



Collections Development Policy

National Museums NI

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1. Relationship to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation:

1.1 Museum's statement of purpose

1.1.1 The Board of Trustees of the National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland (hereafter referred to as 'National Museums NI') is required under Article 4 (1) of the *Museums & Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998* (hereafter referred to as 'the Order'), to 'care for, preserve and add to the objects in its collections'.

1.1.2 The areas of interest to be covered by the organisation are defined in the Order, Article 4 (1) (d), as:

- art, history, and science
- the culture and way of life of people; and
- the migration and settlement of people

Article 4 (2) states that 'the Board shall have particular regard to the heritage of Northern Ireland'.

1.1.3 National Museums NI also collects items of international significance that directly relate to the areas of interest outlined above; provide context, both historic and contemporary, for items already in the collection; and, demonstrate Northern Ireland's place in the world and the impact of world events on Northern Ireland.

1.1.4 National Museums NI's vision is:

Celebrate who we are: telling the stories of our past, challenging our present, shaping our future

1.1.5 National Museums NI's mission is:

- Develop, manage and care for our collections to benefit current and future generations
- Make our collections accessible to the widest possible audiences
- Play a leading role in the economic and social wellbeing and future of this place
- Build an organisation where people feel valued

1.1.6 National Museums NI's Corporate Strategy 2025-2030 sets out three core principles and four impact areas:

Core Principles

- Ensuring museums are for everyone
- Connecting our collections with people
- Delivering a future-focussed, effective museum service

Impact Areas

- Identity
- Peacebuilding

- Environment
- Innovation

1.2 Purpose of policy

1.2.1 This policy is part of the National Museums NI's Collections Management framework which consists of:

- Collections Development Policy
- Collections Information and Access Policy
- Collections Care and Conservation Policy

1.2.2 The purpose of the Collections Development Policy is to ensure that National Museums NI fulfils its responsibilities in relation to the acquisition and disposal of collections, in line with its statutory obligations, Corporate Strategy, and annual business plans.

1.2.3 The constituent museum sites within National Museums NI are:

- Ulster Museum
- Ulster Folk Museum
- Ulster Transport Museum
- Ulster American Folk Park

1.2.4 All sites within National Museums NI are Accredited Museums The Accreditation Scheme is administered by Arts Council England (ACE), which sets nationally agreed standards for UK Museums.

1.2.5 In line with the Accreditation Scheme this policy details how National Museums NI will:

- Acquire new items for the collections
- Dispose of items from the collections
- Maintain best practice in the acquisition and disposal of collections

1.2.6 The Board of Trustees will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.2.7 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 Board of Trustees, 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.

1.2.8 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

1.2.9 National Museums NI 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 finances, staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

1.2.10 National Museums NI will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the Board of Trustees or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

1.2.11 National Museums NI will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

1.3 Policy Implementation

1.3.1 National Museums NI's policies and procedures are informed by relevant legal and ethical frameworks, alongside appropriate national and international standards, as set out in Appendix 1.

1.3.2 Managers should ensure that the Collections Management Framework and supporting procedures/plans are followed in the areas for which they are responsible.

The following strategies, plans and procedures, in particular, are relevant to this policy:

- Collections Care and Conservation Plan 2022
- Documentation Plan 2007, 2014
- Environmental Sustainability Policy 2022
- Event Hire Policy: Ulster Museum 2012
- Event Hire Policy: Ulster Folk & Transport Museum 2014
- Ethics Policy 2020
- Exhibition Policy 2023
- Human Remains Policy 2022
- Intellectual Rights Policy 2013
- Integrated Pest Management Policy 2014
- Lending and Borrowing Policy 2022
- Major Incident and Emergency Plan 2024
- Research Policy 2022
- Working Collections Policy 2014

1.3.3 Training, where relevant, will be provided to support the delivery of the Collections Development Policy.

1.3.4 All National Museums NI staff should strive to meet the responsibilities outlined within this policy.

1.4 Policy Review and Amendments

- 1.4.1 The Collections Development Policy will be published and reviewed in full at least once every three years.
- 1.4.2 Date at which this policy is due for review is on or before January 2028.
- 1.4.3 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.

2. History of the collections

- 2.1.1 National Museums NI was established as National Museums and Galleries of Northern Ireland under the Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998. It comprises four museums that were founded at different times and for different purposes. The summaries below are indicative, rather than comprehensive.
- 2.1.2 The national collection has been almost 200 years in the making. It is an amalgam of institutional histories and the passions of generations of curators, scholars and enthusiasts. Although the thinking about collecting and collections has evolved over time (and continues to evolve), the creation of the national collection has always been fundamentally driven by the desire to record and preserve what is important about the world that we live in and our place within it.

2.2 Ulster Museum

- 2.2.1 The Ulster Museum is the oldest of the four, its collections originating with the formation and activities of the Belfast Natural History Society (1821), re-named the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society (1842), and the closely associated Belfast Naturalists' Field Club (1863). During most of the 19th century, their focus was on developing collections mainly in the area of natural history, but also archaeology and ethnography, and displaying these in the Belfast Museum which had been opened by the Society in 1831. Separately, in 1890, the opening, by the Belfast Town Council of the Belfast Art Gallery and Museum provided a catalyst for broader collections development, embracing not only art but also antiquities and a greater capacity for natural history specimens. A critical mass was created in 1910 when the collections of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society were acquired by the Belfast Art Gallery and Museum. This led ultimately to the construction of a new building, the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery at Botanic Gardens, which opened in 1929, and the establishment, through the Museum Act (Northern Ireland) 1961, of the Ulster Museum as a national institution. The Ulster Museum opened in 1972.
- 2.2.2 The nature and development of the Ulster Museum's collections reflect the above history. A number of 19th-century natural historians, travellers and benefactors are particularly noteworthy. These include William Thompson (botany and ornithology), Sir James Emerson Tennant (entomology), Gordon A Thomson and George Benn (antiquities), and James McAdam (palaeontology). Embracing most, if not all, of these areas was Canon John Grainger who, shortly before his death in 1891, donated his complete collection of geological and zoological specimens, antiquities

and art objects to the Belfast Art Gallery and Museum – as a result of which he has subsequently been referred to as ‘The Father of the Ulster Museum’. All these subject areas have been enriched and enhanced by subsequent collecting, several aspects meriting mention. Critical to the development of the botany collection was the gift by The Queen’s University of Belfast of its herbarium (1968).

- 2.2.3 A substantial part of the Archaeology collection is derived from the early days of antiquarian activity in Ireland during the mid-1800s; from material displayed in the ‘Belfast Museum’ (1831-1910). Some of these archaeological collections, including those of the Rev. Canon Grainger, are substantial. While the majority of the collections and objects on display were found by members of the public, the Museum acquired a number of pioneering excavations particularly those from Neolithic megalithic tombs. Excavations undertaken by previous members of staff include evidence of Ireland’s earliest settlers at Mount Sandel Co. Londonderry and substantial holdings from the urban medieval excavations of Carrickfergus.
- 2.2.4 The collection and display of industrial archaeology formed part of the policy of the Ulster Museum from the 1960s, under the then Directorship of Mr William Seaby. The driving force for this activity was W.A. McCutcheon, who conducted new and intensive research into the subject matter between 1956 and 1968 and expressed his ‘deep conviction of the relevance and validity of industrial archaeology’. From 1968 to 1974 this research was translated into new displays on engineering history at the Ulster Museum. Machinery and other material culture were accessioned into the permanent collection of the Ulster Museum, whilst archival material and photographs associated with McCutcheon’s research were gifted to the Public Record Office of Northern Ireland (PRONI). The Ulster Museum’s collection includes material from all of the major industries for which the north of Ireland was once renowned, including linen production, heavy engineering, ship-building, rope making and brick making.
- 2.2.5 The development of the art collection was stimulated during the early part of the last century by some significant gifts and bequests. The former are exemplified through JMW Turner’s *The Dawn of Christianity*, gifted in 1913, and 34 of his own works presented by the distinguished Belfast-born artist Sir John Lavery in 1929. The bequest of Sir Robert Lloyd Patterson, given to the Belfast Art Gallery and Museum in 1919, was significant in that the paintings were sold some ten years later, with the approval of the trustees of Lloyd Patterson, on condition that the proceeds be used to acquire other works representative of the contemporary British school. This was an important factor in the subsequent shaping of the collection which, through successive shifts in acquisition policy, has grown to encompass not just the work of Irish painters but also British, European and American, both historical and contemporary.
- 2.2.6 Since the 1890s, acquisitions for the Fine Art collection have been made by purchase, gift and bequest, either from individual benefactors or on behalf of organisations including the Art Fund, the Contemporary Art Society, the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, the Elisabeth Frink Foundation, the Arts Council of Northern Ireland, the Haverty Trust and the Friends of the National Collections of Ireland. Notable acquisitions have been supported by grants from the Art Fund, the Esme

Mitchell Trust, the Friends of the Ulster Museum, the Department for Communities, the Heritage Lottery Fund and the National Heritage Memorial Fund. A small number of acquisitions have been made by public subscription. In 2012, the Arts Council NI collection was gifted to National Museums NI. Since 2018, collecting in Fine Art has become increasingly ambitious and strategic, enabling us to focus on particular themes and areas of the collection. Through Acceptance in Lieu allocations, and with generous grant aid, a number of serious gaps have been filled by major acquisitions. Most notable are two 19th century French paintings: *Quiet* by Tissot and *The Woodland Path* by Renoir, the first French Impressionist painting to enter the collection. 17th century Dutch art has been enriched with works by Jacob van Ruisdael, Jan van Goyen and Rembrandt, and Baldassarre Peruzzi's nocturnal *Nativity* (saved while under export bar) is the first High Renaissance work to enter the collection. Irish art has benefited by major acquisitions of work by Sir William Orpen, one of the most serious gaps in the collection, and William Leech. The theme of climate emergency has taken on greater urgency during the last decade, and is represented by a number of acquisitions, most recently a tapestry *Interval V* by Ailbhe Ni Bhriain.

