

MARYPORT MARITIME MUSEUM
COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT POLICY
2022 - 2027

Name of museum:

Maryport Maritime Museum

Name of governing body:

Allerdale Borough Council

Managing Body:

Maryport Maritime Heritage Ltd

Company no. 07226618

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: 23 November 2022

The policy will be published and reviewed at least every five years

Date at which this policy is due for review: November 2027

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.

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

1.1. The Governing body is committed to providing access to quality leisure and cultural activities.

1.2. The statement of purpose of Maryport Maritime Heritage Ltd is:

To identify, collect, preserve and interpret artefacts, photographs, library archives and materials relating principally to the maritime history of Maryport. We strive to promote lifelong learning and access, and assist the public in understanding and appreciating Maritime and related heritage, and local culture.

Our Mission

To bring Maryport's unique maritime and related heritage and culture to life and preserve it for future generations, through:-

Promotion of exhibitions, programmes and events that are creative, accessible, inclusive, enjoyable and memorable.

Developing links and greater involvement with local, national and international networks fostering co-operation and collaboration with museums and other organisations

Seeking Professional advice and involvement in areas of management, research, acquisition, conservation, interpretation, scholarship, publication, outreach and lifelong learning.

- 1.3. The governing body (Allerdale Borough Council) will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.
- 1.4. 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 governing body 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.
- 1.5. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances and then only after proper consideration by the governing body or responsible officer of the Museum itself, having regard to the interests of other museums.
- 1.6. The museum 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 staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.7. The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 1.8. The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons

2. History of the collections

Maryport Maritime Museum opened in 1976 in what was the 'Queens Head', a harbour side inn. Initiated by local teacher Annie Robinson, with funding provided by Allerdale District Council and the English Tourist Board, she formed the basis of the collection with her own items together with loans and donations from the local population. These ranged from maritime items to general local history.

In 2009 Maryport Maritime Heritage Ltd, a group of local volunteers, were granted a management agreement together with a licence on the building from Allerdale Borough Council. Essential work to the fabric of the building was undertaken by the Council in 2009. MMH Ltd volunteers undertook a complete interior refurbishment and reorganised and relocated displays. MMH Ltd has run the museum there since 2010.

In 2022 the Museum closed the doors on number 1 Senhouse Street (Queens Head) and have set up a temporary, pop up museum on the corner of Curzon

Street. In the mean time, an old church building – Christchurch – is being redeveloped within it's beautiful original shell, to house the new Maryport Maritime Museum through Future High Streets funding, due to be open in the spring 2024.

The collection consists principally of Maryport's maritime legacy but also includes items and documentation on its social and industrial past. Research into this and the town's Maritime history is ongoing. This also helps to serve the family history service.

Support from interpretative design specialists have supported Allerdale and MMH to develop the internal lay out to be able to showcase the collection in all its glory.

MMH Ltd are being supported to develop a business plan for the new building.

3. An overview of current collections

Background

This diverse collection represents Maryport's maritime, industrial and social history, and contains just under 3603 (not including loans) objects, documents, photographs and works of art. Items not on display are available to the public by appointment. Since the 2017 review, there has been a programme of digitalisation of documents and photographs to minimize handling, and make these available to the public.

The collection period for Maryport Maritime Museum is from 1600 to the present day. This is intended to provide continuity with the Senhouse Roman Museum. Future collecting will be restricted to the postcode area CA15.

Archaeology

i) Pre-history
Not applicable

ii) Roman
Not applicable

iii) Medieval
Not applicable

Social History

Costume & Textiles

RN and merchant navy uniforms connected to Maryport seamen. Children's shoes and clogs which were found in Maryport and date from late 19th to early 20th century.

Domestic: Leisure/pastimes

Oars from the Ritson family. Dolls pram and doll dating from around 1922 from a Maryport family. A handwritten and illustrated hardback scouting guide written by an early 20th cent Maryport scoutmaster.

