

Cabinet

16 March 2023

Museum Disposal of Items which do not meet the Collection Development Policy

Recommendation

That Cabinet approves the process of disposing of the identified items in Warwickshire Museum Service's collection which do not meet the requirements of the Museum Collection Development Policy (approved by Cabinet in January 2020) as listed in Appendix A.

1. Purpose of Report

- 1.1 This report seeks Cabinet's approval to dispose of items in Warwickshire Museum Service's collection (the collection) which do not meet the Museum Collection Development Policy 2020-2025 (the policy) which was approved by Cabinet on 30 January 2020. This policy requires Cabinet to approve disposal of museum objects regardless of value.

2. Executive Summary

2.1 Background

- 2.1.1 There are a number of items (identified in **Appendix A**) which have previously been added to the collection, and are owned by WCC, which do not meet the requirements of the policy.
- 2.1.2 The majority of items in section A of appendix A were acquired circa 1990s to be used as set dressing at St. John's House Museum and having not been used have been in storage since that time.
- 2.1.3 The items do not meet the requirements of the policy, as they are in poor condition, are unlikely to be used for display or of limited engagement potential and will not be used for set dressing at St. John's House Museum or any other Heritage Culture Warwickshire (HCW) sites.
- 2.1.4 The other items in Section A of Appendix A are items in the collections which are duplicates and/or have no provenance (either at all or for Warwickshire). These objects are therefore of no use either for display or study purposes.

- 2.1.5 These items in section B of Appendix A were acquired circa 1980s and are in a state of advanced historic deterioration and/or disrepair, and of no potential for display or educational use.
- 2.1.6 The items are either duplicated by better-preserved examples or are not related to Warwickshire's heritage, and as such do not meet the policy.
- 2.1.7 In line with best practice and the policy, any items which do not meet the policy should be disposed of in accordance with the Museum Association Code of Ethics¹ and the Spectrum standard (the UK collection management standard that is also used around the world²).

3. Timescales associated with the decision and next steps

- 3.1 Following Cabinet approval, the disposal of the identified items requires the following of the Spectrum standard (the standard).
- 3.2 The standard requires "a minimum period of two months for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed"³ by other museums or appropriate bodies before other forms of disposal can be completed.

4. Environmental Implications

- 4.1 None arising directly from this report.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 Following Cabinet approval, items will be offered to other museums or appropriate bodies in the first instance in accordance with the policy. There are established protocols for museum staff to do this via sector networks. This may involve donations. However, should disposal be by sale, the collective value of the items is in the low £'000's and will be accounted for in accordance with the Policy approved by Cabinet in 2020 and the Museum Association Toolkit which requires that "any money raised as a result of disposal through sale should be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the museum's collection."⁴

¹ 'Code of Ethics for Museums', *Museum Association*, <https://www.museumsassociation.org/app/uploads/2020/06/20012016-code-of-ethics-single-page-10.pdf>, accessed on 25th October 2022

² 'Spectrum', *Collections Trust*, <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/spectrum>, accessed on 25th October 2022

³ 'Deaccessioning and disposal', *Collections Trust*, <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/deaccessioning-and-disposal-suggested-procedure>, accessed on 25th October 2022

⁴ 'Disposal Toolkit: Guidelines for Museums', *Museums Association*, <https://ma-production.ams3.digitaloceanspaces.com/app/uploads/2020/06/18145447/31032014-disposal-toolkit-8.pdf>, accessed on 25th October 2022

Appendix

Appendix A – Items identified for disposal

Background papers

None

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This report has been shared with the following members:
Councillors Adrian Warwick, Parminder Singh Birdi, Sarah Boad, Caroline Phillips,
and Will Roberts (Chair, Vice Chair, and Party Spokespersons of the Resources and
Fire & Rescue OSC)

Appendix A – Items identified for disposal

Section A – Social History items

The objects from the Social History collection and recent collections review at St Johns, with a small number of objects from the Museum Collections Centre at Hawkes Point.