- 2.2.7 The works of art on paper collection, the largest fine art collection, has multiple areas of strength owing to significant donations and past acquisitions. Many of these donations were given in the late 19th and early 20th century forming the foundation of the collection, the treasured Henry Fuseli drawings were given by the first curator of the Art Gallery when it was on Royal Avenue, in 1890. A significant donation of wood engravings from Lady Mabel Annesley given in 1939 forms the basis of the print collection and various schemes, such as the National Art Collections Fund, have bequeathed important works e.g. by Ruskin and Rossetti. Donations of local importance by individuals such as John and Roberta Hewitt have also been significant.
- 2.2.8 The applied art collections, which comprise ceramics, glass, silver and metalwork, furniture and wood, costume and textiles, jewellery and a childhood collection has two areas of particular strength, namely the 18th century and the contemporary period. The historic collections are of predominantly Irish material, and the contemporary are international in scope. The Ulster Museum represents the only public collection of international contemporary applied art in Ireland.
- 2.2.9 The current Ulster Museum collection of fashionable dress, accessories, and textiles essentially replaces the one that was lost when Malone House, where the former collection was stored, was burnt down following its bombing in 1976. Beginning from a 'clean slate' the museum was forced to re-examine our collecting policy. This prompted a particular focus on developing a strong 20th-century fashion collection. Each year, since 1984, two complete outfits for spring/summer and autumn/winter have been purchased – one International designer outfit and one high street outfit. This unbroken chain of contemporary fashion acquisitions is a unique achievement for the Ulster Museum, one of the very first museums in the world to recognise the significance of collecting contemporary fashion. As far as rebuilding the textile collection, major acquisitions concentrated on areas where the nucleus of a collection was still in existence, including the important 1712 Lennox Quilt.

2.2.10 Between 2016 and 2020 the Ulster Museum developed its history and art collections through 'Collecting the Troubles and Beyond', funded through the National Lottery Heritage Fund's Collecting Cultures programme. This involved the acquisition of significant collections including the NI Prison Service collection, the James Ellis collection, the Tom Hartley collection, artwork by Geordie Morrow and contemporary photographic collections representing well-known photographers including Martin Nangle and Frankie Quinn. This priority collecting activity focussed on Northern Ireland's recent past and its legacy continues today.

2.3 Ulster Folk Museum

2.3.1 The genesis of the Folk Museum lies in a memorandum prepared in 1943 about a post-war policy for the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery (see paragraph 2.2.1) in which the then Director, Sidney Stendall, advocated the creation of an open-air museum. This aspiration was pursued by his successor Wilfred Seaby and, following a favourable report presented to the Northern Ireland Parliament, the Ulster Folk Museum Act was passed in 1958. The Folk Museum's remit was to illustrate the ways of life, past and present, and the traditions of the people of Northern Ireland. Individuals influential to the development of the Folk Museum included, in addition to those mentioned above, Estyn Evans, a pioneer in the study of folk culture in Ireland, and its Directors, George Thompson and Alan Gailey. The current site, at Cultra, County Down, was purchased in 1961.

2.3.2 The Folk Life and Agriculture collections focus on ways of life and traditions of the people of Northern Ireland in a western European context from the late nineteenth century through to the early decades of the twentieth century. They include material culture representing buildings, domestic life, agriculture, craft and textiles, and non-material culture including traditional music and oral histories. Duncrun Cottier's House was the first building to be selected, dismantled and brought to the Cultra site in 1961. The building was re-erected and completed in 1963. The Ulster Folk Museum formally opened in July 1964 along with the Coalisland Spade Mill. They were soon joined by more buildings and the rural area of the open-air museum began to flourish. The rural area of the open-air museum is a representation of a dispersed settlement, common to Ireland, with dwellings and public buildings reflecting regional variations scattered through an open landscape. Much was put into the spaces between buildings, the ditches, the field boundaries etc. as well as the construction of the buildings themselves. Most of the buildings were brought brick by brick from their original locations, Ballydugan Weaver's House being the only replica building in the rural area of the museum. In due course, the museum decided to establish a small town. Some of the buildings in this area had already been reconstructed to be part of the dispersed settlement, but they were later incorporated into the new townscape. With the building of the town, there was a drift towards constructing replica buildings, instead of moving entire buildings from their original situation, as had been the earlier policy. Today, there are over 50 buildings on the site.

2.3.3 In parallel with these developments, an equally wide-ranging body of material relating to ways of life and traditions was collected through targeted fieldwork over many

years. This has not only complemented the buildings but also provided important evidence of the rich social fabric of Ulster and the day-to-day lives of people. It covers such areas as farming, crafts and domestic life through both objects and archives. The latter include rich collections of photographs, the most important of which are those taken by W A Green, and sound recordings covering oral and aural histories such as music, folk tales and linguistic diversity.

- 2.3.4 The foundation for the costume and textiles collection was laid by one of the first group of curators, Katherine Harris, in the early 1960s. Harris' background in geography and ethnography served her well as she explored and collected fine examples of local dress and textiles, in many cases directly in conversation with those who were born and raised in the late 1800s. Her interest in material culture and traditional craft skills spanned across a range of media including straw work, needlework and everyday dress. Over a period of almost ten years Harris collected, exhibited and published aspects of the Folk Museum's collection of dress and textiles. Some of the most significant objects in the collection were acquired during this period, including fine examples of Irish lace, linens, and bedcovers.
- 2.3.5 In the fifty years since Katherine Harris' retirement from the museum, the collection has been developed further by three successive Curators of Textiles, each bringing with them, in turn, specialisms in the study of Home Economics, Folklore, and Design for Fashion and Textiles. As a result, the collection has grown considerably in both size and quality to its present status as a comprehensive archive of dress and textiles in Ulster from 1730 to the present day. A recently developed contemporary collecting plan has supported the acquisition, through purchase, of a number of objects illustrating technical and design skills, from Irish makers.

2.4 Ulster Transport Museum

- 2.4.1 Alongside the emergence of the Folk Museum, a museum dedicated to transport was also being considered by the above-mentioned Wilfred Seaby, Director of the Belfast Museum and Art Gallery. A local committee of transport enthusiasts presented a number of vehicles, mainly rail, to the Belfast Museum on the understanding that they, together with other transport items already in the Museum's collection, would be maintained and developed. Between 1954 and 1956, two buildings were leased in Belfast to hold the growing collection. New premises at Witham Street, Belfast, were purchased in 1960, a curator was appointed in 1961 and the new Belfast Transport Museum, under Belfast Corporation control, was opened in June 1962. It remained under Corporation control until responsibility was transferred to the Trustees of the Folk Museum in 1967 through the Ulster Folk Museum Amendment Act. At the same time, the Dalchoolin site, located a short distance away from the Folk Museum, was acquired as the site for the new Transport Museum. In 1973, the official name of the institution was changed to The Ulster Folk and Transport Museum to reflect the amalgamation.
- 2.4.2 Today the Transport Museum lies within a 40-acre site, representing almost forty years of incremental development in the opening of a Transport Gallery in 1976, a Rail Gallery in 1993 and a Road Gallery (1995). Influential figures in the early

development of the transport collections, particularly road and rail, included the first curator, Robert Beggs, and Robert Galbraith. These collections include extensive and representative holdings of Irish railway vehicles, significant items being received from the Ulster Transport Authority (now Translink) and Córas Iompair Éireann. Public and private road transport is reflected in items ranging from horse-drawn vehicles to a De Lorean car.

- 2.4.3 The collections also cover transport associated with sea and sky. Of particular significance in the former category are *Result*, a 19th-century schooner, one of some 200 vessels comprising the UK National Historic Fleet and ship plans from Harland & Wolff, Belfast's major shipyard, including design drawings for *Titanic*. The latter includes items ranging from a Shorts SC.1 vertical take-off aircraft, a Rex McCandless designed autogyro to a Martin Baker ejector seat and a Merlin Spitfire engine.

2.5 Ulster American Folk Park

- 2.5.1 The idea behind the Ulster American Folk Park originated in the 1950s when Eric Montgomery sought the Northern Ireland Government's support for the setting-up of the Ulster-Scot Historical Society (now the Ulster Historical Foundation). Montgomery received the Northern Ireland Government's backing again in the 1960s for a programme to restore the ancestral homes of notable Americans whose forebears had emigrated from Ulster.
- 2.5.2 One site of interest was the birthplace of Thomas Mellon, located at Camphill, at a bend on the River Strule near Omagh, Co. Tyrone. An American entrepreneur, lawyer and judge, he is perhaps best known as the founder of Mellon Bank and patriarch of the Mellon family of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. The Scotch-Irish Trust of Ulster was set up to restore and maintain the dwelling and the opening ceremony took place on 21st June 1968.
- 2.5.3 Not long after the opening, the land surrounding the Mellon Homestead was acquired to help tell the wider story of Thomas Mellon. The open-air museum was developed according to descriptions in Thomas Mellon's private autobiography; the idea being that visitors could trace Mellon's journey from Ulster to America through a visit to the museum. 'Ulster' would comprise early 19th century replicas of a forge, a weaver's cottage, a meeting house to coincide with Mellon's departure in 1818 and also an original school from nearby Castletown, built 1845. 'America' would have replicas of Thomas Mellon's first two homes – the log cabin in which Mellon and his parents settled on arrival in Pennsylvania and the two-storey log farmhouse that the family moved to a few years later, having become more prosperous. Work was completed for 6th July 1976, in time to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the American Revolution.
- 2.5.4 The Folk Park looked to the Ulster Folk Museum for inspiration on the building and furnishing of traditional houses. A collection was amassed primarily to furnish the open-air museum. It includes both Ulster and American domestic miscellanea, textiles, costume, furniture, craft tools and agricultural implements; as well as

associated building maintenance materials and fittings, drawings, photographs and other records. The collection also covers areas that inform the wider story of emigration, the most noteworthy being the Paul Loudon-Brown White Star Line Collection acquired in 2010. Comprising over 7000 objects, it illustrates the context of the emigrant vessel the Titanic through the history of its parent company.