Work: Industrial

This collection contains items from the 18th to the 20th cent. Including: Maryport brewery - engraved glass panel and various brewery associated objects, Hornflowa – buttons and plastic tableware; Maryport glass works - glass makers' tongs.

Maritime

This forms the core of the collection. It contains a large collection of ship models also a significant number of maritime paintings. The collection holds a considerable number of items relating to Maryport shipbuilding and shipping lines. Other items range from navigation instruments and other on-board items to Maryport related Merchant and RN uniforms. The collection also contains a significant quantity of archive material. Overall, the maritime collection represents the maritime history of Maryport into the 20th cent.

Within the maritime area there is a separate group relating to the Ismay family and the White Star Line

Commercial

Maryport hatter R. Gates top hat shop sign and associated items dating from the 19th cent. Co-operative Society documents relating to Maryport.

Community: Schools

Some archive material.

Religion

Maryport Presbyterian Church seat letting book. Various other related items are contained within the collection. (See Ceramics)

Natural Sciences

Vertebrate Zoology

A pair of preserved armadillos. Believed to have been collected by a 19th cent Maryport seaman.

Fine and Decorative Art

Fine Art (Oils, Prints, Watercolours)

MMM collection contains 25 oils and a number of watercolours and prints, mostly but not totally, confined to maritime subjects. Amongst these are the Mitchell collection which includes a significant collection of William Mitchell Paintings. The collection also contains 'Maryport from the North Pier' by Percy Kelly.

Ceramics

Painted plates by William Mitchell. These date from the late 19th cent. Other items include plates from local churches and others that relate to the White Star Line.

Archive Material

The Museum's Archives content is predominately maritime but does include a number of other Maryport related subjects.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

The collection period for Maryport Maritime Museum is from 1600 to the present day. This is intended to provide continuity with the Senhouse Roman Museum. Future collecting will be restricted to the postcode area CA15, although special consideration will be given to artefacts outside this area which have local interest providing permission is given by the Allerdale representative.

Due to limited storage and display space, only unique items with good provenance and which contribute clearly to the story of the area, complementing current collections, will be collected. Large items will not generally be collected except in exceptional circumstances.

Archaeology

We have no intention of collecting related items. This is the province of the Roman Senhouse Museum.

Social History

i) Costume & Textiles

Naval uniforms will be accepted provided they are of significance to Maryport. The collection contains very little work apparel. In order to expand on the industrial history of Maryport, we will accept items of work clothing relating to coal mining and the dockside industries. To provide a complete picture of Maryport life 'Sunday best' will be collected. Children's clothing is also under represented.

ii) Domestic: leisure/pastimes

Children's toys - local pursuits - adult education

iii) Work: industrial, commercial, maritime, agriculture

Items, tools or products relating to Maryport industries from 1600 - present day. Considering the immense contribution that the coal industry made to Maryport, coal is considerably under-represented in the collection.

Items relating to Maryport trade or professions:

The collection has very little to highlight the importance of the fishing industry to Maryport and is under represented.

The White Star line and Ismay family collection already has a significant number of items relating to the line after the death in 1899 of Thomas Henry Ismay. Any future item offered that is beyond that date will not be accepted.

iv) Community: schools, religion, political/military

We will accept objects relating to the education of Maryport covering the museum's collection period.

Natural Sciences

i) Vertebrate Zoology

We have no intention of collecting related items.

ii) Invertebrate Zoology

We have no intention of collecting related items.

iii) Botany

We have no intention of collecting related items.

iv) Geology (rocks, minerals and fossils)

Will accept geology relating to the mining industry.

Fine and Decorative Art

i) Fine Art (Oils, Prints, Watercolours)

Yes, but needs to have significance to Maryport.

ii) Metal and Glass

Only if relevant to Maryport.

iii) Ceramics

Only if relevant to Maryport.

iv) Furniture

May accept if relevant to Maryport. Museum space must be considered.

