, is of national significance.
- **Sculpture:** This collection is small and mainly late nineteenth and early twentieth century British. It contains a selection of major pieces including Rodin's 'Eternal Spring', Alfred Gilbert's 'Comedy and Tragedy' and portrait busts by Jacob Epstein.
- **Costume and textiles:** A regionally important collection, the costume and textiles date from the 15th century to the present day. Particular strengths of the collection include:
 - Bagot Collection of clothes, accessories and jewellery worn by Lord and Lady Bagot dating from the 1940s to the 1970s and including Bagot family ceremonial and court dress from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries
 - Rawlence Collection of European textiles and lace dating from the 16th to the 18th centuries

- Dolls from the Young Collection encompassing early to mid 20th century costume dolls from around the world
 - New Victoria Theatre Collection of mainly female dress dating from the late 19th to the 1960s
 - Significant examples of work by contemporary makers such as Wendy Ramshaw and Zandra Rhodes
 - Documentary evidence - photographs, dressmaking and knitting patterns brochures and advertising material and other ephemera connected with costumes and textiles
- **Furniture:** select in number but wide-ranging, previously acquired from past collections such as the Arnold Bennett Museum. Some pieces are complementary to the history of Ford Green Hall.
 - **Glass and metalware:** the glass holdings comprise a small representative collection of mainly English glassware dating from the 18th century to the present day. The metalware is mainly of local significance but also includes the Keiler collection of silver cow creamers linked to the ceramics collection.
 - **Far Eastern Collection:** Mainly given to the City via the WD Wilkins Bequest. It consists of around 100 items of Japanese jade and ivory and a selection of nineteenth century Japanese woodcuts.

1.5 Natural History

Historic background to collections

The natural history collections of plants, animals, rocks and fossils have evolved from those made by members of the North Staffordshire Field Club (NSFC), established in 1865, and the collections held at the Stoke-upon-Trent Athenaeum, founded in 1846. The NSFC collections formed the basis of the North Staffordshire Natural History Museum which opened in 1908. At the opening of the Museum it was noted that:

“The Committee (of the North Staffordshire Field Club) also came to the wise decision that the museum should mainly comprise exhibits relative to Staffordshire, and that it should be made as representative as possible of the flora, fauna, and geology of the County. As will be seen, this decision has been adhered to, and there is every promise that in course of time the various collections will represent very adequately a County which is rich in natural history treasures.”

Over the years this proclamation has been adhered to and further material has been acquired primarily by field collection by local geologists and naturalists, and also by purchase, gift, exchange or bequest.

Summary

The collections are of regional significance and provide evidence of the geology, flora and fauna of the Stoke-on-Trent catchment area and the Staffordshire county area. Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service houses the most comprehensive collection of Staffordshire natural history material anywhere in the world. The collections as a mass are significant rather than individual items being stars. Changes in the distribution of species over time, possibly reflecting environmental conditions, can be made as there has been a concentration on collecting a significant number of local species over the years. Some non-local material has also been acquired to provide typical examples on a national basis for comparison with the local items, together with a smaller amount of exotic material.

Existing strengths:

