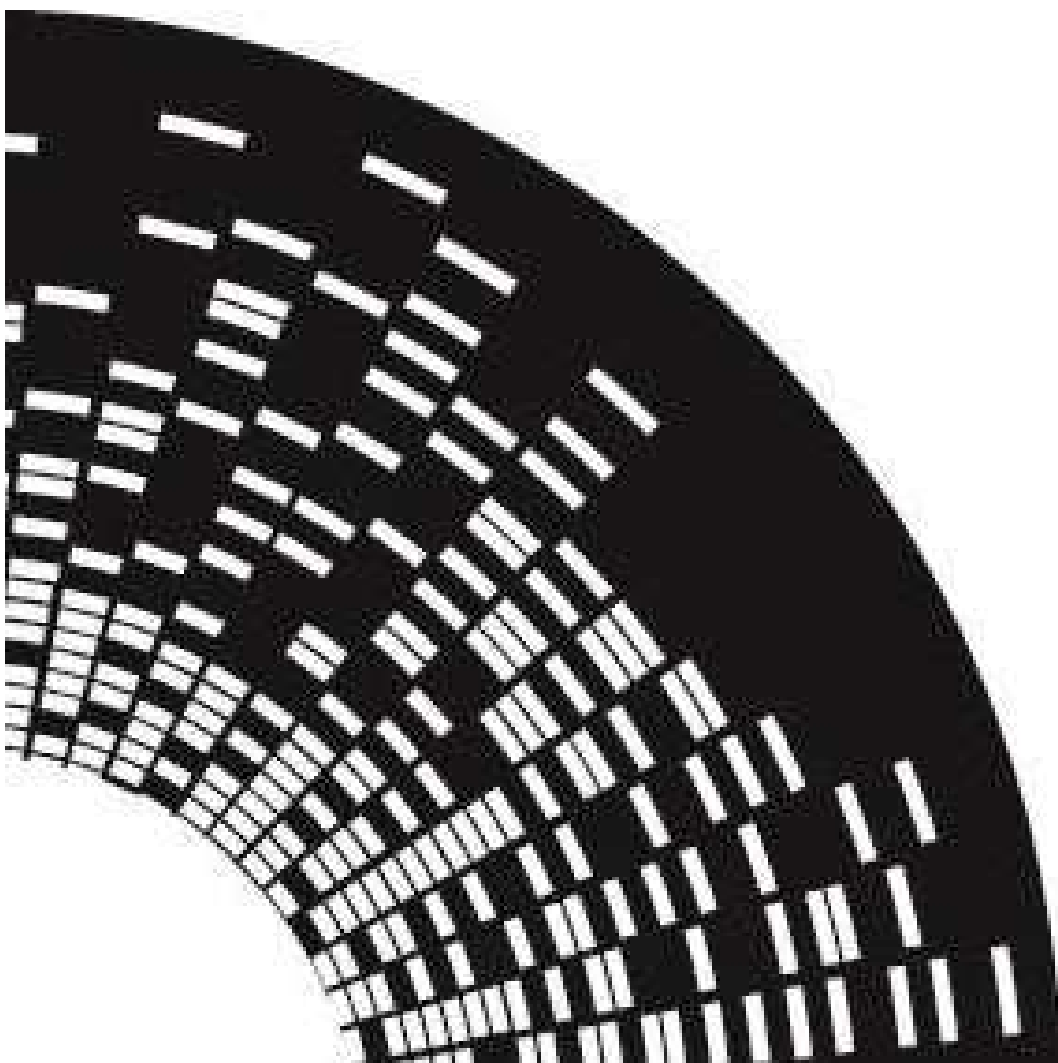




Accreditation Collections development policy



Name of museum: Penrith and Eden Museum

Name of governing body: Eden District Council

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 14 November 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: November 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:

Penrith and Eden Museum will collect, preserve, display and interpret material relating to the cultural and social history, archaeology and natural environment of Penrith and the Eden District. It will provide wide access to its collections and resources through a programme of displays, research, outreach, web pages and digitised information, and educational workshops and events. It will engage with as diverse a public as possible within available resources.