2.5.5 The Folk Park continued to expand after its opening in 1976. The Hughes House opened in June 1980. It provided the Folk Park with a Catholic migration story, contemporary to Thomas Mellon's Scotch-Irish experience. The Ship and Dockside Gallery and the Ulster and American Streets were constructed in the mid-1980s. The 1990s saw the opening of the Campbell House in 1992, the Emigrants exhibition in 1994 and the Single Room Cabin in 1996. Development continued in the late 1990s with the Mass House, the Fulton House and the Hupp House. The McCallister and Rogan Houses were completed by 2012.

2.5.6 In recent years, we have committed to developing the narrative at the Folk Park to incorporate stories that were hitherto underrepresented. These include stories relating to women, urban migration, Indigenous Peoples and enslaved people.

3. An overview of current collections

3.1 The collections of National Museums NI are estimated to be in the region of 1.4 million items. The collections are multidisciplinary, diverse and span all time periods, referencing Northern Ireland within and to the wider world. Historically, they have grown on the site-based framework of the Ulster Museum, the Ulster Folk & Transport Museum and the Ulster American Folk Park. However, since similar collection types can relate to more than one site, they are more appropriately classified within three broad and complementary subject areas. National Museums NI will continue to collect within these subject areas and the time periods and geographic areas to which they relate. The subject areas are:

- Art
- History
- Natural Sciences

3.2 Art

3.2.1 The art collections include fine and applied art and incorporate both historical and contemporary material, mainly within an Irish context but also including some significant international holdings. In excess of 14,000 works, the art collection contains paintings, sculptures, works on paper, lens-based media, Troubles art, glass, ceramics, silver and metalwork, jewellery, furniture, costume and textiles. These collections are significant at both a national and an international level.

3.2.2 The Irish Art collection spans the 17th century to the contemporary. Almost all major Irish artists and movements are represented, with particular strengths in landscape, portraiture and subjects associated with the north and west of Ireland. In 1929, the

Belfast-born Sir John Lavery (1856-1941), a leading 'Irish Impressionist', donated thirty-four paintings from all periods of his career including 'Under the Cherry Tree' and 'The Green Coat', a dazzling full-length portrait of his wife Hazel. The landscape and life of the West of Ireland is of particular importance characterised, during the early 20th century, by the work of Paul Henry, William Orpen, Jack B. Yeats and Sean Keating, and in the post-war generation by Gerard Dillon, Derek Hill, Barrie Cooke and many others. Strengths of the twentieth-century collection include Irish Modernism and Irish artists of international importance, such as Mainie Jellett, Louis le Brocqy, William Scott and Willie Doherty. The figurative tradition remains strong in Northern Irish post-war painting, and is represented by Charles Lamb, William Conor, Colin Middleton, John Luke, Dan O'Neill, Basil Blackshaw and many others. In portraiture, a group of 18th century Belfast sitters by Strickland Lowry and Joseph Wilson is notable, as is a series of 20th-century literary portraits, including the first Portrait of Seamus Heaney commissioned from Edward McGuire in 1974, and the last portrait completed months before the poet's death in 2013 by Colin Davidson. Recent acquisitions have focused on the Irish landscape, and include work by Elizabeth Magill, Melita Denaro, William McKeown and Paddy McCann.

3.2.3 The 20th century and contemporary collection are of outstanding international importance. Successive curators have strengthened these areas to form one of the most impressive collections of modern and contemporary art in the U.K. outside London. The early 20th-century British collection includes work by Stanley Spencer, Walter Sickert, Duncan Grant and others of their generation. The International Post-war represents the largest and most important area of the collection, and includes Sam Francis, Joan Mitchell and 'Colour Field' artists Morris Louis, Kenneth Noland and Helen Frankenthaler. European post-war painting is represented by, among others, Karel Appel, Jean Dubuffet and Antoni Tàpies, and the German 'Group Zero' by Gunther Uecker, Otto Piene and others. British art is particularly strong in abstract painting with excellent St. Ives artists including Peter Lanyon, Roger Hilton, William Scott and Ben Nicholson. Two of the most important works in the collection are an exceptional early Francis Bacon *Head 11* (1949), and a seminal Barbara Hepworth *Curved Form (Delphi)*, (1955). The later 1960s, 70s and 80s includes work by Bridget Riley, Anthony Caro, Joseph Beuys, Gilbert and George and many others. Recent acquisitions include the manga-influenced Japanese painter Makiko Kudo, Belfast-born Hannah Starkey, whose photographic work considers the urban experience of young women, and two sculptures that address themes of climate emergency and migration; *The Dog that lost its Nose* (2009) by Siobhan Hapaska and *Blue Sky Thinking* (2019) by Patrick Goddard. A collection of time-based media was begun in 2008, and includes major work by Willie Doherty, Bill Fontana and Cornelia Parker.

3.2.4 The Italian collection includes some of the first paintings to enter the Ulster Museum collection. In 1893, an exceptional pair of genre portraits by Giacomo Ceruti were bought as 'foundation pictures' and are the most important works by the artist in the UK. The collection was transformed in the 1960s by the acquisition of two major 17th-century paintings, *Allegory of Fortune* by Lorenzo Lippi and *St Cecelia* by Giovanni Francesco Romanelli. The Flemish collection includes a small group of 15th-century panels attributed to the Master of the Legend of St. Catherine, the Master of the

Female Half-lengths and an impressive School of Bruges 'Virgin and Child', known as the Carrickfergus Madonna. The acquisition of *Moses Striking the Rock* by Hendrik van Balen, a gift through the Art Fund in 2021, has considerably strengthened the Flemish collection. The Dutch collection has recently been transformed by two major acceptances in lieu: *The Cornfield* by Jacob van Ruisdael, a masterpiece of international importance from the Beit Collection, Russborough, and a *View of the Palace of the Dukes of Brabant, Brussels* by Jan van der Heyden. The British collection is strongest in portraiture, usually of sitters with local or Irish connections. One of the most important paintings in the collection is an exceptionally fine late work by J.M.W. Turner *The Dawn of Christianity (The Flight into Egypt)*, 1841. Most recently, in 2021, a magnificent Tissot *Quiet*, 1881, of an Irish sitter, has filled what had been a serious gap in nineteenth-century French and British painting.

- 3.2.5 There are two major strengths to the works of art on paper collection, the first is its ability to demonstrate various shifts and important movements in this mode of artistic production: Works by John Ruskin and J.D. Harding demonstrate the emergence of watercolour painting being popularised and considered a 'fine art'. A large collection of wood engravings represents the importance of the wood-engraving revival and how women artists were at its centre. A donation of Rembrandt etchings through the acceptance in lieu of tax scheme celebrate his impact on printmaking which can be seen through over 300 years of the practice in the collection. The second strength is seen through large, or significant, holdings of work by individual artists including, for example, Henry Fuseli, Andrew Nicholl, Elisabeth Frink and Mainie Jellett.
- 3.2.6 The Ulster Museum has the largest collection of artworks that relate to the Troubles. Throughout the 30-year period and up until today artists from Northern Ireland and beyond have responded to the conflict through their artistic practice and a variety of media, including painting, sculpture, works on paper, lens-based and ceramic. During the period of the conflict, the Ulster Museum did collect several significant artworks, including *Woman in Bomb Blast*, 1974, by F. E. McWilliam, *...morning workers pass...*, 1978, Rita Donagh, *Ulster Crucifixion*, 1978, Ken Howard and *The Other Cheek?*, 1998, John Keane. It is only in more recent times, which has included the substantial gift of the Arts Council of Northern Ireland's collection in 2012 that the collection has grown to its current level of significance. Since 2014 the Ulster Museum has also acquired work by artists including Mary McIntyre, Donovan Wylie, Dan Shipsides, Gerry Gleason, Peter Richards, Ursula Burke, Jack Pakenham and Gladys Maccabe, through purchase, gifts and donations.
- 3.2.7 The Arts Council of Northern Ireland (ACNI) gifted collection provides the context and foundation of the wider Ulster Museum art collection. It demonstrates contemporary artistic practice in the region across the past 40 years, not just through local artists work but also through the international - with artists who exhibited or worked here. It also reflects more than just the physical art, but maps the galleries and cultural activity of this place. Though it is one gift it represents two collections; the CEMA collection, formed in the early years of Northern Ireland's existence and the ACNI collection, which began in the mid-1960s and as a result represents the artistic practice in relation to the conflict. Another area of strength is the number of works

that connect to performance. It can be seen as a teaching collection as it teaches us about our own visual past.