- **Botanical collections:** There are around 15,000 plant and fungi specimens. Significant local specimens (voucher material) have proved relevant to the proposed publication of a new 'Flora' for Staffordshire and a distribution Atlas for fungi. The oldest local specimens date back to 1839 and there are several examples of a hybrid bilberry, a species reputedly first identified locally by Charles Darwin when he resided in the Maer Hills area whilst courting his cousin, Emma Wedgwood. Significant collections include:
 - Eric S. Eedes collection of 6,000 flowering plants and ferns (mainly Staffordshire)
 - Henry P. Reader collection of 2,800 flowering plants and ferns (mainly Staffordshire)
- **Geological collections:** There are around 12,000 rocks, minerals and fossils. This area contains good and comprehensive coverage of the fossils associated with the local Coal Measure horizons. Geologically speaking, more recent finds include an auroch (ancient cow) skull found during excavations at Etruria station in 1877, and part of a mammoth tusk from Fenton. Significant collections include:
 - John Ward collection of 800 carboniferous coal measures – fishes (mainly Stoke-on-Trent)
 - British Coal Geological Services Collection of 400 Carboniferous Coal Measures – rocks and fossils (mainly Staffordshire)
 - John T. Wattison collection of 100 Carboniferous Limestone – fossils (Astbury, Cheshire)
 - William A.S. Sarjeant collection of 1000 minerals (North Midlands)
- **Zoology collections:** There are over 100,000 animal specimens, the majority of which are species that are found in and around the region. They cover most of the animal kingdom from tiny invertebrates to larger mammals and provide accurate information for publications such as local distribution atlases. Unexpected additions to the local wildlife include red-necked wallaby study skins from a colony breeding in the Staffordshire Moorlands in the late 20th century, and a virginian opossum found in Oakamoor in 2001. Significant collections include:
 - Maurice Waterhouse collection of 3,000 beetles (mainly Staffordshire)
 - C.E. Stott collection of 21,000 beetles (national – an important reference collection)
 - Philip F. Dutton collection of 5,000 bird eggs (mainly Staffordshire, some foreign exchanges)
 - Richard G. Warren collection of 8,000 butterflies and moths (mainly Staffordshire)
 - Maurice Waterhouse collection of 2,500 flies (mainly Staffordshire)
 - James Edwards collection of 4,000 flies (mainly Staffordshire)
 - Maurice Waterhouse collection of 1,500 hymenopterans (mainly Staffordshire)
 - William Hill collection of 3,000 land and freshwater snails (mainly Staffordshire)
 - John R.B. Masefield collection of 11,000 land and freshwater snails (mainly Staffordshire, some of national significance).
- **Environmental recording:** The Staffordshire Ecological Record is a partnership between the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust, Staffordshire County Council and Stoke-on-Trent City Council to record biodiversity and geodiversity data. The role of the Museums Service is to act as a repository for important specimens found in the county and as an archive for primary data. The provision of continuing to make specimen data electronically accessible is a significant contribution to the historical and reconfirmable information available.

The Service also works closely with the City's Environmental Team to help promote local geology and wildlife issues.

1.6 Local History

Historic background to collections

The main sources of archaeological material have been excavations by both amateur societies (including the Museum Archaeological Society) and professional field-units. Much of the material entering the collection has been found by the City Council's Field Unit, which has been involved in a long-term research excavation at Hulton Abbey, and undertakes watching briefs and evaluations throughout Stoke-on-Trent and the surrounding area. Major additions to the collection have occurred as a result of transfers from other repositories, including Staffordshire County Council, Stafford Borough Council and the private Museum at Denstone College.

Initially, Ford Green Hall started as a display of 'Folk-life' artefacts. Collecting social history material began to happen seriously and in a more focussed manner from the 1970s onwards.

Summary

The Local History collection promotes a strong sense of identity and place, inspiring pride in the City as well as celebrating the creativity and achievements of its people.

Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service is the principal repository for archaeological material from the whole of the Staffordshire county area, and recognised as such by English Heritage. The collection includes significant finds of post-medieval ceramics from the sites of former local pottery manufactories, generating an extensive body of material which complements the museum's ceramic collections.

In recent years, a number of 'Treasure' items of national importance have been collected. These artefacts have been acquired under the legislation of the Treasure Act (1996, revised 2002).

A wide range of material reflecting the cultural, social and economic life of the people of Stoke-on-Trent is included in the collection. Much of it is of 19th and 20th century in origin, with one or two earlier objects. Contemporary items from the 21st century are also collected.