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.

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 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below 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
- extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
- the item under consideration lies outside the museum's established core collection

2. History of the collections

The origins of the museum can be traced back to the founding in 1830 of the town's Mechanic's Institute to which Harrison Wilkinson left in his will 'all the books comprising his library, all his coins, medals, and casts, for use of all the inhabitants of the town of Penrith for ever, without alienation by sale or otherwise'. Its collections passed to the Working Men's Reading Room, and in turn, in 1883 to the Penrith Free Public Library and Museum, the Penrith Local Board of Health having adopted the Free Libraries and Museums Act two years earlier. A significant amount of the Museum's original collection has survived largely due to the local authority's having assumed the role of patron at this early stage in its history.

Dr. Michael Waistell Taylor (d.1892) became the museum's first Honorary Curator. He authored 'The Old Manorial Halls of Westmorland and Cumberland' and was a keen amateur archaeologist and naturalist – the Museum still possesses his herbarium collection. Through him the museum acquired the geological collection of Vice-Admiral Wauchope of Dacre Lodge which had been bequeathed to the town on condition that it should receive suitable accommodation and be preserved for public use. The early collections were wide ranging; they included a 'Celtic' stone axe found at Redhills, old coins, shells, birds, butterflies, corals and medallion plaster casts of celebrities as well as ethnographic specimens such as Maori female dresses, Red Indian implements of war, and an Egyptian mummy and case. The latter was given to Darlington Museum in 1930 then transferred in 1961 to the Oriental Museum at Durham University, where it is now on display. Also on loan at Durham is the collection of Oriental antiquities bequeathed to the museum in 1955.

In 1906 with funding from the Carnegie Trust the Library and Museum moved to the newly converted Penrith Town Hall in Corney Square. By then the Honorary Curator was J. Charles Varty-Smith. A pioneer researcher on old glass and a frequent contributor to illustrated magazines such as The Queen, Country Life, Home and Garden and The Connoisseur, he and his daughters made a number of important gifts to the museum such as the multure dishes used for collecting tolls at the town's market.

In 1964 Penrith Urban District Council handed over its Library to Cumberland County Council and the Museum was temporarily closed for lack of accommodation. In December 1967 it was announced that Robinson's Church of England Infant School in Middlegate was to close allowing the Council to acquire the building to re-establish the museum. When the school closed in April 1971 preparations were stepped up for the conversion of the building to a 'museum-cum-information-bureau'. The Information Centre was opened in the early 1970s and a small display of museum artefacts was set up. It was not until February 1985 that Councillor R. I. Porter, Chairman of the Museum Sub-Committee, outlined at an open meeting in the Town Hall proposals for the formal re-establishment of the museum. An inaugural meeting of the Friends of Penrith Museum was held on 5 March and on 9 July 1985 the Penrith Museum was officially re-opened to the public in Robinson's School.

In 1988 Eden District Council resolved to undertake a scheme of major alterations and extensions to the building, and by 1990 it had been completely renovated with additional office space and storage accommodation for the museum. A grant from the Museums and Galleries Commission enabled the building of an environmentally controlled store, further grants for the scheme being received from the North West Museums Service, English Heritage, Northern Arts and Cumbria County Council. It was officially opened by the playwright Colin Welland on 20 April 1990 and in January 1991 it was awarded Full Registered Status by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

Further renovations were carried out in 2010 with the installation of LED lighting throughout the galleries, the provision of hearing loops and disabled door access and visual equipment (plasma screen). At the same time new Click Netherfield Evolution Demountables and Prism cases were installed.

