



Southend Museums Service Collections development policy 2014-2019



Name of museum: Southend Museums Service

Name of governing body: Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

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

Date at which this policy is due for review: 2019

Museum's statement of purpose

Mission Statement:

'The safeguarding of the natural and man-made heritage of the Southend on Sea area through the conservation and interpretation of the buildings and collections in its care, to which the public should have the widest possible access through displays, exhibitions, events and activities, educational work, advisory and identification services.'

Southend Museums Service seeks to:

Acquire, preserve and interpret evidence of the material and non-material human and natural history of Southend-on-Sea and of south east Essex, and in particular:

- Acquire, preserve and display examples of high quality British art, particularly where there is a local connection, either through the artist or through the subject matter.
- Preserve and display the collections of Old Master works possessed by the Beecroft Art Gallery, but only exceptionally to augment this collection.
- Form comprehensive reference collections of groups of plants, animals and geological specimens found in Essex, with special reference to south east Essex.
- Acquire such ancillary material demonstrating and illustrating universal biological and geological principles.
- Acquire, preserve and interpret archaeological finds and associated archives from the Museum's collecting area.
- Acquire, preserve and interpret items illustrative of the history of Southend-on-Sea, south east Essex and the Thames Estuary
- Acquire such ancillary material as may be required for the proper interpretation and understanding of our collections and Museum buildings
- Maintain and interpret for the public, historic buildings Prittlewell Priory and Southchurch Hall

1. An overview of current collections

The existing collections cover the principal fields of human history, natural history and fine art. Within these broad disciplines the collections comprise social/local History, including ephemera and photographs, numismatics, costume and archaeology; natural history, including vertebrates, invertebrates, geology and mineralogy, photographs and biological records; The Beecroft, Municipal and Thorpe Smith Collections of fine art. Southend Museums' collections have been acquired since 1906, but include a series of foundation collections acquired in the first instance by the Southend Institute from 1885.

Much early collecting was fairly indiscriminate regarding relevance to the Museum's geographic area, especially in the field of social history. Today collecting is restricted to items that relate more specifically to south east Essex.

This statement describes the broad themes in which the collections may be grouped. Within these themes are areas in which we would wish to actively expand or enhance the existing collections. There are some areas where we might accept donations, if appropriate, to complement the collections. There are other areas of the collections to which we would not wish to add, except in exceptional circumstances. These are indicated in the following descriptions. Similarly, there are certain items in the collections for which disposal to more suitable homes would seem appropriate (in some cases disposal coupled with directed collecting), as a means of enhancing the remaining collections.

2. Themes and priorities for future collecting

- All collecting activity must take account of the following principles:
- Items collected should normally have a strong connection with south east Essex or the Thames Estuary
- Where appropriate items should be in good condition and require minimal conservation treatment (including archaeological items, which should have undergone necessary treatment before deposition)
- Where an otherwise important or interesting object is too large or in too poor a state of deterioration to enter the collection, a photographic record and/or report will be made by the relevant curatorial staff and retained in the Museums' archives. This may include buildings, other structures or areas which are due for demolition, development or renewal.
- Items collected should not contain materials that pose a risk to health or safety
- Items collected should not duplicate any already in the collections unless an exceptional case can be made (e.g. group value, value for display, condition or provenance). Existing items may be disposed of in accordance with the Disposal Policy set out below.
- No further 'permanent' loans will be accepted into the Museum's collections.
- Future collecting must take account of requirements for potential new seafront museum themes.

3. Collection Information

Fine Art

Southend Museum Service's art collections are housed at the Beecroft Art Gallery, and are managed as a trust with Southend Borough Council the sole trustee.

The art collections comprise three separate parts:

The Beecroft Collection. Built up by the founder, Walter Beecroft, and the Friends of the Beecroft Art Gallery and acquired mainly in the 1950s. Comprises mainly Old Master paintings (most notable being the Dutch and Flemish works) and other pre-twentieth century works by British, French, Italian and German artists. Also contains an important selection of works by the artists of the Great Bardfield Group (mid twentieth century). Sculpture representation poor apart from a bronze by Jacob Epstein. The Beecroft collection contains the most important works of the art collections. 157 works, mainly oil paintings, some watercolours, prints and drawings and sculpture.