Existing strengths:

- **Spitfire:** The Mark XVI model, representing locally-born R.J. Mitchell's triumph of aircraft design and a cultural icon for the City.
- **Photographic collection:** A large collection of photographs, transparencies and glass plates, mainly representing views of Staffordshire, local industries and portraits of local people. It includes the Blake collection of glass plates of late 19th to early 20th century Staffordshire views.
- **20th century community history:** This includes material reflecting the everyday life of Stoke-on-Trent families in the latter part of the 20th century. Particular themes well represented include:
 - *Community life* material relating to customs and beliefs, social, industrial and political organisations, local government, public services, amenities, entertainment, popular culture and defence.

- *Domestic and family life* artefacts including household fittings, furnishings and equipment relating to heating, lighting, sanitation, cleaning and maintenance. Material relating to the preparation and consumption of food, hobbies and pastimes.
 - *Personal life* including personal records, mementoes and memorials, clothing, accessories and biographical material relating to named individuals.
 - *Working life* including material relating to any working activity undertaken in The Potteries, including trades, crafts, extractive and manufacturing industries, retail distribution, professions, transport and services, and ancillary activities.
- **Arnold Bennett collection:** This collection includes the papers, diaries, letters and ephemera associated with the writer. There are also a collection of watercolours by Arnold Bennett in the arts collection.
 - **Transport memorabilia:** The North Staffordshire Railway Collection includes postcards, tickets and reminiscences from former railway workers. There is also material relating to the Potteries Motor Traction Company and a collection of tram ephemera. A key object is Oliver Lodge's igniter – a major invention in the history and development of the internal combustion engine.
 - **Industrial history collection:** Machinery, tools and equipment relating to the pottery industry and associated trades have been collected. The majority of collections at Etruria Industrial Museum are on long term loan from Jesse Shirley.
 - **Post-medieval ceramics:** This includes excavated pottery produced in Stoke-on-Trent - an extremely important resource in the study of the development of the region's ceramic industry.
 - **Roman artefacts:** This includes the Lightwood Hoard and Trent Vale pottery.
 - **Iron age gold torcs:** A goldsmith's hoard found near Alrewas, with examples of twisting/torquing gold which is unique in this country.
 - **Stafford late Saxon pottery:** One metric tonne of 10th to 11th century pottery made in Stafford and traded as far as Dublin.
 - **Bronze age sword:** Two joining fragments of the same 3000-year-old sword from two separate hilltops in Stoke-on-Trent and as such a unique find.
 - **Pre-historic to medieval treasure items:** This area includes a Bronze Age gold bracelet; Roman Britain silver jewellery; Roman Britain coins; a rare 11th century German gold brooch and a 13th-14th century personalized silver seal matrix.

2. Criteria Governing Future Collecting Policy, Including The Subjects Or Themes For Collecting

2.1 Overall Areas for Development

- **Consultation:** To implement a much wider programme of consultation over the next three years concerning Stoke-on-Trent Museums Service's Acquisition and Disposal Policy involving:
 - West Midlands Hub Museums
 - Institutions regionally, nationally and internationally with comparable collections and collecting area, for example utilizing links created through the Ceramic Specialist Network, the work of the Ceramic Development Officer and the Crafts Curators Forum
 - Cultural advisory and grant-giving bodies
 - Local representatives concerned with Cultural Development, Tourism, Regeneration, Education and Social Inclusion
- **Focus:** In tandem with the consultation process, to undertake a collections mapping exercise over the next five years to specify the key areas of strengths, weaknesses, cross disciplinary links as well as synergies with comparable collections and institutions. To implement an action plan to maximize collection strengths and address areas of weakness.
- **Contemporary Collecting:** To increase opportunities for supporting the creativity of artists and communities. To take a proactive and pragmatic approach to representing the current cultural and environmental development of the region for the future. To explore ways of continuing important projects such as the Contemporary Art Society Special Collection Scheme acquired with lottery funding from Arts Council England.
- **Inclusive Collecting:** Over the next three years, to implement a practical programme identifying and targeting the area's diverse communities and faiths in order to develop a more representative approach to collecting. To look at ways of collaborating more closely with other City Council staff as well as outreach projects undertaken through Renaissance in the Regions in order to achieve this goal.
- **Contextual Collections:** To place increased emphasis on the importance of collecting, recording and giving access to contextual material in line with requirements outlined in the Freedom of Information Act. This incorporates photographic and new media records, working drawings, manufacturing methods as well as written and oral testimonies surrounding objects, their collection history and the collectors themselves. To liaise closely with the City Archives over the collection and care of archival material.

