

# **ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL POLICY**

**MUSEUM: GREENFIELD VALLEY HERITAGE PARK**

**GOVERNING BODY: GREENFIELD VALLEY TRUST**

**Policy approved on: 16<sup>th</sup> September 2006**

**Review date: September 2010**

## **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 The purpose of this Acquisition and Disposal Policy is to comply with the requirements of MLA's Museum Accreditation scheme and to encourage public confidence in the Museum as a suitable repository.

1.2 It defines the present state of the collections and reviews the current policy of acquisition and disposal. It ensures that material is accepted according to a recognised strategy and serves as a reference document to guide curatorial decisions.

## **2.0 Background**

2.1 Greenfield Valley Trust is a company with charitable status (registered charity no 518532), which was formed as a voluntary organisation in 1987 as the result of the efforts of the Friends of the Greenfield Valley Association with the support of Delyn Borough Council.

2.2 The Greenfield Valley Trust's Mission Statement and Aims and Objectives are published in its Memorandum and Articles of Agreement. The overall aim of the Trust in relation to this policy is to collect, conserve, promote and interpret, for the public benefit of the local community and visitors to Flintshire, material evidence representative of the cultural and economic history and tradition and the natural environment of the Greenfield Valley in particular and the surrounding area in general.

2.3 Since 1996, Greenfield Valley Heritage Park has been in the ownership of Flintshire County Council as the successor authority to Delyn Borough Council. Since July 1993 managerial responsibility for the site has been vested in the Greenfield Valley Trust. The Principal Museums Officer for Flintshire County Council acts as Curatorial Adviser to the Trust.

## **3.0 Existing collections**

3.1 Greenfield Valley Heritage Park extends over 28 hectares, from the A548 at Greenfield to the town of Holywell and was opened in 1984 by Delyn Borough Council. The Park includes seven Scheduled Ancient Monuments, the track bed of a mineral tramway and of a standard gauge railway, plus five reservoirs and woodland. Basingwerk Abbey is owned by CADW. The Museum itself centres around the Abbey Farm group of buildings together with a number of historic buildings from the area which have been moved and reconstructed.

3.2 The current collection therefore consists primarily of:

- a) Items relevant to the history and interpretation of the group of historic buildings.
- b) Objects relevant to the industrial history of the Valley and specifically the firms which operated in the Valley from the eighteenth to the twentieth century. These include the copper and brass industry, iron, lead and coal mining, quarrying and lime and cement manufacture, wool and cloth spinning, weaving and garment manufacture, papermaking, brewing and mineral water manufacture.

c) Objects connected to the agricultural history of Flintshire and north-east Wales.

3.3 This policy includes:

a) collections gathered by the Friends of Greenfield Valley (current and predecessor bodies) and formally transferred to the Greenfield Valley Trust in March 2003. The collection totals some 1100 objects. The Friends no longer collect in parallel to the Trust, but may make suggestions for future additions to the collection which will be assessed against this policy.

b) collections acquired in the past, at present or in the future by the Greenfield Valley Trust, or those transferred into its ownership from other bodies.

3.4 This policy excludes:

a) collections made since 1981 by the former Delyn Borough Council at the Greenfield Valley Museum and inherited by Flintshire County Council following local government reorganisation in 1996. These items are principally of agricultural and industrial heritage significance and those housed at Greenfield are on fixed-term loan to the Trust. This collection includes the group of historic buildings forming the core of the Museum. Additions to this collection are governed by Flintshire Museums Service's Acquisition and Disposal Policy.

b) the loan collection from the National Museums and Galleries of Wales, consisting primarily of furniture.

#### **4.0 Criteria governing future collecting policy**

4.1 Recognising that the character and wealth of the Greenfield Valley area has been built on industrial, urban and rural development, the Trust will continue to collect on behalf of the Museum and as relevant to the area of the Greenfield Valley:

a) social history collections that record, illustrate or otherwise relate to the everyday social, industrial and rural life of the Greenfield Valley area, including educational, religious, commercial, craft and military life, leisure and pastimes, customs and beliefs.

b) artefacts reflecting the industries of the Valley particularly relating to those firms which were based in the Valley. In particular:

i) the mining of non-ferrous metals including lead, zinc, silver and precious metals

ii) the processing and manufacture of ferrous and non-ferrous metals including copper and

brass processing, lead processing and iron founding

iii) coal mining and stone quarrying

iv) textile production

v) maritime material from the coastal strip

vi) paper making

vii) printing

viii) leather industry

ix) brewing and mineral water industries

c) oral history records, in co-operation with other relevant agencies in Flintshire and north-east Wales, including the Museums and Archives Services in Flintshire and elsewhere.

d) architectural fragments from locally-important structures and buildings which are under threat or are being demolished. Within the constraints of this policy the re-use of such material, maintaining its integrity, will be encouraged whenever possible. Buildings will not be acquired except in exceptional circumstances and with adequate resources.