This review was carried out with reference to the Museum Association Code of Ethics and the Disposal Toolkit. The criteria used for determining disposals were as follows:

- Significance/provenance (in line with Collections Development policy)
- Condition assessment/completeness (includes potential cost of conservation and long-term storage)
- Documentation (including whether it has been accessioned, catalogued etc)
- Storage housing
- Public engagement potential

Items currently at St. John’s House (items with “none” recorded under objective number have not been formally added to collection.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
69/1971	Slaughterer’s pulley wheel	Has a Warwickshire provenance but is large and includes beams as well as the wheel itself. Condition is fair, but engagement potential is limited. It could not be displayed at Market Hall Museum or reconstructed appropriately at Hawkes Point and presents long term storage / preservation issues.
126/1967	WCC cheque signing machine	Poor condition. One of a number of items handed over to the Museum Service from WCC when old equipment was replaced and no engagement potential for contemporary audiences.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
1969/53	Apple mill and press	Poor condition and a lack of storage space. No / limited opportunities to display or present to the public.
183/1978	3 fire grates from Woodhouse St, Warwick	Poor condition and lack of storage space. Unlikely to be used for display and limited engagement potential.
137/1969	'Deans' washing machine	Poor condition and no engagement potential
H7507 126/1982 or 77/1979f	Washing machine with mangle	Documentation and provenance unclear. Poor condition and no engagement potential
100/1972	Two-oven kitchen range Hassal and Singleton - received in pieces	Poor condition and therefore no engagement potential.
1982/9, H7090	Kitchen range made for cottage at Stoneleigh village	Poor condition (oven door missing) and lack of storage space. Unlikely to be used for display and limited engagement potential.
1971/135 a/b/c	Long handled Fork(a), hand cart frame(b), iron wheel tyre(c)	Incomplete and limited engagement potential.
113/1967	Handmill c 1853	Incomplete and in poor condition.
115/1983	Beatty Washing Machine	Complete, but in poor condition and lack of storage space. Limited engagement potential
49/1978	Ewbank mangle	Incomplete, in poor condition and little provenance information.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
10/1969	Sack beam scales from Nuneaton flour mill	In pieces, poor condition and lack of storage space. Limited engagement potential.
140/1969	Roasting Jack or Hastener	Damaged and in poor condition. Duplicate (one in St Johns kitchen).
H7090	Cooking range 'DAPPER'	Incomplete (door and other fittings missing) poor condition and long-term storage implications.
226/1983/ H8950	Lantern for gas lamp	Possibly damaged and replaced lantern from gas lamp at St John's House (by the side of the house). Incomplete and in poor condition.
141/1978a, b and c	Cast iron bedroom grates and fire baskets x 3	Poor condition and documentation not clearly linked to these items. Limited engagement potential.
None	Sewing machine in box	Duplication (there are a number of sewing machines in the collection). Limited opportunity for display and limited engagement potential.
None	Mangle, green painted cast iron stand. 'The Craven Wringer'	No documentation found nor provenance. Duplicate.
None	Weedkilling implement	No documentation. Possibly old museum garden equipment rather than collections.
None	Long shafted lawn roller	No documentation. Possibly old museum garden equipment rather than collections.
None	Bandsaw	No documentation. Possibly old museum garden equipment rather than collections.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
None	Metal poles and fixings, painted black	Possibly linked to a fire pump, but no documentation found and function not confirmed.
None	Possible water tank	No documentation nor provenance. Use / purpose unclear.
None	Pulley or pipe part	No documentation nor provenance. Use / purpose unclear.
None	Large cast iron hinges and upright	No documentation. Possibly old museum fixings (damaged and presumably replaced).
None	Pulley system	No documentation nor provenance. Use / purpose unclear.
None	Wooden carrier and wheeled frame– possibly a pram	No documentation nor provenance. Use / purpose unclear.
None	Valor Gas heater	No documentation nor provenance. Duplicate
None	Roller from Ironing machine	No documentation. Poor condition and incomplete.
None	Washing dolly	No documentation. Poor condition
None	Horncastle and Son Leamington – possibly a door for cooking range	No documentation and not fully identified. Poor condition and incomplete
None	Small metal container with tap fitting	No documentation and not fully identified.
None	Assorted metal pipes	No documentation and not fully identified. Poor condition and incomplete

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
None	Semi-circular lid	No documentation and not fully identified. Poor condition and incomplete
None	Wooden shaft, pointed at one end	Part of larger object, therefore incomplete and unidentifiable
None	Wooden panel (possibly from a wall)	No documentation. Possibly a fixture in St John's House, but removed. Not collections nor relevant to collections.
None	Possible large handle and drain key	No documentation. Unidentified, if it is a drain key, may be linked to house and not collections.
None	Two iron wall brackets	No documentation and not fully identified. Possibly related to house and not collections.
None	Iron range with grate and thistles and lion decoration	No documentation. Poor condition and incomplete
None	Unidentified metal panel with fitting	No documentation and not fully identified. Poor condition and incomplete
None	Unidentified metal panel	No documentation and not fully identified. Poor condition and incomplete
None	Female sparrowhawk	Very poor condition, wing, body and eye damage, with better examples held within the collection. No value or potential for display or other public engagement, without costly repairs.