- **Rationalisation:** To clarify areas where active collecting will discontinue and activate a programme of loans, re-housing of material and selected dispersals while stringently maintaining the guidelines outlined in point 12. To explore, in conjunction with the development of the Service-wide ICT strategy, the potential uses of new technology in aiding rationalization of collections and collecting. To link with the development of other non-accessioned resources such as objects for handling and display.

2.2 Ceramics

Collecting Aims

To concentrate resources on material from the Staffordshire Pottery industry

To develop a comparative collection enabling study and interpretation of Staffordshire material within a wider national and international context

To support contemporary practitioners.

Collecting Priorities

In all cases, priority will be given to marked or attributable pieces with a known provenance.

Material relating to the Staffordshire Pottery Industry

The majority of the Ceramics Collection is based on post-mediaeval factory-produced material from Staffordshire. There are some areas in which the collection is particularly strong, for example 18th-century earthenwares and stonewares. The opportunity should be taken to enhance these areas with exceptional pieces.

Although the present holdings are extensive there are some areas which are seriously under-represented, especially the nineteenth-century earthenwares. A positive effort will be made to identify those areas and to acquire items which will fill the gaps. Material will be collected relating to the displays at Gladstone Pottery Museum.

Supporting the Staffordshire Collection with other British material

Staffordshire-type wares were also produced in other parts of Britain. The points of similarity and difference between the different types are useful for comparative purposes and help to put the local wares and their development into context so that they can be studied effectively.

This aspect of the collection has not been fully developed, particularly with regard to non-Staffordshire porcelains, resulting in an under-emphasis of the contribution of other British production centres. A selective but positive acquisition policy to overcome obvious omissions will ensure that the collection is not only a centre of excellence for North Staffordshire ceramics but is also one of significance for the wider study of post-medieval British ceramics.

Twentieth Century Studio Pottery Collection

The Service has one of the largest collections of British studio pottery in the country, with particular strengths in studio pioneers and contemporary potters. The Service will continue developing and enhancing this pre-eminent collection.

Contemporary Collecting

The Service has an established reputation for its contemporary collecting in both industrial and studio wares. This will be maintained in conjunction with developing projects such as the Stoke-on-Trent Ceramics Festival and the continuation of works related to the Contemporary Art Society Special Collection Scheme.

Consolidating the Existing World Collections

The Service's international collections are reasonably strong in early Far- and Middle-Eastern wares. There are good examples of Italian Maiolica and Meso-American pottery, and small collections of 18th century European porcelain and stoneware. All of these types are relevant to the development of the local industry, which was influenced by a variety of geographic and historical traditions.

In order to give an accurate view of the British ceramic industry in its true context it is necessary to make reference to comparative and contrasting ceramic traditions. It is desirable to acquire relevant examples which would help to consolidate the Ceramics Collection.

Loans

In addition the Ceramics Collection currently has a few loan collections on deposit. Many of these are collections of specific types of material brought together as research or study collections by significant collectors, which directly relate to the Museum's own collections. Previously a number of Godden's collections have been purchased by the Museum. It is hoped to acquire these groups of material should they become available.

Archival

The acquisition of archive material is important and documentary evidence relating specifically to ceramic history is acquired and made available by a variety of media, including the digitisation of unique or fragile material.