4.2 Recognising the specific focus of the Museum on the agricultural and rural history and traditions of Flintshire in particular and North-East Wales in general, the Trust will continue to collect on behalf of the Museum and in association with the Flintshire Museum Service:

a) objects, records and other forms of material culture for agricultural and rural history and traditions of Flintshire in particular and North-east Wales in general. Additions of County relevance will generally be acquired by Greenfield Valley Trust as opposed to Flintshire Museums Service where they will be utilised in research or interpretation at Greenfield Valley.

4.3 Objects associated with a specific individual otherwise associated with the Valley may also be acquired after due consideration.

4.4 Non-local objects which represent non-surviving local parallels may be acquired for the purposes of interpretation.

4.5 Material acquired specifically for education and outreach purposes (e.g. replicas and duplicate material) will be identified and listed as separate to the core collections.

## **5.0 Period of time and/or geographical area to which collecting relates**

5.1 In accordance with the Aims & Objectives of the Museum in the Heritage Park, the area of the present policy shall be:

a) the Greenfield Valley

b) the County of Flintshire, specifically for agricultural and rural history and traditions, defined as

i) the current administrative county of Flintshire (since 1996)

ii) the historic county of Flintshire (up to 1974) and the old-Flintshire parts of the county of Clwyd (until 1996) with due regard to the collecting interests of museums in other successor Counties.

5.2 Collecting will relate to all periods of time in which Greenfield Valley has been occupied or used. The main focus will be the 18<sup>th</sup> to the 20<sup>th</sup> centuries.

## **6.0 Limitations on collecting**

6.1 The Trust on behalf of the Museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring material, to ensure adequate conservation, documentation and usage, and takes into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as storage, conservation and display resources and the availability of professional curatorial staff and advice. In particular, it is recognised that no large objects will be acquired without sufficient storage or display space.

6.2 No person involved in the policy-setting or management of the Museum should compete with the Museum in acquiring material, or take advantage of information received because of his/her position. Should a conflict of interest develop between the aims of the individual and the Museum, those of the Museum should prevail.

6.3 No gift or bequest will be accepted to which any special conditions apply which conflict with the operation of the Museum.

6.4 The term 'permanent loan' will not be used by the Museum. There will be a presumption against the acceptance of material for long-term loan, and it will seek to convert any existing permanent loans into donation. Any loan agreements will only be entered into for an agreed renewable fixed term and for a specific purpose.

## **7.0 Collecting policies of other museums**

7.1 This policy shall be implemented in direct association with the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy of Flintshire Museums Service.

7.2 The Museums Service of Flintshire County Council acknowledges the policy herewith of the Greenfield Valley Trust on behalf of the Museum in the Heritage Park of collecting agricultural history and rural life material for the County (as set out above), with special regard to agricultural tools, machinery and equipment. Flintshire Museums Service also acknowledges the Greenfield

Valley Trust in collecting historical material from the town and environs of Holywell, although it is accepted that both parties may so collect.

7.3 Greenfield Valley Trust recognises the role of Flintshire Record Office as the primary repository of archival material for the County. It will only acquire archival material where it is an integral part of an object-based collection or where it is particularly connected to material already present in the Trust's collection (after consultation with Archive staff).

7.4 Greenfield Valley Trust acknowledges the collecting policies of its neighbouring and associated museums, archives and other similar services in and around the present county of Flintshire. It will support these policies wherever appropriate, and seek to publicise its own acquisitions and disposal policy and the similar policies of other institutions. The Trust will make this Policy document available to other museums and appropriate agencies, to members of the public and to all potential providers of objects and associated information to the collections.

The Trust will consult with other relevant museums and agencies to avoid or resolve conflicts of interest over the acquisition of material.

## **8.0 Policy review procedure**

This policy will be reviewed every three years or when a significant alteration is necessary. This policy supersedes the 2003-6 policy as published in the Museum's Collection Management Plan. The next planned date for review will be 2009.

## **9.0 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.

## **10.0 Acquisition procedures**

10.1 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.

10.2 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).

10.3 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 DCMS in 2005.

10.4 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.

10.5 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, 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).

- 10.6 Any exceptions to the above clauses 8a, 8b, 8c or 8e will only be because the museum 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 museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decision and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

### **11.0 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.

### **12.0 Repatriation and Restitution**

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, 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.

### **13.0 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 (3<sup>rd</sup> ed., 2002).

### **14.0 Disposal procedures**

14.1 By definition, the museum 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.

14.2 The museum 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.

14.3 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.

14.4 Decisions to dispose of items will not be made with the principal aim of generating funds.

14.5 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 but in exceptional cases improvements relating to the care of collections may be justifiable. Advice on these cases will be sought from MLA.

14.6 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), 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.

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

14.8 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.

14.9 The announcements 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.

14.10 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.