Key recent acquisitions include paintings by Jacob Thompson: 'The Close of the Vintage' (acq. 1997), 'The Height of Ambition' (acq. 2006) and 'The Druids Collecting Mistletoe' (acq. 2015). Also material acquired through the provision of the Treasure Act including gold and silver artefacts, Roman earring and 18th Century posy rings (3) and silver medieval brooches (3) and silver late medieval pilgrim badge. Also the Newby hoard of Roman Coins and Thomas Bland of Reagill sketchbook. Other key acquisitions include Alan Stones' drawings towards 'Eden' and Morsman painting 'Palenque'.

3. An overview of current collections

International/national dimensions

In the fine and decorative arts the museum has some material of national and wider importance. This comprises the Dutch/Flemish artists Wouwermans, Brouwer, Teniers the Younger and Heemskerck, and the Italian artist Gaetano Gandolfi. There is also work by Hoppner, Grisct and Ward Binks.

National/local dimensions

Falling into the category of national importance as well as locally significant are key works by the artist Jacob Thompson of Penrith whose paintings are of growing interest. There are works by distinguished contemporary local artists eg Alan Stones and Lorna Graves and a wide range of prints of views in the locality by artists of repute eg Turner, T H Fielding, Farrington, William Green, Knyff, William Bellers, James Clarke, Stubbs and the Buck brothers.

There is some important nationally significant archaeological material, especially prehistoric rock art and Neolithic artefacts, and Roman finds from Borrowbridge, Brougham and Plumpton Roman forts.

Regional/local dimensions

These collections are a unique and substantial profile of the cultural history of Penrith and the Eden Valley, augmented by archives including an outstanding collection of photographs of the area. They have been substantially increased by acquisition over the past twelve years. Databases and documentary resources highlight their importance. They are categorised as follows:

Art

Local paintings by Jacob Thompson; John Thompson of Penrith; Edward Hopley watercolours, oil paintings and artist's archive; Thomas Bland of Reagill drawings, William S. Cowper, Annabelle Smith, Fred Lawson; Emma Watson; Lorna Graves; Alan Stones.

Archaeology

Stone and Bronze Age; representative collection of Neolithic axes, flint arrowheads; microliths, three rare and important examples of local rock art

Roman; finds including querns and millstones, pottery and coins, coin hoard from Newby, oil lamps and various artefacts predominantly from Roman forts at Brougham, Borrowbridge and Plumpton.

Records of local excavations deposited by Archaeological Units (eg Oxford Archaeology North).

Medieval

Penrith town seal; medieval coins; chalice and paten; halberd; bronze cauldron and tripod ewer; glazed cistern; Bellarmine jugs; carved stone head; stone cross shaft socket. St. George pilgrim badge and brooches.

Social History

Artefacts from Penrith and Eden mainly pertaining to trades and occupations (eg brewing), notices, bottles, photographs, bill heads: large collection wooden patters: documents and photographs from Stalkers Castlegate iron foundry: clocks, including Porthouse of Penrith: tailoring – tailor's tools and requisites: military and other uniforms including medals eg Westmorland and Cumberland Yeomanry and Inglewood Rifles: Penrith Town Band and Eden Valley Band of Hope uniforms and regalia: medals of Penrith Crimean hero Trooper Pearson and other Pearson memorabilia: William Jameson wrestling trophies: Wetheriggs and other potteries, including commemorative and souvenir wares: items relating to school education, including attendance medals and toys: railway memorabilia.

The markets – measures, seals, multure dishes, town crier's bells

Civil law, order and administration – key and handcuffs from Penrith Gaol, policing material from former County Constabulary Museum at Carleton Hall, Lord Whitelaw memorabilia, Percy Toplis monocle and other associated items, civil defence and home guard material.

Domestic items – including lighting, cookware, clogs and other items of dress.

Geology & Natural history

Significant collections of local minerals, rocks and fossils. Local Herbaria and entymology collections. Taxidermy and trophy horns, shells (Trumpet and Bailer). Elephant tooth excavated from Penrith Castle.

Photographs

Over 1350 prints, negatives and glass plates of local views

Archives

Wide-ranging collection of written and printed documents relating to items in the collection and aspects of the history of Penrith and Eden. Important documents relating to the Jacobite Rebellion, Musgraves of Edenhall estate papers, a wealth of trade bill heads, minute books of Penrith Scientific & Literary Society, PUDC and other Council papers, wartime memorabilia, map collection, charity papers.