The Municipal Collection. Southend Borough Council's additions to the art collections, during and after Walter Beecroft's time. Mainly 20th century works, many with local or Essex connections. Most notable is an early Constable sketch of great importance, and three oils by Edward Seago.

580 works, some sculpture.

The Thorpe-Smith Collection. Local works, the best being around one hundred works by Victorian artists, bequeathed to the gallery by Sidney Thorpe Smith, around 1960. Since then, the collection has grown to over 900 works and continues to be added to.

949 works; oils, watercolours, prints and drawings, no sculpture.

Future collecting policy, including the subjects or themes for collecting:

The Beecroft collection has not been added to for many years. Future acquisitions could include Old Master drawings (as there are none in the collection) or items that broaden other areas that are lacking such as Dutch genre and Italian paintings. It is, however, unlikely that this area of the collection will grow due to inflated prices. However, if a donation of an Old Master painting were to be offered it should be considered within the context of the rest of the collection and only be accepted if of equal quality.

Further works by artists of the Great Bardfield Group are desirable but any collecting of such items must be done whilst taking into account the collecting policy of the Fry Art Gallery, whose remit is exclusively works by that group and other artists in the Saffron Walden area.

The Municipal collection has been added to most in recent years. When the gallery received an annual collecting fund, works from the Royal Academy Summer exhibition were often purchased but now, with no acquisitions fund, collecting should be restricted to modern works of the highest quality and preferably with local or Essex connection.

The Thorpe Smith collection is most easily added to, but collecting should be restricted to high quality depictions of local scenery and subjects from any era. Southend Museums Service will continue to collect

pictures illustrating the social and maritime history of the town and contemporary depictions of Southend and area. Particular emphasis should be placed upon scenes of the Thames estuary and its shipping, particularly those which also convey historic information on those vessels and their working practices. Paintings of named or unnamed ships and boats will be collected if a connection to the area is established or they represent a particular type of vessel relating to the Thames Estuary. An exception to the local scenery rule would be the paintings of Alfred Herbert who was born in Southend but painted elsewhere in the country and in Europe. The gallery will continue to collect works by Herbert, whether of local scenery or otherwise.

Portraits of local people of note should also be sought but high quality should be maintained. In the past these have been added to both the Thorpe Smith Collection and Municipal collections.

The Museums Service will also selectively collect works of quality by artists who have lived and worked locally.

Natural History

The collections contain representatives from most major groups of animals and plants. As with all museum natural history collections, their compositions reflect past and present interests of local collectors and recorders, including members of museum staff.

The Natural History collections form a valuable record of environmental change in this area over the last two centuries. They contain material that is important for distributional, taxonomic and environmental research.

The principal groups represented are:

Vertebrates (mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish)

Skeletal material as well as mounted ('stuffed') and spirit-preserved material. There are also several large and scientifically important old collections of birds' eggs. Collecting in this area is never active but depends on the public bringing in specimens found dead.

Invertebrates

Insects: large and important collections with strong relevance for scientific research and display.

Other Invertebrates (e.g. Spiders, Molluscs and several marine groups)

The collections include much important local marine invertebrates (which can provide valuable evidence for environmental research in the future) and spiders.

Plants (Herbarium material including pressed plants, dried fungi, mosses and lichens).

Modest collections with strong local and county significance.

Geology and Mineralogy

A medium-sized worldwide collection of minerals of high quality and a modest fossil and rock collection, mainly of Essex material.

Photographs

The Museum has several thousand 35 mm transparencies, mostly of high quality, that complement the natural history collections.

Biological Records

The Museum has been collecting data on local wildlife sites since 1975 and the resulting evidence forms an important research and planning resource.

Themes for future collecting:

In general, the Museum will continue to add to its reference collections in the fields of geology, botany and zoology. By gradually improving its standards of specimen care, it is expected that high quality collections will eventually be offered to the Museum.

Vertebrates

The Museum will continue to collect local animals and birds found dead for augmenting its vertebrate collections. This may involve actively seeking donations of birds or animals found dead. Further examples of birds' eggs will not be added to the collection.