2.3 Arts

Aims

To acquire art in all media relating to the history and future development of Stoke-on-Trent and provide a national context to the changing face of the landscape

To develop the strengths of the existing resources of national and international work

To support contemporary artists and makers

To enhance cross disciplinary links

Collecting Priorities

Contemporary Local and Regional Arts

Collecting in this field has slowed down significantly in recent years. It is a priority to re-invigorate this area, actively seeking opportunities to purchase and commission significant works by local and regional artists and makers and artists' groups. It is also important to acquire works linked to key milestones in the City's development, capturing the changing local environment, its diverse communities and industries as well as highlighting the public art programme.

Changing Face of the Landscape

To acquire historical and contemporary works reflecting the impact of industrialization and environmental issues on the landscape. Works will complement and provide a wider national and international context to the collection of locally-based material relating to greening the City.

Historical Works with Relevance to Stoke-on-Trent

To acquire works by key local practitioners not already represented in the Arts Collection, as well as enhancing the depth of material by artists and makers already collected. To continue to collect significant examples of historical works relating to the changing local environment, its diverse communities and industries. In particular the aim is to enhance the collection of material and work by artists and designers with links to the Pottery Industry. To photographically record works relevant to this area but not acquired.

Material will be collected relating to the displays at the Branch Museums.

Contemporary and Historical Costume and Textiles

To take a much more rigorous approach to an area which has developed in a piecemeal fashion. In the main, historical material will only be collected if it is accompanied by contextual information making it regionally significant.

There is a need to take a more proactive approach to representing contemporary material without duplicating other museum collections or compromising storage facilities. Contemporary costume and textiles should be of particular relevance to Stoke-on-Trent. It is an aim to represent advancements in the developments of new materials and techniques as well as the influence of the culture of recycling material on costume.

It is a key priority to collect material representative of the diverse communities and faith in the region.

Recording material digitally and photographically will be an important tool in this area.

Print Collection

To continue to develop this collection as an important resource for the study and enjoyment of printmaking techniques as well as providing a wider European context to the history of art. To collect prints by artists represented in other areas of the collections.

20th Century Art and Craft

To build on the strengths of this collection of mainly British work by enhancing the scope of material by artists, makers, schools and movements already represented.

Contemporary Art and Craft

To collect innovative, challenging work of national and international significance which interacts with the strengths and traditions of the existing art and non-art collections in the Service. To enhance the works purchased through the Contemporary Art Society Special Collection Scheme by representing artists' work in depth including collecting contextual material such as initial sketches and designs. To liaise with comparable museums and galleries to avoid duplicating collections.

2.4 Natural History

Aims

To continue to acquire specimens originating from the Stoke-on-Trent catchment area and the county of Staffordshire

To develop the general resource collection to allow a meaningful comparison and interpretation of local material within the context of the Natural World as a whole.

Priorities

Local Material

Subject to nature conservation interests, the Service will continue to collect all forms of evidence of local geology, flora and fauna for display, study, reference and educational purposes. Material is acquired primarily by gift or bequest from local geologists and naturalists, and is supplemented by purchase or exchange. Specific priority areas include:

- Stoke-on-Trent and surrounding area biological and geological specimens and associated ephemera to build on the existing strengths of the Natural History collections.
- **Voucher** specimens of new and important reference material from Staffordshire where legal and nature conservation interests permit
- Specimens to complement existing collection
- Collecting of contemporary specimens needs to be encouraged to maintain the overall historical record of the collection

Non-local British Material

Whilst concentrating on *local* material, the general resource collections should be considered as regional and national in scope. Typical examples of the country's geology, flora and fauna is occasionally acquired to compare with *local* material and to complement existing collections.

International Material

The existing collections contain a small amount of non-British material and this will only be added to for specific display or educational purposes. Examples of exotic material brought into the local area, such as building stones or foreign insects in packaging, may be retained for comparative purposes.

Contextual Data

Data with Natural History specimens needs to be explicit in terms of 'what, where, when and who for'.

It is a priority to get more information about significant collectors - biographies, scientific articles etc - and objects related to those collectors – for instance medals awarded - collected in partnership with Local History.

