
SCOTTISH BORDERS COUNCIL/LIVE BORDERS MUSEUMS & GALLERIES COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2024-2029

Report by Director – Resilient Communities

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16 April 2024

1. PURPOSE AND SUMMARY

- 1.1 This report is seeking approval of a revised Collections Development Policy for the collections in museums and galleries which are operated by Live Borders, for the period 2024-29. Although the responsibility for managing the Council’s heritage and art collections passed to Live Borders in 2016 the ownership of these collections remains with Scottish Borders Council. The parameters for collecting and the procedures for disposing of material to and from the collections therefore require to be set and approved by Scottish Borders Council based on comment and advice received from Live Borders Head of Museums, Galleries & Archives.**
- 1.2 Under the terms of the Arts Council England’s (ACE) UK Museum Accreditation Scheme (administered in Scotland by Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS)) - a Museum and Gallery is required to have in place an approved Collections Development Policy to cover the acquisitions and disposals of material into and from its permanent museum object and art collections. Having such a policy in place is a recognised and accepted indicator of good museum practice and management.
- 1.3 Live Borders Museums & Galleries will reapply for Museum Accreditation in 2027 and is therefore required to present an updated Collections Development Policy that has been approved by Scottish Borders Council. The current Collections Management Policy was approved by Scottish Borders Council on 14 February 2018 and was due to run until 2023. In addition, the new policy needs to acknowledge the requirement to prioritise rationalisation and disposal during this policy period.
- 1.4 The revised Policy is attached as Appendix 1 and the necessary changes, which are relatively minor, are detailed in section 3.

2 RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 I recommend that the Executive Committee approves the amended Scottish Borders Council/Live Borders Museums & Galleries Collections Development Policy 2024-2029.**

3 COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY 2024-2029

- 3.1 The acceptance of an item into the Museums and Galleries permanent collection implies an obligation to properly care for the item. The Service does not have the resources or the premises to accept everything that is offered. It is therefore important to define areas and priorities of collecting, and by default, areas where the Museums & Galleries will not collect. This allows Curatorial staff to care for items accessioned already in the collection and to collect or dispose strategically within Policy guidelines.
- 3.2 The attached Policy (Appendix 1) follows the approved style and precise wording laid down by Museums Galleries Scotland and Arts Council England and which are required as part of the Museums Accreditation application process. The model policy has previously been approved by the Council and has consistently been adopted by the Museum and Gallery Service as the framework underpinning its own policy.
- 3.3 Changes to revised Museums & Galleries Collections Development Policy:
 - a) Update details of existing collections from information gained from the merged Borders collection online databases, storage review and completion of phase 1 of the museum collection valuation.
 - b) Update details of collection needs based on curatorial knowledge and responsible collecting to achieve sustainable growth as is practical given space and resources.
 - c) Replace references to Live Borders Museums & Galleries Manager with Live Borders Head of Museums, Galleries & Archives.
 - d) Replace references to Museum HQ Municipal Buildings with St Mary's Mill, Selkirk.
 - e) Add references to museum storage in the library/contact centre building in Duns and the Heritage Hub Archive.
 - f) Replace references to Tweeddale Museum with Peebles Museum.
 - g) Replace references to Jim Clark Museum with Jim Clark Motorsport Museum and remove reference to Jim Clark Room.
 - h) Numbering has been amended slightly.
 - i) Update accredited and non-accredited organisations lists.
 - j) Add reference to the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries Archive.