- 3.2.8 The fashion collection has several strengths. The historic fashionable dress section is especially strong in the 18th century. This includes an 18th-century court suit belonging to the 2nd Earl of Belvedere, a cut velvet and metal thread suit worn by the Black Rod of the Irish Houses of Parliament in 1751, and a rare court mantua gown. Additionally, the donation of the textile heiress Elizabeth Balfour Clark's 1911 court dress and train has highlighted an emerging collection of court dress with the Ulster Museum. Also held are outfits of almost every year from the mid-18th century to the present day. The fashion dolls, which complement the historic garments, are the most important element of the childhood collection. However, it is the 20th-century haute couture and contemporary fashions which are the most distinctive elements of the fashion collection. Every designer of note is represented, from Poiret, Chanel and Dior to McQueen, Galliano and Westwood. High street retailers both physical and online are also represented.
- 3.2.9 In terms of textiles there is a small but important collection of 18th-century bed furniture, mostly by named Irish embroiders. This includes the 1712 Lennox Quilt made by Martha Lennox, daughter of the Sovereign of Belfast, the Delany bedcover, a by Mary Delany, the well-connected 18th-century artist and epistolarian, and the Antrim bed furniture, a complete set worked by or under the supervision of Lady Helena McDonnell, 1705-83, daughter of the 4th Earl of Antrim. Important tapestries and other textile wall art include the 18th-century *Pilgrimage to Mecca* set by Paul Saunders, Arabesque by Joshua Morris and the mid-20th century *Adam and Eve* by Louis le Brocquy. Most important of all, however, are two large wall hangings, *Océanie - Le Ciel* and *Océanie - La Mer*, by the French artist Henri Matisse.
- 3.2.10 The main strengths of the ceramics collection lie in British and European historic ceramics, Irish ceramics, Asian and the contemporary. The British and European historic collection comprehensively documents the development of pottery and porcelain from the late 16th century. The Irish collection, which has pieces dating from the 18th century is representative of all the major potteries in Ireland. There are significant and unique pieces of, amongst others, Dublin delftware by Henry Delamain, excavated material from the Downshire pottery, Belfast, Wade Irish Porcelain and one of the finest collections of First Period and Second Period Belleek porcelain. The Asian collection is a small but important element of the ceramic collection that puts the European pieces into context. This collection ranges from stoneware of the Yuan Dynasty (1279-1368) through to early 20th century Japanese porcelain. The Ulster Museum, from 1982, pioneered a contemporary collecting policy within the ceramic field. As the only public collection of international contemporary ceramics in Ireland, it continues to form an extensive, comprehensive and inspiring record of the work of ceramic artists.
- 3.2.11 The glass collection consists of mainly two areas. Firstly, the historic collection, which is made up of mainly English and Irish 18th and 19th-century glass. A highlight of this section is the group of 350 drinking glasses showing the development of such wares since the last quarter of the 17th century. There is, too, a comprehensive

collection of decanters including many rare marked Irish pieces. Ireland was an important glass manufacturing region in Europe during the 18th and 19th centuries and the collection reflects this. Each of the Irish factories is represented. Without doubt the most important piece in the Irish glass collection is the bowl and stand that was once owned by the Marquis of Bute. As one of the most spectacular pieces of Irish glass ever made it has no comparison in any public collection in Britain or Ireland. As with the ceramics collection, the Ulster Museum was innovative in its policy of collecting contemporary glass and this collection is unique in Ireland. With over 100 artworks, it is an internationally important collection that continues to chart new movements within the glass medium. The most significant work in the international contemporary glass collection is *Azure Ice Crystal Sconce* by Dale Chihuly, which is made up of elements cut at the Waterford Glass Factory.

- 3.2.12 The jewellery collection is, except for recent contemporary acquisitions, almost exclusively the gift of Mrs Anne Hull Grundy, art and jewellery historian, who had Northern Irish connections. Comprising some 700 pieces, it dates from the 16th century to the 1930s, and includes the best existing collection of 19th-century Irish jewellery. Recent contemporary acquisitions include a *Ring Set* by Wendy Ramshaw and jewellery by Zoe Arnold, Jane Adams, Grainne Morton, Katy Hackney and Emmeline Hastings.
- 3.2.13 The small, but significant furniture and wood collection comprises mainly Irish material, however, the earliest piece in the collection is an Italian marriage chest or cassone from the 16th century. The collection contains some very fine and important examples of Irish cabinet-making of the 18th century. As well as carved early mahogany pieces there are later 18th-century examples of the neo-classical style, including a side table by William Moore. Another significant example is a mirror dating from 1760 by Francis and John Booker of Dublin. The 20th century is represented by an elegantly designed and inlaid chest of drawers in the Art Deco style by James Hicks of Dublin and the only wood carved sculpture by Rosamund Praeger. Contemporary furniture includes work by Andrew Klimacki, Mary Little and Joseph Walsh
- 3.2.14 The historic Irish silver collection has few equals. The earliest piece, the 'Loftus Cup', is engraved with the words 'This silver-gilt cuppe was made of the great seale of Ireland in 1593, Adam Loftus being then Lord Chancellor....'. Seventeenth-century pieces include two fine porringers of 1685, a tankard of 1679 and a rosewater dish of 1658. The 18th-century collection is particularly strong, with all the styles and influences of the time represented. The single most important acquisition is the 'Kildare Toilet Service', a uniquely large and complete 28 piece silver-gilt toilet service, made for the dressing table of the wife of the 19th Earl of Kildare to celebrate the birth of their son. Made by David Willaume of London, it dates from 1720-22. The contemporary silver collection is primarily Irish, with pieces by leading Irish silversmiths, however, the collection has recently expanded to include work by international silversmiths.

3.3 History

3.3.1 The History collections reflect evidence of people and events from the earliest settlers, through the main archaeological and historical periods and up to the present day. They also include significant material from various world cultures.

3.3.2 Archaeology

3.3.2a The archaeology collections span the time from the arrival of Ireland's first Mesolithic settlers (c. 8000 BC) up to the later Medieval period (c. AD 1600). The vast majority of the collection is local but of note is the internationally significant material from the Spanish Armada wrecks of the *Girona* and *La Trinidad Valencera*.

3.3.2b During the Mesolithic and Neolithic periods the major flint and stone outcrops that occur in the northern part of Ireland is reflected in the substantial amounts of stone artefacts acquired. This includes the Malone Road hoard, Belfast, of exceptionally large Neolithic polished stone axes. Bronze Age tools and weapons are well represented and more unusual items are a pair of Bronze Age musical horns from Drumbest, near Ballymoney in Co. Antrim. Items acquired as a result of the Treasure Act (1996) have added to the variety of Bronze Age gold jewellery on display. In contrast, Iron Age material is rarer.

3.3.2c The arrival of Christianity sees an array of new objects, some made specifically for the Church. The Museum's active involvement in recovering material from the dredging of the River Blackwater which borders Co. Armagh and Tyrone added significantly to this aspect of the collections. It includes the 7th-century Clonmore shrine, Co. Armagh (a decorated receptacle to hold the relics of a Saint) along with evidence of Viking gold, silver and material raided from church sites.

3.3.2d One of the most significant recent acquisitions is the 10th-century bronze hand bell from Ballyclog, Co. Tyrone (on display). It is one of the few bells associated with a Christian settlement that has connections to St. Patrick. Objects from settlement sites also increasingly feature as do the first signs of urbanisation including coinage. Moving towards the 1600s, part of the collections reflect the conflict and political relationships with England.

3.3.3 World Cultures

3.3.3a The World Cultures collection at Ulster Museum provides a fascinating insight into many rich cultures from around the world and includes over 5000 objects from Africa, the Americas, Asia, Oceania, and the Arctic region. The collection largely explores Indigenous cultures from around the world during the 19th and 20th century however does go back in time to ancient Egypt as well. The collection illustrates the history and life of Indigenous peoples around the world, and captures stories of everyday life in the home, trade, appearance and dress, rites of passage, migration, religion, and conflict. The collection also reflects a history of both imperialism and globalisation.

3.3.3b Most items were acquired in the 19th and early 20th centuries, by members of the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society. The European bias and power imbalances that characterised this collecting leave a complex and sensitive legacy to address today. Whilst some material was acquired legitimately, the collection does include objects which present significant ethical issues. In light of the decolonisation agenda within museums, the implementation of a new approach to these collections is a priority for National Museums NI.

3.3.4 Modern History

3.3.4a The Modern History collections cover a range of objects relating to the political, social and economic history of Ireland, including archival materials (photographs, maps, paper ephemera), paintings, books, banners, costumes, weaponry, coins, banknotes, medals and tokens.

3.3.4b The two centuries to 1700 were frequently punctuated by upheaval and war and yet these turbulent years saw the development of the modern economy. The conflicts of the era are reflected in the weapons and armour in the collection. Coins, trading tokens, printed material and religious items trace the rapid development of civilian life in the shadow of war. With political stability in the eighteenth century came rising prosperity, an enriched cultural life, and an appetite for new ideas. The artefacts in National Museums NI collection from this era reflect this growing wealth. Silverware, pottery, and jewellery speak to a new opulence. Pieces of regalia of the Order of St. Patrick, a dormant order of chivalry once as exalted as the Order of the Garter, are part of this collection. Growing inequality in society is demonstrated in 'penal crosses' and beggars' badges.

3.3.4c The late 18th century witnessed the American and French Revolutions, encouraging radical thought. The United Irishman's rebellion in 1798 was eventually crushed, and the Act of Union was passed in its aftermath. The collection includes military uniforms, weapons, and personal belongings of significant figures involved in this struggle, including the sword and coat of Henry Joy McCracken, industrialist and revolutionary, and the death mask of agitator and organiser, James Hope. The industrial collection contains a wide range of engineering and linen-related material from this period, charting Ulster's growth from a largely agrarian to industrial society. The Great Famine of the 1840s made the gulf between rich and poor all too apparent, and the collection holds famine tokens and cooking pots from this period.

3.3.4d The Home Rule to Partition collection highlights this crisis period with examples of propaganda from both the Home Rule and Unionist campaigns, and artefacts and weapons from the Mountjoy II. The First World War prevented the Home Rule Act 1914 from being implemented, and the Easter Rising complicated an already difficult political situation. The collection includes a wide array of First War artefacts, including personal belongings and medals from both sides as well as objects from Ireland illustrating the rapid constitutional and social changes that were occurring. There are items from the Easter Rising and the partition of Ireland, and pieces that demonstrate the rising role of the women's movement, and labour organisations. The

significant Second World War collection includes uniforms, medals, and gas masks, as well as items related to Belfast's wartime industry. The collection also reflects the political and social history of the 1950s and 60s with many political posters, objects relating to the civil rights movement and the wider cultural history including theatre and sporting memorabilia.