Invertebrates

Future collecting will concentrate on groups where specimens are necessary to confirm identity (e.g. flies). Areas for active collecting include local marine invertebrates (which can provide valuable evidence for environmental research in the future).

Plants

Active collecting will concentrate on critical groups of plants and those from threatened and changing habitats. In both cases, the collection of scientific voucher specimens is important.

Geology and Mineralogy

Further collection of minerals will be restricted to the filling of obvious gaps with specimens of the highest quality. Active collection of fossils will involve the investigation of temporary exposures, including Pleistocene (Ice Age) sites. The investigation of geological exposures, given their temporary nature, will be considered to be important.

Photographs

Further additions to the natural history photographic collection are desirable. The same documentation criteria apply as to the specimens.

Biological Records

Maintaining up to date information on local wildlife is essential for its accurate interpretation. Active collection of such data should continue.

Limitations on collecting

Southend Museums 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 staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

Every effort is made to ensure that all items for addition to the collections come with provenance/history. Only in exceptional circumstances will items be accepted which lack this information. In general, future additions to the collections must satisfy the following criteria:

Specimens should be accompanied by data which must include, in the case of natural history and archaeology, the place, date and circumstances of collection, and preferably much more

Natural History specimens should preferably be of local or county significance. Non-British material and specimens with inadequate data will not be collected except in so far as they can be used to illustrate general biological principles. On no account would a large collection of specimens without data be accepted.

Specimens will only be collected in accordance with the Codes of Conduct issued by the appropriate national societies (e.g. the Geologists Association, Mammal Society, Botanical Society of the British Isles, etc.)

For the period covered by this Policy the Museum will not be in a position to accept large and bulky items, unless under exceptional circumstances and of exceptional significance.

Collecting policies of other museums

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

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

Colchester Museum

Chelmsford Museum

Braintree Museum

Saffron Walden Museum

Grays Thurrock Museum

Social History Collections (except EKCO and costume collections)

Background

This is a very wide and miscellaneous series of collections of mixed quality, principally from the late Victorian and later periods. While a considerable amount of the material has no known local connection (resulting from passive and non-targeted collecting in the past) there are some very fine pieces (particularly furniture, some ceramics and domestic fireplaces, for example) with local family connections. There are particularly fine collections of local photography, ephemera, local souvenir pottery and postcards, covering south east Essex, but concentrating mainly on the Borough of Southend-on-Sea.

The collections can be grouped into the main headings below.

Ephemera

These collections relate specifically to:

- a) The seaside and local tourism
- b) Local theatres, clubs and societies,
- c) Local shops, trades and industries
- d) Wartime
- e) Civic matters (Southend Local Board, Southend Borough)
- f) Local newspapers.
- g) A very small collection relating to local families
- h) Photographs (Including postcards, prints and glass plate and other negative materials, relating specifically to south east Essex, and particularly to Southend, and dating from c. 1870 to date.)
These collections can be described specifically by photographer/collector/origin:
- i) Dawson collection: glass negatives of Southend and the area dating from 1899-1901
- j) Padgett Collection: glass negatives and postcards of S.E. Essex, dating from c. 1900 to 1930
- k) Secourable Collection: a small but important collection of images of Southend, c. 1870
- l) Borough Engineers Collection: record shots of Southend Borough, c. 1950-1980
- m) Goodale Collection: prints of Southend area including an important archive of bomb damage in first and Second World Wars
- n) Postcard Collection: A large collection of postcard views of Southend Borough dating from c. 1900 to date.

There are also a very few more personal collections, comprising negatives, prints and transparencies (and some film) taken by local residents.

Leisure and Resort

Artefacts relating to the leisure pursuits of local inhabitants and visitors, and especially relating to Southend-on-Sea's importance as a holiday resort and seaside town. This includes a substantial collection of holiday souvenirs, dating from c. 1870 to 1950s.

Ceramics

Locally produced ceramics, together with examples of domestic wares, principally from the Victorian and later periods. This collection includes an important group of Leigh and Southend wares.

The domestic wares include:

- a) Late Victorian tea and dinner services
- b) Individual cups and saucers, creamers, etc. from the late 18th and 19th centuries, with local family connections
- c) Stoneware hot water bottles/foot warmers
- d) Wash basins and ewers
- e) A collection of Castle Hedingham Wares
- f) Examples of stoneware Bellarmine jugs and stoneware mineral water bottles from local firms
- g) Leigh and Southend Wares (late 19th to mid-20th century.)

