



Rural Life Centre

OLD KILN MUSEUM TRUST

Registered Charity No: 289150

Reeds Road, Tilford,

Farnham, Surrey, GU10 2DL.

(01252) 795571

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY

Name of museum: Rural Life Centre

Name of governing body: Old Kiln Museum Trust

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 27 January 2016

Policy review procedure:

The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 01 January 2021.

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

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

1.1. The museum's statement of purpose is:

The Rural Life Centre governed by the Old Kiln Museum Trust is a visitor attraction which collects and preserves objects associated with farming, tools and goods used by craftsmen and traders locally and objects from village life circa 1750 to 1960. Through its displays it recalls a way of life once common to the local people.

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

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

1.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances. and then only after proper consideration by the Governing Body, having regard to the interests of other museums.

- 1.5. The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using SPECTRUM primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.6. The museum will undertake 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.
- 1.7. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

2. History and scope of the collections

2.1. *Collecting period.* The collection grew from the post-War acquisitions of agricultural and forestry implements of Mr Henry and Mrs Madge Jackson, who subsequently founded the Museum and were the principal Trustees until their deaths. Their house is part of the Trust property. Practical considerations made it necessary to concentrate collecting on the period from the mid-18th century to 1960. In setting this time parameter consideration has been given to the museum's interest in recording changes that led to an improved agricultural system and local methods of farming. Tools used by craftsmen, local trades and occupations that one might find in villages in the locality are also collected. The criteria for 20th century objects are that they are important in representing changes in local village life.

2.2. *Collecting area.* The main geographical collecting area is South West Surrey. This also includes other areas of the country, if objects could reasonably be expected to be commonly used in Surrey; and if in accepting an object, the museum is not competing with other more appropriate museums. Of specific interest are the villages of Tilford, Frensham, Dockenfield, Churt and Elstead. Objects from the collecting areas of other Waverley museums, namely Farnham, Godalming and Haslemere may be collected, provided there was joint agreement and the object added to the overall local historical picture. A small selection of foreign items may be collected for comparison with locally produced equivalent.

3. An overview of current collections

Agriculture. Horse drawn vehicles and implements, heavy horse harness and equipment, seed drills, ploughs, hand tools, traps and trapping, scales, hops, haymaking and harvesting, drainage, beekeeping, poultry husbandry, corn grinding machinery, reapers.

Buildings. Granary and grain handling display. Shepherds hut and shepherding implements. Victorian stable.

Horticulture: Gardening tools, mowers and other grass tending implements. Market gardening machinery and other equipment. Tree and bush bundlers. Forestry -Horse drawn timber nibs

etc., hand tools, Moss edge tools, saws and saw sets, machinery. Crafts -Wood-turners workshop (display and demonstrations).

Wheelwright's shop (display and demonstrations),

Tools. Tools of the thatcher, broomsquire and cooper, tools of the cobbler, tools of the carpenter.

Brick carving

Machine shop and engines. Trades/ -Carts, plumbing, grocer, enamel signs, scales, butcher, baker, dairy, tailoring.

Professions. Haberdashery, chemist, cobblers, brewing.

Social History

Buildings: Prefab, Anderson shelter, 1860s timber chapel, WWI barrack room (the Museum's village hall), 1883 timber cricket pavilion, 1906 "tin hut" schoolroom displays -Horse drawn traps, 1930s and WWII, schoolroom, photography, office equipment, heating and lighting, nursery, public house, post office, laundry, weights and measures.

Textiles: Smocks and other Victorian clothing.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The museum will continue to actively collect objects in the following areas: agriculture, sheep husbandry, Surrey traditions, use made of heathland and commons, local transport, hops, forestry, gardening, horses and horse drawn vehicles, local village life, tools relating to local trades, crafts, and local industry and seek appropriate buildings in which to house these collections. It will concentrate on items of 1760 to 1960, and from the South East of England. Items from other areas will only be acquired if they can clearly show that they could have been used in the region.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

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

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

5.3. There is considerable duplication within certain collections – for example garden equipment, (lawnmowers, pitch markers), carpentry (outside one coherent collection), laundry – where the historic processes are crowded out by the volume of near-identical objects on display. This militates against the understanding of the purpose of the objects and

interpretation of the processes. One Trustee is nominated as the conduit to the Governing Body of recommendations for disposal.

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

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

7 Collecting policies of other museums

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

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

7.2.1. Regionally

- Museum of English Rural Life at Reading (MERL). The MERL collection is a national collection of technical innovations in the history of agriculture, rural and craft industries. It has an extensive library and archive.
- Hampshire County Museum Service. The County Museum Service in Hampshire has an agricultural museum and extensive collections.
- The Weald and Downland Museum at Singleton. This Museum collects material selectively for education, experiment and demonstration in the areas of agriculture, domestic life, trade, industries and transport.
- All Museums within the Rural Museum Network.
- Other organisations: Central Southern Vintage Agricultural Club, TATHS, Hall and Duck Trust, Thames Valley Shoe Repairers Associations and more.

7.2.2. Locally

- Museum of Farnham. It is appropriate that there is a co-operation between these two museums because they share many common themes. For example, the hop and beer industry, George Sturt and the workings of the wheelwright shop and changes in the social life of local people.
- Godalming Museum. This is a local history museum interested in local industries such as paper, glass, leather and stocking making, and gardens through personalities such as Jekyll.
- Haslemere Museum. Has a collection of European peasant crafts as well as local history. Its main theme is natural history and geology. Insert list of museum(s)/organisation(s)

8. Archival holdings

The Museum does not actively collect books or paper ephemera, except where it enhances or illustrates an exhibit. It maintains material which is important to use as an aid in interpreting the collection and the local history relating to the collection. As the museum holds archives, including photographs and printed ephemera, the Trust will be guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums in the United Kingdom (3rd ed.2002).

9. Acquisition

9.1. The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

9.1.1. Acquisition procedures. The museum will exercise with due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the Trustees are satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

9.1.2. Policy and advice. The Trust recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collection, 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. The Trust undertakes to seek advice from professional curators of similar collections and other experts in the field, as appropriate.

9.1.3. Conditioning. Any objects accepted into the collection are presumed to be in good condition. All new objects arriving at the museum will be carefully cleaned and treated for beetle infestation if made of wood. Regular monitoring of all objects will be carried out and professional advice sought if a problem arises.

8.1.4. Restoration. Restoration will be contemplated only after careful consideration, as it leads to extensive damage to the original object. When restoration is undertaken, records will be made of the original condition and proposed work.

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

9.3. In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

10. Human remains

The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11. Biological and geological material

The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

12. Archaeological material

The museum will not acquire any archaeological material.

13. Exceptions

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

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

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

14 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.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

(Not relevant to the Museum)

16 Disposal procedures

- 16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.
- 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment

of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.

- 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.
- 16.6 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 or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be

applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England.

- 16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.
- 16.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

Disposal by exchange

- 16.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.
- 16.16 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 16.17 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.
- 16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Adopted by the Trustees at a Trust Meeting held on 27 January 2016

J Michael Phillips

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Chairman
27 January 2016