3.3.5 Contemporary History

- 3.3.5a The history of Northern Ireland from the late 1960s to the present day has been dominated by the civil and political conflict known as 'the Troubles.' The events that took place here after 1968 have impacted not just the people of Northern Ireland, but people across the world. The collection covers themes of politics and conflict, and the impact of both on everyday life, people and communities.
- 3.3.5b The objects, photographs, political ephemera and artwork in the Troubles collection represent a wide range of experiences. The Troubles collection includes items directly associated with the conflict – a rubber bullet, improvised explosive devices, firearms and a bomb disposal robot. There is a large collection of material associated with the Northern Ireland Prison Service as well as crafts and artwork created by prisoners in Armagh Women's Gaol, HM Prison Maze and Magilligan. There are many emotive objects in the collection and those that remain contested in terms of significance and meaning amongst those who experienced the conflict.
- 3.3.5c The contemporary history collection also includes objects that represent our wider social, cultural and economic history. The collection is a dynamic one and it continues to be developed and refined. Recently acquired items include George Best's Northern Ireland football jersey, a puppet of Gerry Adams from the TV series Spitting Image, material relating to the life and career of Belfast-born actor James Ellis and a collection of Pride t-shirts dating from 1991 when the first march was held in Belfast.
- 3.3.5d National Museums NI is committed to developing its approach to community history and our community history collection. This involves working with community partners to curate their history and ensuring our collection is more diverse and inclusive.

3.3.6 Photography

- 3.3.6a National Museums NI holds a wide range of historic photographs most are in black and white and kept in print and negative format. The collection dates from around 1870 and represents commercial and social life, industrial and economic activity, street scenes and townscapes, transport and political and social events. Key collections include the Harland & Wolff Collection of shipyard photographs, bodies of work by W.A. Green, A.R. Hogg, the Northern Ireland Tourist Board collection and the Hackney Collection of First World War photographs charting the recruitment and training of the 36th Ulster Division in the First World War, and their journey to the Battle of the Somme and beyond.

- 3.3.6b Other important collections include the work of Cecil Newman, describing local urban and road development in the 1960s and 1970s; the Garland collection, which records the aftermath of the Belfast Blitz, 1941, and the work of local home defence agencies; the Glass Album relating to the Land War in Gweedore, County Donegal, in the 1880s; the Douglas Sobey Collection relating to the LGBT movement in Northern Ireland in the 1970s and photojournalism dating from the 1970s by Martin Nangle, Bill Kirk and Frankie Quinn.
- 3.3.6c National Museums NI maintains a large collection of lantern slides depicting social, economic, and industrial life in Ireland in the late 1800s and 1900s. A large photographic archive includes copies of major collections held elsewhere, such as the Annesly, Young, and Langham collections. The photographic collections also chart the development of photography itself. Our oldest photographs are daguerreotypes and calotypes from the dawn of the medium, and there is a collection of cameras, magic lanterns, and photographic equipment, dating from the 1850s onwards.

3.3.7 Transport, Industry and Technology

- 3.3.7a The Transport, Industry and Technology collections cover all forms of transport built or used in Ireland, from the late eighteenth century to the present day, and the industrial heritage of Ulster. The non-material collections comprise oral and aural histories giving an insight into transport and industry in Ireland and local people who have contributed to the development of transport around the world.
- 3.3.7b The collection of non-commercial road vehicles reflects the innovations of local manufacturers such as Harry Ferguson and Crossle but also charts the development of the road users vehicle as a status symbol from the turf carts used on farms to the luxurious carriages belonging to James Shein to the streamlined Rolls Royce as well as more contemporary vehicles such as the DeLorean and Clan Clover. Included in the collection are a number of military vehicles that reflect the civil war in Ireland during the 1920s as well as the more recent Troubles. The commercial vehicles show how public transport has grown not only in Belfast but in more rural areas of Ulster. There is an extensive motorcycle and bicycle collection highlighting local innovators like Rex McCandless' and his featherbed frame as well as local racing legends like Stanley Woods. In 2023, a significant gap in the collection was filled when we acquired seven motorcycles, each associated with a racing legend from Northern Ireland's road racing history – Joey Dunlop, Robert Dunlop, Philip McCallen, Ryan Farquhar, Tom Herron, Frank Kennedy, Owen McNally. The first cardiac ambulance in the world highlights emergency service vehicles, along with a number of fire engines.
- 3.3.7c The rail collection is a comprehensive overview of the growth of the railways in Ireland and the technological developments that occurred throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. It includes early steam engines that ran the lines in Donegal and *Maebh*, one of the largest engines to ever be seen on the Irish rail network. The innovation of the railbus and the popularity of the narrow gauge railway in Ireland are also important features of the collection. Included in this is the tram collection

depicting early commuting in industrial Belfast at the turn of the century and their replacement by the trolleybuses.

- 3.3.7d The maritime collection mainly consists of locally made vernacular vessels that depict life by the coast through fishing, transport and recreation such as currachs, rowing boats from the North coast and oyster boats from Galway. The merchant schooner *Result* is the largest boat and its local connections to Carrickfergus and fascinating story make it a highlight of the collection. The local links continue through objects associated with the *RMS Titanic*, built in Belfast by Harland & Wolff, and the important collection of ship plans depicting the shipbuilding heritage in Belfast from the late 19th century to the mid-20th century.
- 3.3.7e There is a strong local association with aviation through the Belfast Short Bros factory at Queens Island. A number of the aircraft in the collection were built by this company and some even tested over Belfast Lough such as the Shorts Sealand and the SC1, the first VTOL aircraft in the world. The local connections continue through replicas of Harry Ferguson's monoplanes as well as a number of Miles aircraft which had a base out of Newtownards for a period after World War II.
- 3.3.7f The industrial revolution is of particular significance to the northeast of Ireland, which became a world leader in a range of industries. These industries boosted the economy and employed many thousands of local people across generations, meaning that the experiences of industrial life are integral to individual and community identity and heritage. Professor WA McCutcheon, an industrial archaeologist, was the driving force behind the development of the industrial collection in the 1960s. Machinery and other material culture was accessioned into the permanent collection, including material from all of the major industries for which the northeast of Ireland was once renowned, such as linen production, heavy engineering, shipbuilding and rope making. Significant specimens include six stationary steam engines that exemplify power generation in the 19th century, a Columbian printing press donated by *The Belfast Newsletter*, and looms, spinning frames and beetling machines representing the hugely significant linen industry.

3.3.8 Folk Life and Agriculture

- 3.3.8a The museum's material culture collection is in part a study collection, and in part a resource for the open-air museum. It contains important collections of agriculture, domestic life, crafts, community life and dress and textiles. The domestic life collection is a particular strength, thanks in part to the need to furnish the buildings in the open-air museum. So too is the collection of dress and textiles which represents excellence in technical skills, creativity in design and wear, industry in the factory and on the farm, and an appreciation of dress and textiles as folk art, over a period of almost three hundred years in Ulster. There are rich agricultural collections including early seed winnows, threshers, ploughs, horse and farming-related material and an extensive spade collection highlighting the regional varieties.
- 3.3.8b The collection of dress and textiles includes over 30,000 objects, the result of almost 60 years of fieldwork, research and acquisitions. It is the largest public collection of

dress and textiles in Ireland and one of the largest of its kind in any open-air museum in the British Isles. One of the core strengths of the collection is dress and textiles from the period 1840 -1910, linens that reflect the growth of power loom weaving in Ireland, and both finished and working examples of whitework embroidery and lace.

- 3.3.8c One of the earliest pieces in the textile collection is a panel of lace for a child's bonnet, believed to date from the early eighteenth century. The most recent acquisitions include examples of contemporary millinery, and a patchwork wall hanging made during the 2020 Covid 19 lockdown to celebrate the work of the NHS. The collection covers a very wide area of dress and textiles but some of the more significant collections include:
- A collection of wedding dresses, from 1850 to 1990
 - A collection of regalia for brotherhoods in Ireland (including the Orange Order) from the mid-1800s to present day.
 - A collection of almost 100 objects for Irish Dance from the 1930s to the present day.
 - A large collection of household linens 1790 to mid-1900s, including those produced by named manufacturers
 - A collection of over 400 examples of Irish lace from the mid-1800s to mid-1900s
 - A collection of patchwork bedcovers and hangings illustrating a wide range of techniques and patterns, from the early 1800s to the present day
- 3.3.8d A non-material culture collection is held within the museum's sound archive, largely stored on cassette or reels, although significant efforts are being made to digitise it. It is an extensive collection of recordings spanning transport, industry, crafts, folklore, language, traditional music and song. Whilst the bulk of the collection was amassed in-house by museum curators, some collections were acquired from external sources.
- 3.3.8e The Ulster Folk Museum holds significant photographic collections capturing the way of life in Ireland, mainly Ulster c. 1850-1930, from notable photographers such as W. A. Green. Substantial in-house archive photography captured the history, activities and events of the Ulster Folk Museum from the early 1960s onwards. In addition to still images, the museum has collected moving images in the form of film over the years. This material is currently being digitised to enable researchers to view this historical portal to our past. In collaboration with Northern Ireland Screen, the museum is an access point to the "Digital Film Archive" that provides, via a computer station, 70 hours of digitised moving images about Northern Ireland from 1897-2000.
- 3.3.8f The library and paper archive deals with the subject matter of the museum. The library contains about 25,000 books and many periodicals, covering a wide range of topics from cookery to local history, from costumes to early motor cars. It includes a considerable collection of international journals concerned mainly with folklore and ethnology, many of which cannot be found elsewhere in the province. The archives have an equally wide scope, containing reminiscences, linguistic and folklore material, transport material, maps, plans and much more. Collections include the open-air museum buildings archive, folklife questionnaire collection and papers

pertaining to notable individuals including Estyn Evans, Richard Hayward, George Thompson and Alan Gailey.

