

## **Purbeck Mining and Mineral Museum - Collections Development Policy**

The Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum is part of the Swanage Railway Trust

Date of approval of the governing body:

Date at which this policy is due for review: Two years from the date of the approval by CoM of SRT

### **1. Statement of Purpose**

The purpose of the Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum is the preservation and interpretation of the Purbeck extractive industries, especially those associated with the creation of the Swanage Railway branch line. In the first instance this includes all aspects of the Purbeck ball clay industry including mining and mining equipment, associated infrastructure and equipment (especially narrow gauge railways), and all aspects of associated social and economic history. In addition, the Museum aims to preserve and interpret materials relating to the industries and social history of shale and shale gas, Purbeck limestones, other clays, aggregates and chalk, and oil. This may include geological material for preservation, research or interpretation purposes. The Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum exists to enable access to information and material to local people, those whose families have been involved in the industries and visitors to the area.

This document lays out the policy to be used in the proactive development of the collection of the Purbeck Mineral and Mining Museum. It lays out the geographical, temporal and subject areas for collections acquisition, and defines limitations on collecting, relations with other museums' collecting areas and dealing with acquisitions which are not intended to be part of the official collections of the Museum.

### **2. An overview of the current collections**

The existing collections consist of equipment, artefacts and ephemera related to the ball clay extraction industry of the Isle of Purbeck, Dorset. The core collection includes the buildings and some fittings of the museum premises itself, as well as locomotives, rolling stock, larger mining equipment, and miners' personal effects. The supporting collections include ephemera and photographs relating to the miners and clay merchants and their families, as well as film footage and oral history. Most of this material is not original, but copies, and much of it is in electronic form. The collection focuses on material directly related to the Isle of Purbeck, but also includes related material associated to the extraction industry by thematic association, products or via the families and companies engaged in the industry and its international trade. The collections largely cover the late 18th Century to the later 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

### **3. Themes and priorities for future collecting**

Themes for future collecting include:

- Artefacts, equipment (and technology), images, film, audio and ephemera associated with the Purbeck ball clay extraction industry, in particular material associated with the narrow gauge railways, including locomotives and rolling stock or parts thereof with a

direct connection to the Purbeck Ball clay industry and the development and use of the Swanage Branch line;

- Artefacts, images, film and ephemera associated with the companies, miners and their families associated with the Purbeck clay extraction industry, in particular where it illustrates the social history of the ball clay industry;
- Artefacts, equipment (and technology), images, film, audio and ephemera associated with other Purbeck extractive industries such as, but not exclusively, **shale** (exploited during later prehistory and the Romano-British period, and again in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> Centuries for shale oil), **oil and natural gas** (being an area of early modern development of onshore drilling), **salt** (exploited from the later prehistoric to later medieval period), **Purbeck limestone** (exploited from the Romano-British period onward, and latterly associated with the development of the Swanage branch line), **chalk** (utilised as ballast for railways as well as production of lime for agricultural use and cement production during the 19<sup>th</sup> Century) and **other clay** extraction, production and transportation (e.g. regionally/nationally important later prehistoric and Romano-British pottery industries, other post-medieval clay used for architectural ceramics and bricks).
- Geological specimens from the local area to provide illustrative material for displays.

Material may not be considered for collection where it is deemed that sufficient similar material already exists within the collection, and/or the material is not of suitable provenance, quality or condition, and/or is not of sufficient rarity to justify its acquisition. All material should have a clear link with Purbeck, except for where an alternative example of an item provides a useful addition to the collection for educational or display purposes.

#### **4. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal**

As the collections are at a developmental stage, it is not thought that at present there is any scope for rationalisation or disposal, and it is felt that responsible collecting as described in item 3 will ensure that the collection is developed responsibly. However, this clause will be held under review.

#### **5. Limitations on Collecting**

The museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangement 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. Decision making will in particular take account of the availability of suitable storage, and will be developed in line with projects to make enhanced storage facilities available. Collecting will also take account of the expertise and funding available to care for items in the collection and will also evolve in line with staff training and availability of funds for conservation.

#### **6. 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 define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following museums:

- Swanage Railway Museum, Corfe Castle Station (Swanage Railway and its predecessors)
- Wareham Town Museum (The heritage of Wareham town)
- Dorset County Museum (Dorset Social history and archaeology)
- Purbeck Stone Museum, Langton Matravers (The Purbeck stone extraction industries)
- Poole Museum (Industrial heritage of the Poole Harbour area)
- Swanage Heritage Centre (Development of the railways and local industry)
- Corfe Castle Museum (The heritage of Corfe Castle village)

## 7. Policy Review Procedure

This policy will be reviewed by the Committee of the Purbeck Mineral and Mining Group every two years. The revisions will be recommended to the Museums and Education Group and the Council of Management of the Swanage Railway Trust for adoption into the Trust's Policies.

## 8. 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.

The PMMM will acquire objects and materials which are not covered by this policy and which are not intended to enter the permanent collections of the Museum. This is the case for material which is obtained for the following reasons:

- Display purposes (e.g. examples of equipment not in the collections);
- Public activity and educational purposes (e.g. working models, handling activities for learners);
- The functioning of industrial equipment and working narrow gauge railway;
- Material donated with a view to disposal to raise funds.

All materials obtained by the PMMM of any value for the first three of these purposes will not be entered into the **Accessions Register**, but will be entered into an **asset register**. These items are not subject to the needs of the collection disposal policy, but shall be disposed of when necessary with due propriety.

Material donated with a view to sale must be clearly identified and agreed with the owner. Documentation must be completed which makes it clear that it is a donation in lieu of funds, and not an item intended for retention as part of the PMMM collections. Gift Aid should be sought where applicable.

## 9. Acquisition procedure

- 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. 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.
- d. 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.
- e. 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 as defined by the Treasure Act 1996.
- f. 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. The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

The ***PMMM Accessions Procedure*** is detailed more fully in a separate document. However, in essence it consists of:

- ***Entry Form*** and ***Item Entry Procedure***
- Decision making regarding Acquisition – recommendations from the Museums and Education Manager to the PMMMG Committee;
- Accessions register and allocation of a unique number;
- Marking object with its unique number;
- Documentation of the object and maintenance of the location record utilising the objects unique number.

## 10. 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.

### **11. The management of archives**

The PMMMG is in possession of and likely to accrue further archival material. The vast majority of this material comprises secondary copies of originals and not original material. It exists in both paper and electronic formats. Where paper copies are received, all material will have an electronic copy taken, and a hard copy on archival quality paper will be printed of appropriate electronic documents. The file formats to be used, and the archiving process both for hard copy and electronic material is fully documented in the ***PMMM Archives Procedure***.

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).

### **12. Disposal Procedures**

These paragraphs apply to all objects which have been accessioned as part of the collection of the museum. Disposal of other materials and equipment in the possession of the Museum (referred to in Section 8) shall be disposed of in accordance with principles agreed by the PMMM committee. Should accessioned items need to be disposed of the following procedure will apply.

#### *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 12g-12s 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 13g-13m and 13o/s 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.
- 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 13a-13d and 13g-13h will be followed as will the procedures in paragraphs 13p-13s.
- 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.