

Foxton Canal Museum



ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL POLICY

Last review February 2011

Governing Body: Foxton Inclined Plane Trust

Date approved by governing body: ?????

Minuit Reference of Committee meeting ?

Date at which policy due for review: December 2015

- 1. Existing collections, including the subjects or themes for collecting**
 - a. The object collection tells the story of the Foxton Inclined Plane Boat Lift, Foxton Locks and the canals closely associated with it. Approximately 2500 objects are currently in the collection.
 - b. Objects include remnants of the Boat lift, and locks, parts of boats, 1 x 70ft work boat and 2 x ice breakers (boats). The rarest items are; the lift remains (including metal fragments and one large pulley wheel), legging boards used to take boats through the local tunnels, a Tunnel Brush and a Tunnel Lamp.
 - c. The Archive collection consists of documents and copies of documents relating to the Lift, locks and local canals but includes items from canal history in general; however these are often common or copied items to provide background information rather than originals. There are approximately 4,000 items in the archive, including the archive of the Old Union Canals Society.
 - d. The collection is driven by the FIPT's commitment to education in relation to the Inclined Plane, Foxton locks, the inland waterways and the need to keep the displays relevant to schools and other visitors.
- 2. Criteria governing future collecting policy, including the subjects or themes for collecting**
 - a. New objects will only be collected if:
 - i. The object is important to the history of the boat lift.
 - ii. The object improves the quality of the collection.
- 3. Archive material will be collected if:**
 - a. The item relates directly to the Inclined Plane Boat Lift or Foxton Locks.
 - b. The item relates to other boat lifts or inland waterways, if it is a common item, is a copy, and adds important information to the collection. Original items will be offered to the appropriate museum.

4. Period of time and/or geographical area to which collecting relates

- a. The primary collection relates to the period from 1800 to the present day
- b. Is closely related to Foxton Locks and the South Leicestershire / North Northamptonshire waterways.
- c. Archive material from any inland waterway provided that it doesn't conflict with the statements above.

5. Limitations on collecting

- a. 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.
 - i. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as inadequate staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- b. The ability to display the object and provide a suitable environment for the objects long term preservation.

6. Collecting policies of other museums

- a. 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.
- b. Specific reference is made to the following museum(s):
- c. Harborough Museum
- d. Leicestershire County Museums
- e. Northamptonshire County Museums
- f. Stoke Bruerne Waterways Museum (part of NWM)
- g. The National Waterways Museum, (The Waterways Trust)

7. Policy review procedure

- a. The Acquisition and Disposal 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 noted above.
- b. The Regional Agency / Museum Council / or their successors will be notified of any changes to the Acquisition and Disposal Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of existing collections.

8. 7. Acquisitions not covered by the policy

- a. 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.

9. 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 DCMS in 2005.
- d. The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.
- 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, such as reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure as defined by the Treasure Act 1996 (in England, Northern Ireland and Wales) or reporting finds through the Treasure Trove procedure (in Scotland).
- f. Any exceptions to the above clauses 8a, 8b, 8c, or 8e will only be because the museum is either:
- g. acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin; or

- h. acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded; or
- i. acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin; or
- j. in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970.
- k. 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.

10. Spoliation

- a. 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. 10. Management of archives

- a. 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 (3rd ed., 2002).

12. Disposal procedures

- a. By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and should possess (or intend to acquire) permanent collections in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body accepts the principle that, except for sound curatorial reasons, there is a strong presumption against the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.
- b. The museum will establish that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Any decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken only after due consideration by its governing body (Trust Council)
- c. 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.
- d. Decisions to dispose of items will not be made with the principal aim of generating funds.
- e. Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions but in

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

- f. A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator of the collection acting alone.
- g. Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift, exchange or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- h. If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museums to which it was offered directly, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal, and in other professional journals where appropriate.
- i. The announcement 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.
- j. 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.

13. Approved by the Foxton Inclined Plane Trust on Date Minute number

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14. Chairman, ?

15. Company Secretary, Michael G Beech

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