3.3.8g The Ulster Dialect Archive contains published and unpublished wordlists and glossaries that document the distinctive speech of the people of the area that comprises the old nine-county Ulster. Within that area, three principal dialect areas are generally distinguished. The first is Ulster-Scots (sometimes called 'Scotch-Irish'). The second is Mid-Ulster English (also described as 'Northern Hiberno-English' or 'Ulster Anglo-Irish'). The third is the speech of those areas where Irish Gaelic is either still in use or has died out relatively recently. Most of the material in the archive is in the form of the written or printed word. However, a significant proportion is found within the museum's sound archive. The paper-based dialect archive contains several manuscript collections, notably the Sir John Byers glossary (c. 1910), the Montgomery manuscript (County Antrim dialect, 1961), and the Huddleston manuscript (Ulster-Scots poetry and prose). Published collections include the donated Ulster-Scots library of Professor Robert J Gregg (1912-1998) and many now rare and out-of-print works. Much of the material in the collections have been electronically captured on a dictionary database. PDF copies of this dictionary are available for download either as a whole or by alphabetic letter.

3.3.9 Emigration

3.3.9a The Emigration collections relate to the interpretation of people in new places and are concerned primarily with social history surrounding the migration of people from Ulster and their settlement in North America from 1600 to the present day. These collections include: Ulster and American domestic miscellanea, textiles and costume; Ulster and American furniture, craft tools and agricultural implements; and, emigrant-related buildings and associated building maintenance materials and fittings, drawings, photographs and other records.

3.4 Natural Sciences

3.4.1 The Natural Sciences collections show particular emphasis on the botany, geology and zoology of the north of Ireland but also include material of international provenance:

3.4.2 The Zoology collection holds examples of every mammal species living in Northern Ireland today, and skeletons of whales and dolphins that have washed up on these shores. The collection contains more than 2000 mammal mounts, skins, and skeletons. The finest of these are on display, while many more form an important reference collection. More than 300 bird species are known from Northern Ireland, and the collections include mounts of nearly all of them. Many were prepared in the early 20th century by the famous Sheals taxidermists of Belfast.

3.4.3 There are more invertebrates in the collection than all the other specimens combined. Most of the insect specimens are from the UK and Ireland, but many are from further afield. Among them are the exceptional collections of Morpho and

Parnassius butterflies. There is also a significant collection of other invertebrates, particularly snails, from across Ireland.

- 3.4.4 The geology collection includes around 30,000 fossils, 11,000 mineral specimens, 4,000 rocks, and a growing collection of meteorites. Highlights of the fossil collection include the only dinosaur bones ever found in Ireland, an Edmontosaurus skeleton and Giant Deer bones. The minerals collection includes examples of those first found in Northern Ireland - Larnite, Garronite, and Gobbinsite. In the rocks collection is iconic Mourne granite and Cushendun 'pebble beds', as well as the 1780 million-year-old Inishtrahull gneiss, the oldest rock in Ireland. There is a small, but representative, collection of meteorites, including several that fell in Northern Ireland. Among them is a 113kg iron meteorite, spectacular slices of 'stony iron' pallasites, a small Lunar meteorite, and many small pieces from the great Russian meteorite fall of 2013.
- 3.4.5 The herbarium's founding collections originate from the Belfast Natural History and Philosophical Society. The oldest specimens are marine algae collected by John Templeton in the 1790s. Since then, the collection has expanded to include over 100,000 specimens. It features representatives from across the plant and fungi kingdoms. Collectively these underpin the scientific knowledge of our flora. Beyond its role as a scientific resource, the herbarium also holds significant cultural and heritage value, being particularly rich in nineteenth century material.
- 3.4.6 In addition to the main herbarium collection, we hold an important archive of related material that includes a collection of manuscripts, drawings and historic and contemporary wildlife art paintings, early and/or rare natural science books, transparencies and photographs, and data generated through fieldwork.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

- 4.1 Given the diverse nature of National Museums NI's collections it is not possible to establish a simple statement that covers all areas of collecting. Acquisition is aimed at building upon the strengths of the existing collections and establishing new collecting areas, where appropriate.
- 4.2 Ten inter-related guiding principles underpin our approach to collections development. Collecting will be directed towards achieving public value by:
- Strengthening existing collecting areas
 - Bridging identified gaps in existing collection areas and acquiring items not currently represented in the collections
 - Acquiring items of particular national and international significance (individually or by association)
 - Acquiring items that are rare and represent the best examples of their kind
 - Acquiring items that support capital development plans
 - Enhancing the permanent exhibitions across National Museums NI sites
 - Supporting the temporary and special exhibition programmes
 - Supporting research activity

- Improving the diversity and representativeness of the collections, through collecting associated with the nine protective categories as identified in Section 75 of the Northern Ireland Act (1998)
- Ensuring the relevance of the collections, through the pursuit of active and informed contemporary collecting

4.3 In addition to the guiding principles outlined in 4.2, the following limiting factors will normally apply:

- Items will not be acquired unless suitable environmental conditions are available for storage
- Items will not be acquired if conservation or remedial treatment to make the acquisition suitable for long-term storage cannot be carried out to a defined programme of work determined before acquisition
- Larger items will not be acquired unless the storage space to contain the material and the long-term resources to maintain them are clearly defined before acquisition
- Where curatorial expertise is absent, for the interim, a cautious approach to acquisition will prevail and the presumption will be against acquisition
- Material will only be acquired if it is well provenanced and has a well-documented recent history

4.4 The themes and priorities for future collecting are outlined below under each collecting area.

4.4.1 Art

Collecting priorities are:

Fine Art:

- European painting Pre-1900 - The priority is now to enhance and develop the Ulster Museum's newly acquired strengths in Italian Dutch and Flemish art. These areas have been transformed by major acquisitions including of a rare High Renaissance painting, *The Nativity* by Baldassarre Peruzzi, and Dutch seventeenth century landscapes by Jacob van Ruisdael and Jan van Goyen.
- Irish painting Pre-1900 - A serious gap in the collection is Robert Fagan, and 17th and 18th-century portraiture generally is not fully represented. Similarly, 18th-century Irish landscape painting could be strengthened. Hugh Douglas Hamilton is currently only represented by two minor portraits and a more significant work would be desirable
- 20th century Irish – the collection lacks an impressive full-length Orpen portrait to balance a number of other major full-length portraits in the collection. Additional priorities are Irish artists who worked in the West of Ireland and a major Basil Blackshaw equestrian painting
- British painting pre-1900 – particularly significant Romantic and Pre-Raphaelite paintings as these are not well represented

- 20th century British - The figurative tradition is not well represented, and the most serious gaps in the collection are Lucian Freud and David Hockney, both artists with Irish connections
- International 20th Century art
- Contemporary art, with particular emphasis on lens-based practice
- Artworks representing socially-conscious practice and artistic activity that addresses issues within our society, including works which reflect current issues of climate emergency and the displacement of peoples.
- Performance art, including art that relates to, or represents, performance art practice e.g. paper ephemera. Specifically in relation to the history of the practice in Northern Ireland
- New media and forms of artistic practice that represent the new technologies and changing attitudes
- Interdisciplinary work connecting to literature, particularly Irish literature

Troubles Art:

- Significant contemporary Irish and International artworks that are artistic responses to the Troubles
- Artworks that respond to the legacy of the Troubles
- Contextual artworks that represent other work by an artist already held within the Troubles Art collection
- Artworks that contextualise the Troubles Art collection in the broader scope of conflict art

Works on Paper:

Including purchases supported by the Olive Letitia Nelson Bequest, which is for the specific purpose of purchasing prints and drawings:

- Old Master drawings, to support and contextualise existing strengths within the collection
- Irish works on paper, historic, 20th Century and Contemporary
- British works on paper, historic, 20th Century and Contemporary
- International works on paper, 20th Century and Contemporary
- Works by women artists, including Irish artists and those representing significant artistic movements
- Works on paper that strengthen existing areas of the fine art collection, or wider museum collection, and help provide further context and understanding. Including new acquisitions received through bequest.

Applied Art:

Historic Applied Art:

- Significant works of historic Irish applied art (Late 17th century to 20th century)
- Significant items reflecting high quality and importance in the development of the applied arts
- Material representative of external influences on Irish applied art

- Important examples of works of art that fill gaps in the current historic applied art collections including; Arts and Crafts, Art Nouveau and Art Deco
- Historic fashionable dress that fills key gaps in the collection

Contemporary Applied Art:

- Significant contemporary Irish and International works of applied art
- Contemporary reinterpretations of historically applied art techniques or designs
- Artworks that reflect new technology and materials
- Internationally important applied art artists that are not currently represented in the collection
- Annually, one 'International Designer outfit' by a successful international designer whose work reflects one of the key looks of the coming season's fashions
- Annually, one 'High Street' outfit, bought in a Belfast shop or online, reflects what is popular and available and actually worn in contemporary Northern Ireland
- Items of fashionable dress that attest to contemporary political, environmental, social and technological development

4.4.2 History

Collecting priorities are:

Archaeology:

- Items declared treasure under *The Treasure Act (1996)*. As part of the Museum's role in administering the Treasure Act in NI, it is afforded the first opportunity to acquire any item declared Treasure by the Coroner (pending the payment of the independent valuation organised through the British Museum)
- Selected items reported under *The Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995*. Not all objects classify as Treasure. The 1995 Order reflects the Museum's role in identifying and recording objects found by members of the public some of which may be subsequently acquired
- Material of Viking origin
- Material of Roman origin
- Material of Iron Age origin
- Objects of particular local or national significance

Modern and Contemporary History:

- Material associated with the development of Northern Ireland with particular emphasis on partition, civil and political conflict, unrest relating to divisive societal issues, de-industrialisation and social and cultural identity
- Contemporary photographic collections, with a particular focus on images by women and by international press photographers working in Northern Ireland from 1969, and those depicting under-represented areas in Ulster and Northern Ireland
- Material relating to the Suffrage movement in Ireland and women's involvement in Trade Unionism