Glasswares

The Museum has a modest collection of glassware, mainly domestic drinking glasses, and dating from the late 18th and 19th centuries. There is a substantial collection of bottles dating mainly from the late 19th and early 20th centuries (but with examples of earlier types), and including representative examples of local mineral water bottles and milk bottles of local dairies.

Printing

This includes a very small but bulky collection of printing presses, and associated fonts, etc., together with printed ephemera, mostly associated with a local firm, and dating from the late 19th to early 20th centuries.

Toys, Dolls and Playthings

This is a very modest collection, dating mainly from the late 19th century to mid-20th century. This collection includes:

- a) Examples of dolls from the mid-19th century to mid-20th century
- b) A very small selection of Dolls Houses (late Victorian onwards), and dolls house furniture
- c) Table (including Board) games dating from the early 19th century, but mainly early-mid
- d) 20th century
- e) Small collection of other toys from early 19th century to early 20th century

Domestic Bygones (not elsewhere described)

This is a large collection of rather miscellaneous material and of mixed quality. This collection includes:

- a) Structural
A locally important collection of fireplaces and surrounds from local demolished farmhouses, dating from 18th and 19th centuries
- b) Small structural items and fittings
- c) Furniture
- d) This includes some medieval and later items, mainly displayed in room settings. The large majority of the post medieval furniture has come from local families, and includes some very fine and important pieces, displayed in room settings.
- e) Lighting and Heating
- f) Oil, gas lamps, electrical fittings
- g) Household Management, etc. (large)
- h) Vacuum cleaners, sweepers, wash tubs, cookers

Household management, etc. (small)

Irons, glove stretchers, domestic appliances including a substantial number of sewing machines, kitchen utensils

Personal

Smoking pipes, hair dryers, razors, spectacles, home medical

Other

Small selection of prams, bicycles, typewriters, some domestic textiles,

Clocks

A small but locally important collection of clocks, both domestic and non-domestic. The domestic clocks include several long-case clocks dating from the 18th century to mid-19th century. The non-domestic clocks (including clock faces) comprise mainly those from the local firm of R.A. Jones and Son.

Photographic

This collection includes cameras, some darkroom equipment and accessories. The collection also includes Magic Lanterns and later projection equipment. This is a modest but representative collection.

War Time

A collection of War Time ephemera (First and Second World Wars) relating to the Home Front and specifically to south east Essex. A small but locally important collection. This collection includes:

- a) Ephemera and items relating to air raid precautions
- b) Ephemera relating to rationing and resources
- c) Ephemera relating to personal life (ID cards, evacuation)
- d) Souvenirs of the air raids (shrapnel, fragments of Zeppelin, etc.)
- e) Artefacts including some helmets, stirrup pumps, badges, etc.

Crafts

Trades and professions are represented by collections of mainly carpentry, smithing and plumbing tools used by local tradesmen. This includes a very large collection of tools and equipment from a local blacksmiths.

Agriculture

A small collection of farming equipment (mainly hand tools) from local farms, but including some larger machinery.

Fishing and the Sea

The museum has a very small collection relating to inshore fishing (shell fish), together with models of (local) boats and ships, of varying quality.

Brick making

A very small collection of bricks representative of local brick making establishments.

Criteria governing future collecting policy, including subjects or themes for collecting:

Active collecting in this area includes enhancing the existing collections by filling gaps in local ephemera and photographs, together with collecting items relating specifically to the seaside and holidays in Southend from the Victorian period to the present day. However, local newspapers will not be collected, except for very early copies of Southend's first newspapers (Southend Standard, Southend Echo and Southend Telegraph.)

Specifically, active collecting will include:

Guide books: to complement existing collections

Photographic archives: relating to Southend and South East Essex

Multicultural Society: To reflect Southend's growing multicultural and multi-faith society, the Museum will endeavour to collect relevant items. Such artefacts may include material relating to the Ganesha festival held at Shoeburyness.