Rationalisation

There is the potential to transfer duplicate material in existing collections from outside the current collecting area back to where they were collected (mainly herbarium specimens).

Links

Good working relationships with neighbouring museums is being fostered by the West Midlands Natural Sciences Curators Group which provides a forum for discussion about the overview of collecting in the region. On a county level, work with the Staffordshire Wildlife Trust and the Staffordshire Ecological Record partnership benefits the collections in a two-way exchange of information. Within the City, there are good links with the Environment Team through the Natural Heritage Strategy to promote geology and wildlife locally. The active liaison with local single interest groups, such as the North Staffordshire Group of the Geologists' Association, Staffordshire Moth Group and the Staffordshire Flora Group, provides the Service and collections with specific expertise to call upon if required.

2.5 Local History

Aims

To act as the principal repository for archaeological material from the whole of the Staffordshire county area.

To record and preserve material reflecting the history and development of the north Staffordshire area and the lives of the people who make up its communities.

To document and illustrate the diversity of life within the local community.

Excavated Archaeological Material

Excavated material will only be accepted if it has been obtained in a manner which conforms to the standards specified in the agreed ***Conditions for the Acceptance of Archaeological Material from Excavations and Fieldwork***. Material must also be accompanied by the appropriate documentation. The *Conditions* also specify sums of money which should accompany finds and documentation excavation to provide for storage and curation costs. This procedure is in line with the Museum and Galleries Commission's ***Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections, 1992***

The archival documentation accompanying the material from an excavation will be collected as an essential part of the archaeological record. Where possible, this will comprise both the original records and a working copy; a second copy of the archive should be deposited elsewhere, preferably in the National Monuments record.

Material finds retained for long-term storage should be relevant to the interpretation of a site. In some cases it will be necessary to be selective in deciding what should be retained. This issue is addressed in the departmental ***Guidelines for the Preparation and Presentation of Archaeological Archives***, which accords with the recommendations of the Society of Museum Archaeologists' document ***Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Collections, 1993***.

Treasure items:

Items of Treasure, identified as such as part of the Portable Antiquities Scheme, will be acquired. Acquiring treasure depends on chance discovery of precious personal artefacts. Close co-operation will take place with other relevant national and non-national museums over finds. In particular cases, the appropriateness of joint acquisitions will be explored.

Casual finds of artefacts:

Archaeological material that has not been recovered from an excavation or identified as Treasure will be collected. Artefacts will be acquired for display, research or study.

Duplication of material will be avoided

Non-Local Material:

Items that have been found beyond the county boundary will not normally be collected. In the case of a diverse collection assembled by a local person, regardless of place of origin, a separate decision will be made, weighing the advantages of maintaining the integrity of the collection against the benefits of splitting the collection between relevant museums, according to the origins of the material.

Social History

Material collected may include objects, documentary records, plans and drawings, ephemera, photographs, videos, film and tape. The use of photography to document rapidly changing aspects of local life and the environment will be increasingly important in the area of contemporary collecting. Where possible, documentary and pictorial records will be supplemented with taped oral testimonies and video taped recordings. Specific priorities are:

- To collect as wide a range of material as possible in order to provide a comprehensive record of the lives, struggles and achievements of all the people of the Potteries. Emphasis is to be given to groups within the community that have previously been marginalised or unrepresented.
- To collect contemporary material documenting the present for the future. To link with outreach projects.
- To collect supplementary material relating to objects, for instance photographs of the original owner or place of use.

Appropriate material will be collected for display at Etruria Industrial Museum. Objects collected will include tools, machinery and equipment associated with Bone and Flint Milling, and other canal-side crafts, trades and industries. Canal related material will also be collected for future displays as the site develops.

The use of historical machinery on site for demonstrations necessitates that parts will in time become worn and may need to be replaced. Although this is standard practice in an industrial works, it presents an ethical problem in the museum context. Accordingly, the replacement of any part must be scrupulously recorded and the piece removed preserved.