Items currently at Hawke Point (items with “none” recorded under objective number have not been formally added to collection.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
141/1977	'Lite' Mangle, spanner and booklet	Bought in Oxfam in 1977 for £5.00. No provenance (possibly bought specifically for St John's kitchen and not used).
134/1979, H4622	Carpenter's Drawers	The set of drawers are from Warwickshire, but they are in a bad condition. There is significant damage due to old wood worm which means the frame can no longer stand and therefore the drawers have to be stored separately. There are cracks developing in some of the shelving panels and the joints are coming apart. Not suitable for display and very limited engagement potential.
139/1967 H2805	Copper stick (for stirring laundry in a heated copper washing basin)	Part of a house clearance on the death of a resident of Main Street, Monks Kirkby. The object is a short stick with no additional features. Condition is poor, it is split and damage to both ends, evidence of scorching-possibly from when it was in use. The stick has very limited engagement potential.
None	No 1 Mangle Manchester Bradford and London	No documentation nor provenance. Duplicate.
None	Mangle top George Michie Darlington	No documentation nor provenance. Duplicate.
None	Woollen felt carriage/car blanket with 6 racoon pelts applied to one side	No documentation nor provenance. In poor condition with long-term storage implications. No engagement potential.

Section B – Natural History items

The objects for disposal were identified during a review of the taxidermy collection, following the collections move from Montague Road to the new Museum Collections Centre at Hawkes Point, 2020. This review was carried out with reference to the Museum Association Code of Ethics and the Disposal Toolkit. The criteria used for determining disposals were as follows:

- Significance/provenance (in line with Collections Development policy)
- Condition assessment/completeness (includes potential cost of conservation and long-term storage)
- Public engagement potential

All specimens lack Warwickshire provenance unless stated otherwise and are currently at Hawkes Point.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
30/1963 F1,F2,F3,F4	Ruff x 4	Very poor condition, with significant damage to the fourth bird. No potential for display or other engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
47/1966	Moorhen	Very poor condition, in a state of physical disintegration. No potential for display or other engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
191/1968	Knot	Very poor condition, in a state of physical disintegration. No potential for display or other engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
113/OCNH - 2005/1	Curlew	Very poor condition, broken wing and broken mount. No potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
168/1969/A	Bar-tailed godwit	Condition is very poor, neck is badly damaged. No potential for public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
77/1981	Wren (?)	Most of body missing: very poor condition and no engagement potential.
157/1955-21	Goldcrest	Detached leg and broken mount; very poor condition. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
123OCNH 2005/1	Richardson's skua	Very poor condition, one eye missing. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
90/1967	Whitethroat	Very poor condition, one eye missing. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair. Collected from Warwick.
(AZ/NH)	Moorhen	Broken feet and feathers, very poor condition. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
35/OCNH 2005/1	Common scoter	Very poor condition, one eye missing. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
31/OCNH 2005/1	Common pochard	Very poor condition, numerous feathers missing. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
8/1967 b and c	Fox cubs	Specimen (b) has suffered loss of fur on shoulder due to past infestation; (c) has suffered loss of fur and skin on legs due to past infestation. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
33/1963b	Lamb	Fur has completely disappeared from the front right leg, possibly due to past infestation. Body as a whole is very dirty, tail appears to be broken. No value or potential for display or other public engagement.
135/1962 K1	Tree pipit	Mount is missing, and a leg is broken. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair.
71OCNH 2005/1	Peregrine falcon and thrush	Birds are no longer upright. Falcon: left wing broken, tail feathers disintegrating or previously eaten by pests, thrush's head broken and condition of feathers very poor. No value or potential for display or other public engagement.
135/1962/D3	Greenfinch	Left wing is broken. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly repair and conservation.
94/1962/A	Trecreeper	Loss of numerous feathers. No value or potential for display or other public engagement without costly remedial conservation and repair. Collected from Wellesbourne.
148/OCNH 2001/1	Tawny owl	Detached from branch, which is in very poor condition. Specimen has lost feathers and suffered structural damage, especially on its head and front. No value or potential for engagement.
48/2015	Otter	Much historical pest damage and staining. No value or potential for display or other public engagement.

Object number(s)	Object Description	Reason for disposal
NH/206	Canada goose	Very poor condition, mould on inside of case, mould and other damage on feathers in several places, feathers very thin in places, mould to back paper, piece of wooden case carcass splintering at back right corner. No value or potential for display or other public engagement, without costly repairs.
NH/152	Ruddy Shelduck	Very poor condition, glass cracked from top to bottom of case on one side, areas around the head and neck are missing feathers, extensive damage to head and tail. No value or potential for display or other public engagement, without costly repairs.