War Time: Active collecting will concentrate on filling gaps with relevant ephemera and items relating specifically to the local area during the First and Second World Wars, e.g. Items relating to Air Raid Precautions (e.g. gas rattle, specific helmets not represented in existing collections, etc.)

- a) Local Land Army ephemera and accessories
- b) Souvenirs made from crashed Zeppelins/Aeroplanes of First World War in S.E. Essex
- c) Specific material relating to local families in War Time where this complements existing collections

Ceramics

Areas for active collecting will include specially commissioned ceramics connected with local families;

Glasswares

It is not intended to add to this collection, except where perfect examples of local mineral water firms are represented to enhance/complement the existing collections.

Printing

It is not intended to add to this collection.

Toys, Dolls and Playthings.

It is not intended to add to this collection unless under special circumstances

Domestic Bygones

It is not intended to add to this collection unless under special circumstances

Photographic

Active collecting here would be strictly limited to photographic equipment and paraphernalia connected with local photography

Crafts

It is not envisaged that additions to this collection will be made

Agricultural

It is not envisaged to actively collect in this area except for items of exceptional local interest and connection that complement the existing collections and which help to illustrate agriculture in south east Essex from the late medieval period to the 19th century.

Fishing and the Sea

Active collecting will include material relating to local fishing (e.g. shellfish) to complement existing collections. This will include contemporary collecting of fishing equipment and other items related to the boats and local fishing industry.

Ship and boat models representing the range of craft which use/have used the Thames Estuary will be sought, along with items representing local ship and boat building and boatyards

Brick making

Active collecting will concentrate on complementing the Museum's representative samples of locally produced bricks and brick-making tools and equipment particularly from the pre-mechanised age.

Collecting policies of other museums:

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

Specific reference is made to the following museums:

Chelmsford Museums

Colchester and Ipswich Museums

Saffron Walden Museum

Braintree Museum.

Leigh on Sea Maritime Museum

Radio and Television (EKCO) Collection

Background

The museum currently holds an extensive collection of EKCO radios, televisions, associated archives, photographs and other products made by the EKCO company from the late 1920s to the 1970s. Key items include all five Bakelite round radios designed by Wells Coates, early televisions, including a prototype model colour television, and archives such as professional photographs of the working factory, special events, and staff, and a very full business archive.

The collection already has national significance as the EKCO brand was well known worldwide. Expansion of the collection and knowledge about the company could make Southend Museums Service the most comprehensive source of objects and information on EKCO in the country.

Criteria governing future collecting policy, including the subjects or themes for collecting.

EKCO items which the Museums Service intends to collect falls under seven categories:

Radio and television models currently not represented in the collection, particularly focussing upon the more obscure radios from the 1930s, the company's heyday, often those which are Bakelite for which the company is best known. Many important missing models have already been identified. Also EKCO radio stands made in the 1930s for specific models.

Different colour ways of radio models already in the collection; some Bakelite models were made in very limited numbers in green, ivory and walnut as well as the more common black or brown. Later, plastic models were sometimes produced in several colours and examples of all of these would be desirable for the collection.

Other electrical items made by EKCO and examples of objects made by EKCO Plastics.

EKCO Plastics (including Nova ware) in all colour ways, and EKCO items, other than radios, made from Bakelite.

Ephemera and objects relating to E.K. Cole himself and the business of the EKCO factory

Advertising items from dealerships that sold EKCO products. The collection already holds many such items, but their appearance at sales or from private sources is rare.

Oral history testimonies from ex-employees of the EKCO factory. The Museums Service is in contact with over one hundred ex-employees and these are to be prioritised for oral histories, according to their roles in the factory.

Limitations on Collecting

Non-domestic military radios will no longer be actively collected by Southend Museums Service, as the EKCO factory was dispersed during WWII to Malmesbury in Wiltshire (and other sites). This material falls under the collecting area of Malmesbury Museum.

Radios, televisions, record players and recording equipment by manufacturers other than EKCO will no longer be collected by Southend Museums Service unless of particular significance to the EKCO pieces.

Collecting Policies of other museums:

The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related 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.