Handling Collection

150 replicas and illustrative handling materials, not accessioned as part of main collection.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

General criteria:

- To collect, preserve, display and interpret objects of historical, environmental or cultural interest relating to Penrith and the Eden District together with supporting information such as documents, maps and photographs.
- To act as a centre for the study of such objects and material by providing exhibitions, events, information and educational facilities for local residents and school children as well as visitors to the area.
- To increase and deepen public understanding of the historical development of the town of Penrith and the area administered by Eden District Council and to promote the appreciation of its landscape, history, culture and economic heritage within available resources.

Specific criteria:

- To acquire local human history material from all periods of time, together with associated documentary or other evidence, relating to the people of Penrith and the Eden District, and
- to their social and economic history – for display, research, reference and educational purposes. New areas of collecting include the history of rock climbing and mountaineering in the Penrith and Eden area and mining heritage. The museum will seek to collect representative examples from the Wetheriggs Pottery from the 1860s onwards.
- To acquire small quantities of non-local human history material for comparative educational purposes, where similar material exists locally, or where it complements or fills gaps in the existing collections. (eg coins, Neolithic tools)

- To acquire fine or decorative art objects from all periods of time where the artist/producer has close connections with, or where the subject matter relates to Penrith or the Eden District – for display, research, reference and educational purposes. The museum will add to its collection of local artists, including Jacob Thompson, Edward G. Hobley and Lorna Graves. We will collect works from Brian Cowper, currently not represented in the collections.
- To acquire local geological specimens and associated documentary or other evidence, with due regard to conservation interests, for display, research, reference and educational purposes. The specimens and material will concern:
 1. The geological history, stratigraphy and structure of the Eden District
 2. Evidence of former life (fossils) from the Eden District
 3. The mineralization of the Eden District (minerals and mineral suites)
 4. The mining and other economic geological resources of the Eden District (iron ore, base metal ores, spar minerals, sands and gravels, building stones, roadstones, clays, limestone, gypsum and anhydrite).
- To acquire small quantities of geological material whether local or non-local where the collector has close associations with Penrith or the Eden District.
- To continue to develop separate schools/community handling collections that complement the topics offered in schools' workshops and community outreach sessions.
- The Museum will not seek to acquire Botanical or Zoological specimens, except for certain specimens relating to and complementing the existing collections and displays.

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.

Due to pressure on space in the museum storeroom, and low usage, we will seek to transfer some archival records, and archaeological excavation archives, to other relevant organisations eg Cumbria Archives Service. We will progress the transfer of some natural science material, such as trophy heads, to another institution following recommendation of the Biological Collections review 2010. We will be open to requests for the borrowing of material by suitable bodies/ organisations (in addition to museums and galleries) where minimum levels of security and environmental conditions are met.

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):

Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery, Carlisle Kendal Museum

Abbot Hall Art Gallery and the Museum of Lakeland Life Keswick Museum

Cumbria Archive Service

Penrith and Carlisle Library Services

8. Archival holdings

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

9. Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

In general the museum curators follow the guidance of the Acquisition Policy and seek the agreement of management and/ or Portfolio holders where cost, storage or conservation issues are involved.

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

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

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 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.

12 Archaeological material

12.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (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.

12.2 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

13 Exceptions

13.1 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

14.1 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 Disposal procedures

- 15.1** All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.
- 15.2** 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.
- 15.3** 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.
- 15.4** 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.
- 15.5** 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.
- 15.6** 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.
- 15.7** 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.
- 15.8** 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).
- 15.9** 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.
- 15.10** 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.
- 15.11** 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.
- 15.12** 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

15.13 The museum will not dispose of items by exchange.

Disposal by destruction

- 15.14** If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 15.15** 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.
- 15.16** 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.
- 15.17** 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.
- 15.18** 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.