- Material relating to the famine in Ireland
- Material representing different ethnic communities in Northern Ireland, their histories and experiences
- Relevant international material linked to the development of the World Cultures collection that provides context or is connected with source communities
- Material associated with disability and hidden disability, the lives of those affected, and organisations that support those affected by disability and campaign for change
- LGBT+ history with particular reference to lesbian, bi and transgender history, material that pre-dates 1970 and material relating to personal history and family life
- Community history that represents different community identities, the concept of place and the individual character of areas of Belfast and Northern Ireland, the experiences of specific communities, local figures, enterprises and sites of importance
- Material associated with the impact of the Troubles outside Northern Ireland, the role of the church, diaspora populations and the legacy of the Belfast/Good Friday Agreement
- Oral histories representing those engaged in frontline services, campaigns for change and rights issues

Emigration:

Objects and archival material (including audio and video recordings) that tell the story of emigration to North America, address gaps in the existing collection, and help expand the narrative of the museum to include marginalised stories:

- 19th, 20th and 21st century material including that which represents the urban tenement experience and the American Green Card era
- Material relating to emigrants with an Ulster Catholic background
- Material relating to emigrants with a working-class Ulster Protestant background
- Material relating to female emigrants
- Material relating to emigrants in all nine protective categories as identified in Section 75. This will include a proactive approach to collecting LGBT+ material, relating to people who emigrated from their places of birth to express themselves
- Material relating to Ulster emigrants' interactions with Indigenous Nations
- Material relating to Ulster emigrants' interactions with African Americans, both free and enslaved
- Material relating to emigration from Ulster to Canada
- Material relating to emigration from Ulster to urban areas

Folk Life and Agriculture

Social History:

- Material that supports and enriches the interpretation of the historic buildings on the Folk Museum site
- Material relating to commercial life in early 20th century Ireland
- Material relating to cultural life in the early 20th century, including sports, leisure, music and dance. In particular, to acquire more examples of traditional musical instruments
- Oral histories with a focus on Irish folklore and social history to contribute to the sound archive
- Material relating to traditional and complementary medicine in an Irish context and objects relating to disabilities and mental health
- Examples of Irish craft, both early 20th century and contemporary material inspired by traditional crafts, with particular emphasis on those crafts demonstrated at the Ulster Folk Museum such as basket-making, wicker weaving, carpentry, blacksmithing etc.
- Objects and archives relating to key events in the lives of Ulster people; birth, marriage, school life, work life, death etc. as well seasonal holidays, events and traditions, such as Christmas, Harvest and religious holidays.
- Material that represents the linguistic diversity of this place, to enhance the Ulster Dialect Archive

Dress and Textiles:

- Examples of contemporary dress and textiles from Irish designer/makers – in particular those examples exhibiting an innovative reinterpretation of traditional textile skills and /or a creative approach to recycling and sustainability.
- Linens, both loom state samples and finished cloth relating to specific, named factories and mills in Ulster.
- Designs and original art work for embroidery, lace making and linen weaving.
- Examples of home dressmaking from the period 1920 – 1980s.
- Dress (for men, women and children) manufactured in Ulster or which has a link to a named local retailer e.g. Robinson and Cleaver, Bank buildings etc.
- Hand knitted garments.
- Work wear, uniforms and overalls relating to local industries and occupations.
- Examples of fancy dress and dress for performance.

Transport, Industry and Technology:

- Cars and motorsport vehicles that were built in Ireland. A specific gap that needs addressing is Irish cars and motorcyles from the 1940s.
- Motorsport vehicles used in Ireland or associated with sporting personalities from Ireland

- Goods and commercial vehicles associated with businesses in Ireland
- Vehicles invented in Ireland or by Irish emigrants and associated material
- Irish transport and travel memorabilia, including promotional and marketing materials
- Vehicles and associated memorabilia marketed as Ulster or Ireland models
- Models and paintings of aspects of transport not currently represented in the existing collection, where it is impractical to collect the real specimen
- Non-material culture - video recordings relating to the social histories of the Transport, Industry and Technology collections
- Two-dimensional, ephemeral material which gives context to the Transport, Industry and Technology collections
- Items relating to *Titanic* in her social, economic and cultural context, including material that illustrates Belfast's industrial and maritime history
- Items relating to the schooner *Result* and to the Carrickfergus shipyards
- Items relating to women in transport, science and engineering
- Green transport, both commercial and non-commercial vehicles, and associated material
- Contemporary water sports, such as surfing and water-skiing
- Transport associated with the political and civil conflict known as the Troubles
- Innovators in transport in the fields of racing, engineering and design
- Social, cultural and design history of transport, as relevant to the island of Ireland
- Material relating to significant individuals from the island of Ireland who are associated with transport
- Material associated with the maritime collection, as well as other objects and material associated with vernacular boat building across Ulster

4.4.3 Natural Sciences

Collecting priorities are:

Geology:

Rocks:

- Distinctive Irish rock types, particularly igneous lithologies
- Unusual Irish rock types or occurrences
- Unusual rock types from around the world
- Representative examples of sedimentary and metamorphic structures, and igneous textures
- Minerals and meteorites
- Representative and rare Irish minerals, particularly examples of mineral species first described from Ireland
- Irish meteorites
- Mineral species and major meteorite types not currently represented in the collections

Fossils:

- Unusual and rare fossils, such as those that show exceptional preservation or preserve evidence that contributes significantly to understanding the palaeobiology of the organism or the palaeoenvironment in which it lived
- Irish fossils that contribute to an understanding of taxonomy, palaeobiology or stratigraphy
- Voucher material from research studies (subject to assessment on each project's merits) High-quality items that augment existing displays

Zoology:

Vertebrates:

- Irish birds and mammals are not currently represented in the collections.
- High-quality taxidermy of Irish taxa
- Well-documented historic specimens
- Voucher material from research studies (subject to assessment on each project's merits)
- Opportunistic or incidental vertebrates of national or topical importance

Invertebrates:

- Marine invertebrates - molluscs, sponges, hydroids, tunicates, echinoderms, anthozoa
- Any Irish First specimens, particularly found in Northern Ireland.
- Any Irish species for which the museum has few or no specimens
- Comparative material of UK species
- Type specimens
- Well-documented material from local and historical collectors
- Voucher material from research studies (subject to assessment on each project's merits)

Botany:

- Responsibly collect new algae, fungi, lichen, plant and slime mould specimens that fill temporal, spatial or taxonomic gaps in the existing collection
- Increase our holdings of difficult groups, non-native species and infraspecific (below species rank) taxa
- Historic plant or fungi specimens from Ireland
- Botanical specimens from outside of Ireland collected by important Irish botanists
- items relating to botany in Ireland such as carpological or seed collections, economic or ethnobotanical items, models, microscope slides, and botany equipment
- Archival items relating to botany in Ireland such as correspondence, field notes, journals, manuscripts, photographs, and books
- Voucher material from research studies and botany or ecological surveys (subject to assessment on each project's merits)
- Material that is of identifiable quality and is accompanied by sufficient collection data

4.5 The collections are a resource for National Museums NI and must be used to underpin all of our activities. We are committed to broadening access to the

collections through exhibitions, digitisation, online resources, loans, outreach, events and publications, at a popular and academic level.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 National Museums NI 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 the 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.
- 5.3 Each object or collection recommended for disposal will be categorised as follows to assist the decision-making process with regard to the method and consequence of disposal of the objects or collections:

CATEGORY 1

Objects or collections which fall outside the remit of National Museums NI as defined in *The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998*.

CATEGORY 2

Human remains (see Section 10), memorials, votive objects and natural sciences specimens that originate from outside of the UK or Ireland. Repatriation or restitution may be considered following a request for the return of remains, objects or specimens and each request will be considered on a case by case basis, led by source communities and taking into account any religious, social or political sensitivities which may apply.

CATEGORY 3

Duplicates, bearing in mind that similar or identical items created or assembled as part of a set, group or sequence may have individual significance.

CATEGORY 4

Objects which present a hazard to the collections or human health where the resources required for treatment or control outweigh the importance of the object. Unless the accepting organisation can undertake treatment or control, then destruction should be carried out.

CATEGORY 5

Objects subjected to accidental damage or wilful destruction. Specialist advice and a condition report, prepared by a conservator experienced in a relevant medium, must indicate that the damage is irreparable or that the resources required for treatment outweigh the importance of the object.

CATEGORY 6

Where an original medium has deteriorated to a useless or dangerous state and a copy has been prepared on an alternative stable medium. Examples are nitrate film or magnetic audiotape.

CATEGORY 7

Objects or collections falling under Spoliation (see section 14).

CATEGORY 8

Objects that are assessed and judged to fit more appropriately with the collecting policies, role and purpose of other Accredited museums (in the first instance) or suitable organisations.

- 5.4 Objects, materials or collections which have not formally entered the holdings of the National Museums NI by the process of accessioning are exempted from the provisions of this policy. In the event that disposal of such items, including unidentified loans or unsolicited donations, should become necessary, a separate procedure will be followed within the UK Documentation Procedural Standard (Spectrum).

6. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

- 6.1 In matters of collections acquisition and disposal, National Museums NI will, where appropriate, take account of:
- The principles outlined in the Museums Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums*, 2015, Section 2 – Stewardship of Collections, and the Museums Association's *Off the Shelf: A Toolkit for Ethical Transfer, Reuse & Disposal*
 - International Council of Museums *Code of Ethics for Museums*, 2013, Section 2.
 - The standards and practices required by the Arts Council England (ACE) Accreditation Scheme
 - *The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998*
 - The Management Statement and Financial Memorandum, Department for Communities (DfC) and National Museums Northern Ireland
- 6.2 The relevant legal and ethical frameworks, under which National Museums NI's policies and procedures are informed, alongside appropriate national and international standards, set out in Appendix 1.