- k) Add two exceptions for clarity.
 - l) Replace references to Ethnography with World Cultures.
 - m) Replace reference to Drumlanrig Tower with Borders Textile Towerhouse/Towerdykeside.
 - n) Remove references to Harestanes, Live Borders vacated in 2022 with the collection largely moved to St Mary's Mill.
 - o) Update reference to St Ronan's Wells Visitor Centre, which is currently not open to the public with the collection largely moved into Tweeddale storage or painting store.
 - p) Remove reference to the Wilton Lodge Park development project which has completed, and the previous partnership with the Wildlife Information Centre at Vogrie which ended when Live Borders vacated Harestanes.
 - q) Add reference to service review and community town planning work investigating opportunities for co-location in Selkirk.
 - r) Update reference to the Great Tapestry of Scotland to reflect it has opened and is outside the remit of this Collections Development Policy.
 - s) Update reference to priorities for rationalisation or disposal necessary for legal, safety, care or conservation reasons including material in heavily damaged or very poor condition; and disposals for curatorial reasons.
- 3.4 In line with current guidelines this policy will be reviewed on an annual basis, in consultation with Live Borders Head of Museums, Galleries & Archives and the Director of Resilient Communities, and any significant changes requiring SBC approval will be brought to a future committee meeting for approval. The full policy will otherwise need to be reconsidered by the Executive Committee no later than 2029.
- 3.5 A report on recommendations for disposals is expected to be brought to the Executive Committee in due course.

4 IMPLICATIONS

4.1 Financial

There are no costs attached to any of the recommendations contained in this report but note risk 4.2(a).

4.2 **Risk and Mitigations**

- a) If the amendments to the existing Collections Development Policy are not approved it is unlikely that Live Borders Museums and Galleries will achieve an award of Full or Provisional Accreditation. In turn this could affect eligibility for grant aid, partnership opportunities and the allocation of Treasure Trove archaeological material from the Finds Disposal Panel.
- b) The Policy reduces the risk of uncoordinated or unplanned collecting.
- c) The Collections Policy and the Management Agreement with Live Borders ensures that management responsibility on collecting and disposals is devolved to Live Borders' Head of Museums, Galleries & Archives, who is professionally qualified and experienced in the protocols, standards and ethics required for collections management. The final decision on disposal of any items from the collections will require to be ratified by Scottish Borders Council.

4.3 **Integrated Impact Assessment**

Equalities Impact Assessment has been carried out on earlier versions of this policy and there were no adverse equality implications. The minor changes to the policy will not impact on this assessment.

4.4 **Sustainable Development Goals**

The Collections Policy, in supporting Museums and Galleries, continues to support United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 3 "Ensure healthy lives and promote wellbeing for all at all ages" through the profound impact visiting museums has in promoting health and wellbeing, making people happier, reducing stress, anxiety and isolation.

4.5 **Climate Change**

There are no anticipated Climate Change effects arising from the proposals contained within this report.

4.6 **Rural Proofing**

It is not anticipated that there will be any adverse impacts on the rural area from the proposals contained in this report.

These recommendations will have a positive effect on Borders communities and ensure high quality culture, leisure and recreation services for the future.

4.7 **Data Protection Impact Statement**

There are no personal data implications arising from the proposals contained in this report.

4.8 **Changes to Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation**

No changes are required to either the Scheme of Administration or Scheme of Delegation as a result of the proposals in this report. There are no changes to be made to either the Scheme of Administration or the Scheme of Delegation.

The Management Agreement with Live Borders includes the Collections Development Policy, which references delegated authority where Live Borders Head of Museums, Galleries & Archives may:

- Undertake appropriate collecting for museums and galleries by purchase, donation, transfer or loan agreement, in line with Policy and resources.
- Recommend on disposals, in line with the Policy and the Museums Association's Code of Ethics, in relation to the permanent museum and art collections held in stewardship by Scottish Borders Council.

5 Consultation

- 5.1 The Director of Finance and Procurement, the Director of Corporate Governance, the Chief Officer Audit and Risk, the Director (People Performance & Change), the Clerk to the Council and Corporate Communications are being consulted and Council will be updated on any further comments received at the meeting.

Approved by

Jenni Craig

Director Resilient Communities

Author(s)

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Avril Marriott	Programme Manager
Fiona Colton	Live Borders Head of Museums, Galleries & Archives

Background Papers:

SBC/Live Borders Management Agreement, March 2016

Scottish Borders Council Museums & Galleries Collections Development Policy 2018-23

Arts Council England - UK Museums Accreditation Standard and Guidelines

The Museums Association Code of Ethics (Collecting and Disposals)

Museums Galleries Scotland – Applying for Accreditation

Previous Minute Reference: Executive Committee 14 February 2018

Note – You can get this document on tape, in Braille, large print and various computer formats by contacting the address below. Avril Marriott can also give information on other language translations as well as providing additional copies.

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