Specific reference is made to the following museums:

Chelmsford Museum (special interest in Marconi radio brand)

Oxford Museum of the History of Science (principal Marconi archive)

BBC Radio Museum

Science Museum

National Media Museum, Bradford

Malmesbury Museum, Wiltshire (special interest in wartime EKCO factory in the town)

Museum of Design in Plastics, Bournemouth University

Numismatic Collections

Existing Collections

Background

The large majority of the coins were donated in the early 20th century as large complete collections. This included a substantial number of non-British coins.

A modest collection, including coins of the realm, tokens, medals and awards. The large majority of the coins have come from local collectors, complemented by archaeological and stray finds.

The majority of the coins are English, with good representation of all issuers from the later Middle Ages onwards. The coins range in date from the late Iron Age (Celtic) to the present day, including Roman.

There is a small but important collection of local token coinage (mainly late 17th century) and more general token coinage (mainly 18th century).

There is a representative collection of military medals (associated mainly with local families) dating from the Crimean War to the Second World War.

A small but important collection of local sporting medals and awards, educational awards (attendance and Peace medals) and other civilian awards.

Criteria governing future collecting policy, including subjects or themes for collecting.

Active collecting will concentrate on obtaining:

Contemporary coinage of the realm, and filling gaps in that area (particularly in regard to paper money)

Examples of local trade tokens to fill any gaps in present collections.

Southend Museum will not collect:

Foreign coins

Costume Collection

Background

Housed at the Beecroft Art Gallery, Southend's costume collection began as a few items collected as social history, and as parts of large and varied donations. In the 1970s and 80s the bulk of the collection was acquired, but with little or no local emphasis. As a result, much of the collection has no local connection or indeed any information as to its history at all. It is intended that further collecting will address this balance through placing an emphasis on the acquisition of local items, whether worn, designed, made, collected or purchased in the Southend area.

Existing Collections

Presently there are garments and accessories from a period of around three hundred years. This breaks down roughly as the following:

Seventeenth century

a single, slap sole shoe

Eighteenth century

several ladies shoes

two late eighteenth century court waistcoats

Nineteenth century

two early pelisse robes

several early bonnets

a small number of 1850s dresses

several items from each decade from the 1860s onwards

Twentieth century

a small number of Edwardian items

a small number of 1910-1920 items

a good number of 1920s – 1970s

a small number of 1980s items

a very small number of 1990s items

Twenty first century

a very small number of items

An important collection of around 500 bathing suits dating from the late 19th century to present day. This collection, mostly formed from the private collection of Mavis Plume, is the largest of its kind in the country and, as such, is an important resource for research.

The costume collection is patchy in many areas and it should be stressed that men's and children's wear is underrepresented in all periods.

Particular emphasis should be placed upon collecting the following:

Men's and children's wear of all periods (with certain restrictions; see Limitations on Collecting)

Pre 19th century costume (though finding such material with a local relevance is unlikely)

Early 19th century (up to 1860s) costume and accessories

Corsetry from 19th century to early 20th century

Early 20th century (1900-1920) costume and accessories

1920s cloche hats

1950s ladies' separates

Items pertaining to youth culture and rebellion of all periods including that from; Teddy Boys, Mods, Rockers, Punks, Goths and skaters

Items pertaining to ethnic minority groups represented in the Borough

1980s costumes and accessories

1990s costumes and accessories

21st century costumes and accessories

Local uniforms (bus companies', emergency services' etc.)

Bathing suits of dates and styles unrepresented in the collection already, and contemporary examples of bathing suits purchased locally.

Items for handling (see below)

Handling Collection

It is also proposed that a handling collection is formed with un-accessioned, robust items which are relatively common and washable, accessories which are small and easily transported, and items of uniform which are usually robust. All of the above can be used for training other museum professionals, school work or be suitable for reminiscence work. Local provenance will not be of great importance for the handling collection. If any donations are accepted for handling purposes it should be made clear to the donor that this may be the case.

Period of time and/or geographic area to which collecting relates:

It is proposed that Southend Museum Service actively collects examples of men's, women's and children's costume and accessories from the early 19th century (and earlier where relevant), up to the present day with an emphasis on acquiring items with relevance to Southend, whether worn, purchased or made in the area, and on acquiring men's and children's wear. An exception to this geographic rule would be items of exceptional quality or rarity which would greatly enrich the collection, or for which another suitable repository cannot be found.