7. Collecting policies of other museums

- 7.1 National Museums NI 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):

- Accredited museums and galleries in Northern Ireland where relevant and appropriate in regard to the subject areas represented in the collections of National Museums NI
- Arts Council of Northern Ireland
- British Film Institute
- British Library Sound Archive
- Dublin City Gallery, The Hugh Lane
- Imperial War Museums
- Irish Museum of Modern Art
- National Army Museum
- National Gallery
- National Portrait Gallery
- National Museum of Science and Industry
- Natural History Museum
- National Maritime Museum
- National Museums Scotland
- National Galleries of Scotland
- National Museums Wales
- National Museums Liverpool
- National Museum of Ireland
- National Gallery of Ireland
- Public Record Office of Northern Ireland
- Royal Armouries
- Royal Museums Greenwich
- Science Museum Group
- Tate
- The British Museum
- Victoria & Albert Museum

7.3 National Museums NI is open to exploring the possibilities of joint acquisition agreements.

8. Archive Holdings

8.1 As National Museums NI holds and intends to acquire relevant 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).

8.2 National Museums NI will adhere to the General Data Protection Regulation 2018 and the Freedom of Information Act 2000 in its acquisition, care, management and use of the archives collection.

9. Acquisition

- 9.1 Authority for the acquisition of objects normally rests with the Chief Executive Officer of National Museums NI acting on recommendations from relevant collections staff.
- 9.2 Where the value of a proposed purchase is £100,000 or above and/or the Director of Collections has identified particular resource implications associated with the acquisition, final authority will be referred to the Board of Trustees of National Museums NI.
- 9.3 In line with best practice guidelines, National Museums NI operates a rigorous specimen acquisition process for both purchases and donations. This process is informed, at all stages, by specialist opinions of curatorial, collections management and collections care staff.
- 9.4 The rationale for the acquisition of objects will be made within the framework of our statutory responsibilities (1.1.1-1.1.2), mission (1.1.4), themes and priorities for future collecting (4).
- 9.5 The acquisition of objects by purchase is and will be, constrained by the financial allocation to the Specimen Purchase Fund. The decision to acquire will, therefore, take account of the priority of each proposed acquisition against the availability of funds for purchase and maintenance.
- 9.6 National Museums NI 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).
- 9.7 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 1 November 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, National Museums NI 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 As National Museums NI 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.

11. Biological and geological material

- 11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, National Museums NI 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 National Museums NI 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 Northern Ireland there is a legal requirement under *The Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995* to report the discovery of all archaeological finds within a 14-day period to the Ulster Museum, which is one of three relevant authorities, specified in the legislation: the Ulster Museum, the Department of Environment and the Police.
- 12.3 National Museums NI will adhere to the *The Treasure Act 1996: Northern Ireland Code of Practice*, 3rd Revision, 2023. The treasure process is administered by Treasure Registry staff at National Museums NI in conjunction with the Coroners' Service for Northern Ireland and supported by the Historic Environment Division (HED). Any person who finds an item or items which they believe might be treasure should report it directly to National Museums NI (who will pass details to the coroner) within 14 days.

13. Exceptions

Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because National Museums NI 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 National Museums NI will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. National Museums NI will document when these exceptions occur.

14. Spoliation

National Museums NI will use 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II period: Statement of Principles and Proposed Actions', issued by the

National Museum Directors' Council in 1998, and report on them in accordance with the guidelines.

15. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

National Museums NI's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, 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. National Museums NI 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 16.1- 4, 16.6-7 and 16.13 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

The return 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' (DCMS, 2005).

16. Disposal procedures

- 16.1 All curators will actively undertake collections reviews as part of normal collections development activity. Such work will be aligned to the National Museums NI Documentation Plan and the recommendations made by the Public Accounts Committee and by Arts Council England as part of the Accreditation process.
- 16.2 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum Primary Procedures on disposal and the Museums Association's guidance *Off the Shelf: A Toolkit for Ethical Transfer, Reuse and Disposal*
- 16.3 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.
- 16.4 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, National Museums NI 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.
- 16.5 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by transfer to the support collection, gift, sale, return to donor, recycling, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.6 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by National Museums NI 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 as appropriate.

- 16.7 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by transfer to the support collection, gift, exchange, sale, return to donor, recycling 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 through delegated authority to the Chief Executive Officer for disposals assessed to be low-risk and the Board of Trustees for disposals assessed to be medium-risk or high-risk, acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.8 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. Consideration will be given as to whether it can be used in the support collection of National Museums NI or it will be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other museums or relevant organisations committed to public access and engagement who may be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.9 If the material is not acquired by any museum or relevant organisation 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 Museums Association's (MA) *Find an Object* web listing service, an announcement in the MA's *Museums Journal* or other specialist publications and websites (as appropriate).
- 16.10 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. 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.
- 16.11 Any monies received by National Museums NI's governing body from the disposal of items must be invested in the long-term benefit of the museum and its collections. This might include care of, access to and engagement with the collection but is not likely to include short-term funding of existing posts or current activities.
- 16.12 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.
- 16.13 Full records will be kept of all decisions on deaccessioning and disposal 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.

16.14

Disposal by exchange

- 16.14 The nature of disposal by exchange means that National Museums NI 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.
- 16.15 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-16.5 will apply.
- 16.16 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.
- 16.17 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, National Museums NI will place a notice on the MA's *Find an Object* web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's *Museums Journal* or other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.18 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.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.19 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the Chief Executive Officer or the Board of Trustees, on the recommendation of professional staff, may decide to destroy it.
- 16.20 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.
- 16.21 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.
- 16.22 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.

16.23 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.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Chairman
Board of Trustees
National Museums NI

Appendix 1: Legal, Ethical and Standards Framework

National Museums NI's Collections Management Framework is informed by legislation, ethical codes and appropriate sectoral standards.

A. Legislation applying to all Collections Management Policies

- Copyright Act 1911 and 1956
- The Public Records Act (Northern Ireland) 1923
- Disposal of Documents Order 1925
- Sex Discrimination (Northern Ireland) Order 1976, as amended
- Health and Safety at Work (Northern Ireland) Order 1978
- Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988
- The Historic Monuments and Archaeological Objects (Northern Ireland) Order 1995
- The Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009)
- Race Relations (Northern Ireland) Order 1997, as amended
- Fair Employment & Treatment (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Human Rights Act 1998
- General Data Protection Regulation 2018
- The Museums and Galleries (Northern Ireland) Order 1998
- Section 75, Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Sections 76 Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Schedule 9 Northern Ireland Act 1998
- Management of Health & Safety at Work Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2000
- The Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003
- Copyright and Related Rights Regulations 2003
- Employment (Northern Ireland) Order 2003
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995, as amended DDA (Northern Ireland) Order 2006
- Equality Act (Sexual Orientation) Regulations (Northern Ireland) 2006, as amended
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981, Wildlife (Northern Ireland) Order 1985, The Wildlife (Amendment) (Northern Ireland) Order 1995, Wildlife and Natural Environment Act (Northern Ireland) 2011
- The Requirements of HM Customs & Revenue
- The Ivory Act 2018

B. Ethical codes applying to all Collections Management Policies

- UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, ratified Nov 2002
- CITES – 'Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora' 1973/79
- Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II period: Statement of Principles and Proposed Actions, National Museum Directors Conference 1998
- Combating Illicit Trade: Due Diligence Guidelines for Museums, Libraries and Archives on collecting and borrowing Cultural Material, DCMS 2005
- Guidance for the Care of Human Remains in Museums, DCMS 2005
- Code of Ethics for Museums, Museums Association 2015

- UK Export Licensing for Cultural Goods – Procedures and guidance for exporters of works of art and other cultural goods, Arts Council England 2011
- ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2013 (including the ICOM 'Red List')

C. Sectorial standards applying to all Collections Management Policies

- PAS197:2009: Code of practice for cultural collections management, British Standards Institute
- Spectrum 5.0: The UK Museum Collections Management Standard 2017

D. Collections Information and Access Policy

D.1 Documentation and Cataloguing Standards

- Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom (3rd ed., 2002)
- ISAD(g): General International Standard Archival Description, International Council on Archives 2007
- Spectrum 5.0: The UK Museum Collections Management Standard 2017
- Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules ('AACR', Joint Steering Committee, 2nd ed., 2002 revision): international library documentation standard. Superseded by AACR2 and Resource Description and Access ('RDA', 2010, revisions through 2013)

D.2 Lending

- Principles for Lending and Borrowing June 2021, National Museums Directors Council (NMDC)
- UK Registrars Group, Courier Guidelines 2nd Edition 2004
- UK Registrars Group (UKRG) - Guidance Notes: The Virtual Courier (UK and Europe) 2020
- Effective Collections, Simple Loans Administration. Museums Association Supported by Esmée Fairburn Foundation. 1st Edition 2007
- Immunity from Seizure legislation (Part 6 of the Tribunals, Courts and Enforcements Act 2007)
- UK Registrars Group, Standard Facilities Report 2008
- UK Registrars Group, Standard Facilities Report: Display Case supplement 2008
- UK Registrar' Group, Standard Facilities Report: Security Supplement 2008
- Bizot Group Loans Guidelines (revised) 2009
- The Bizot Green Protocol 2014
- Government Indemnity Scheme, Guidelines for National Institutions ~~2012~~ 2016
- Smarter Loans: Principles for lending and borrowing from UK museums, Museums Association 2012

D.3 Collections Care and Conservation Policy

- European Confederation of Conservator-Restorers' Professional Guidelines 2002
- National Museum Directors Conference, guiding principles for reducing museums' carbon footprint 2010
- Benchmarks in Collections Care 2.0, Alex Dawson (ed.), Museums, Libraries and Archives 2011

- PAS 198:2012 Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections, British Standards Institute
- PD 5454:2012 Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival materials British Standards Institute
- Joint International Institute for Conservation (IIC) of Historic and Artistic Works – International Council of Museums (ICOM), Conservation Committee (CC) Declaration on Environmental Guidelines 2014
- Institute of Conservation (Icon) Code of Conduct and Professional Standards 2014
- RAPT (Risk Awareness Profiling Tool), www.raptonline.org.uk