Firearms

In most circumstances, firearms will not be collected unless there is a significant local connection.

3. Period of time and/or geographical area to which collecting relates

Ceramics collections range from antiquities to present-day objects with priority given to material from the post-medieval period. Collecting is international in scope with emphasis given to British material and in particular artefacts relating to Staffordshire.

Arts collections range from 16th century artefacts to contemporary works. Collecting is regional and national in scope with an emphasis on collecting works relating to Staffordshire and to a lesser extent the immediate surrounding counties.

Natural History collections range from artefacts from 600 million years ago to the present day. Natural History mainly collects specimens with associated data from the catchment area of Stoke-on-Trent and the County of Staffordshire; traditionally the collections are based in this area and the Service is the principal body collecting in this locality.

When a collection of material including items from another area is offered, a decision is taken as to whether to retain it as an entity or forward material to other institutions in the relevant areas; the collector's wishes will be paramount. Account is taken of localities in adjoining counties as geological and natural area boundaries do not coincide with the administrative boundaries.

Local History collections range from the Palaeolithic to the present day. Archaeological material is collected from sites within the post-1974 county boundaries of Staffordshire. The Service is the principal repository for archaeological material for the whole county of Staffordshire, and is recognised as such by English Heritage, Staffordshire County Council and Stafford Borough Council. Community history material primarily relates to Stoke-on-Trent and the wider North Staffordshire region. Existing material mainly dates from the middle of the eighteenth century until the present day; this does not preclude collecting earlier material in the future.

4. Limitations on collecting

The Service 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 inadequate staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

5. Collecting policies of other museums

The Service 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 specialisms, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources. *If gifts, bequests or purchases are offered that are not considered appropriate for acquisition by the Service but deserve preservation, the relevant Collections Officer will pass on details to other appropriate institutions. All records concerning acquisitions offered, whether accepted or rejected, will be kept on file centrally within the Collections Development Team, available for annual audit checks.*

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

The West Midlands Hub Museums
The British Museum
V&A
The Wedgwood Museum
The Spode Museum
Staffordshire Arts and Museum Service
Borough Museum & Art Gallery, Newcastle-under-Lyme
Buxton Museum & Art Gallery
Derby Museum & Art Gallery
Churnet Valley Railway Museum, Cheddleton

Consultation, loan agreements and joint acquisition programmes will be explored where appropriate.

6. 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 above.

The Regional Agency / Museum Council / CyMAL 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.

7. 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.

8. Acquisition procedures

Collections Officers will complete an Acquisition Form (see Collections Procedural Manual) for items for potential acquisition formalizing authorization, requesting funding and highlighting potential collection care issues.

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

f. Any exceptions to the above clauses 8a, 8b, 8c, or 8e will only be because the Service is either:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or
- 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; or
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or
- in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.

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

g. As part of the acquisition procedure reasonable steps will be taken to establish the identity of the copyright holder(s). This information will be held in a diligence file.

9. Spoliation

The Service 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.

10. Repatriation and Restitution

The Service's governing body, acting on the advice of the Service's professional staff may take a decision to return human remains, objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The Service will take such decisions on a case by case basis, within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications.

11. Management of archives

As the Service 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 (3rd ed., 2002).

12. Disposal procedures

- a. By definition, the Service has a long-term purpose and should possess (or intend to acquire) permanent collections in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body accepts the principle that, except for sound curatorial reasons, there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- b. The Service will establish that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Any decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken only after due consideration.
- c. When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the Service will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant.
- d. Decisions to dispose of items will not be made with the principal aim of generating funds.
- e. Any monies received by the Service's governing body from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions but in exceptional cases improvements relating to the care of collections may be justifiable. Advice on these cases will be sought from MLA.
- f. 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), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the Service acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.
- g. 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, exchange or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- h. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly, 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 professional journals where appropriate.
- i. The announcement 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.
- j. Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.