Contemporary collecting should continue, with suitable items representative of their time and place accepted by donation or purchased when deemed appropriate.

Limitations on collecting

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

The following items will no longer be actively collected by Southend Museums Service, unless of exceptional local interest:

Victorian and Edwardian white work items
Babies' christening gowns
1950s day dresses
1950s cocktail and evening dresses
1970s ladies knitwear
Ladies gloves from 19th century to mid-20th century
Household textiles (unless of exceptional local interest)
Paper patterns
Needlework tools
Military Uniforms (unless its type is not already represented)

Collecting policies of other museums

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

Specific reference is made to the following museums:

Chelmsford Museums

Colchester and Ipswich Museums

Saffron Walden Museum

Braintree Museum

Archaeology Collections

These collections are representative of all periods of human occupation in south east Essex. They are of major research potential and include much that is of regional importance and, with the discovery of the 'Prittlewell Prince' in 2003, some archives of national and international importance.

The collections comprise principally

- Major assemblages in the form of site archives from archaeological excavations
- Stray finds, including some metal detected material
- Antiquarian collections
- Artefacts excavated/dredged from shipwrecks in the Thames Estuary. Of particular note, The *London*, a Designated wreck in Southend waters, regularly visited by a local licensed diver and yielding many and varied artefacts

They range in date from the Pleistocene (Ice Age/Old Stone Age) to the Victorian period.

Heritage and Environmental Records (HER)

Southend Borough Council became a Unitary Authority in April 1998 and Southend Borough's Planning Department is now responsible for maintaining its own Sites and Monuments/Heritage and Environmental Record. This is maintained by the Archaeology Curator.

Archaeological archives are maintained in accordance with Guidelines for the Preparation of Excavation Archives for Long-term Storage (UKIC 1990), Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological collections (Society of Museum Archaeologists, 1993) and Archaeological Archives, a guide to best practice in the creation, compilation, transfer and curation (AAF, 2007)

Future collecting policy

Items from outside the Museum's collecting area will not be accepted for the collections. Archaeological archives will only be accepted if they are complete, have been legally and scientifically excavated, and conform to the Guidelines for Archaeological Archive Deposition published for Essex Museums

Apart from receiving archaeological archives, active collecting will concentrate on information to complement and aid interpretation of the existing collections, together with the addition to the collections of stray finds and metal detector finds (normally through the Portable Antiquities Scheme) where provenance and ownership can be proven.

Active collecting will concentrate upon shipwreck related finds from the Thames Estuary. Acquisitions will be made through transfer from archaeological units such as Wessex Archaeology, and other bodies who have stored them over the years. Waterlogged items will not be accepted unless small and under special circumstances and most objects will be required to have undergone necessary treatment before deposition

4. Policy review procedure

The collections development 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 2019.

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 existing collections.

5. 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.

6. Acquisition procedures

- a. The museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- b. In particular, the museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- c. In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.
- d. So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.
- e. The museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

Any exceptions to the above clauses 9a, 9b, 9c, or 9e will only be because the museum is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin

- 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
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin
- 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 decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

- g. As the museum holds or intends to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005.

7. 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.

8. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. The museum will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 10a-10d, 10g and 10o/s below will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

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

9. Management of archives

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

10. Disposal procedures (see also Principles of Rationalization and Rationalization Plan 2012-14 documents)

Disposal preliminaries

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

Motivation for disposal and method of disposal

- e. When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in paragraphs 10g – 10s will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.
- f. In exceptional cases, the disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below in paragraphs 10g – 10m and 10s will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:
 - the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection
 - the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)
 - the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored

The disposal decision-making process

- g. Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

Responsibility for disposal decision-making

- h. A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.

Use of proceeds of sale

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

Disposal by gift or sale

- k. Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- l. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other specialist journals where appropriate.

- m. The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

Disposal by exchange

- n. The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- o. In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or unaccredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 10a – 10d and 10g – 10h will be followed as will the procedures in paragraphs 10p – 10s.
- p. If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.
- q. If the exchange is proposed with a non-accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will make an announcement in the Museums Journal and in other specialist journals where appropriate.
- r. Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Documenting disposal

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