Archive Material

Industrial, Maritime, education, social, family. Many of the Museum visitors come for the purpose of family research.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

We will consider disposal of items which do not conform to this Collections Development Policy

- 5.1 The museum 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 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 outcome and the process.

5.3 On-going reviews of the collections may highlight the need to consider disposal for legal, safety or care and conservation reasons for example:

- any item that is too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any further use for the purposes of Maryport Maritime Museum
- duplicate or unprovenanced material
- material better suited to another public collection eg another museum or archive.

5.4 These reviews and any subsequent recommendations for disposal will be by agreement with the owners of the collection, Maryport Maritime Heritage Ltd and potentially external specialist advice.

6 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

7.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s):

Helena Thompson Museum, Workington
Kendal Museum
Keswick Museum and Art Gallery
Penrith Museum
Ruskin Museum, Coniston
Senhouse Roman Museum, Maryport
The Beacon Museum, Whitehaven
The Mountain Heritage Trust
The Pencil Museum, Keswick
The Wordsworth Trust
Tullie House Museum, Carlisle

8 Archival holdings

Maryport Maritime Museum holds a significant quantity of archive and photographic material. This collection not only provides information on the town's industrial, maritime and family history but also is used for family history research.

9 Acquisition

9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions is:

The Museum will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the Museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

Appropriate items offered for inclusion are accepted for consideration by the museum's collection manager prior to approval by the appointed representative for Allerdale Borough Council.

Items offered for inclusion into the Museum's collection will be dealt with in either of the following ways:

- a. If the item's value is £1000 or over or is perceived to be over £1000 then Allerdale Borough Council's Representative Officer will be consulted as to the Council's view in acquiring the item.
 - b. If the item is of a lesser monetary value then the decision to acquire the item will be made collectively between Museum staff, volunteers and where appropriate local residents and experts. Decisions will be made in an open and transparent way and with due regard to all the appropriate guidance and documentation. The Museum Curator recommends acquisitions to Allerdale Borough Council's Representative Officer at the end of every financial year for confirmation of acceptance of the items into the collection. Items may then be accessioned by the Museum Curator.
- 9.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is satisfied that the object or specimen has not been acquired in, or exported from, its country of origin (or any intermediate country in which it may have been legally owned) in violation of that country's laws. (For the purposes of this paragraph 'country of origin' includes the United Kingdom).
- 9.3 In accordance with the provisions of the UNESCO 1970 Convention on the Means of Prohibiting and Preventing the Illicit Import, Export and Transfer of Ownership of Cultural Property, which the UK ratified with effect from November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body will be guided by the national guidance on the responsible acquisition of cultural property issued by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport in 2005.

10 Human remains

The museum does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11 Biological and geological material

The museum will not acquire any biological or geological material.

With the exception of coal mining related items.

12 Archaeological material

The museum will not acquire any archaeological material.

13 Exceptions

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

14 Spoliation

The museum will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

The museum's governing body, acting on the advice of the museum's professional staff, if any, 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. The museum 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 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

16 Disposal procedures

16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.

- 16.2 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.
- 16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum will establish if it was acquired with the aid of an external funding organisation. In such cases, any conditions attached to the original grant will be followed. This may include repayment of the original grant and a proportion of the proceeds if the item is disposed of by sale.
- 16.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including 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.
- 16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.
- 16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum 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 MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.
- 16.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation

requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. Any monies received in compensation for the damage, loss or destruction of items will be applied in the same way. Advice on those cases where the monies are intended to be used for the care of collections will be sought from the Arts Council England

- 16.11 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.
- 16.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items involved and proper arrangements made for the preservation and/or transfer, as appropriate, of the documentation relating to the items concerned, including photographic records where practicable in accordance with SPECTRUM Procedure on deaccession and disposal.

Disposal by exchange

- 16.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.13.1 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 16.1-5 will apply.
- 16.13.2 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.
- 16.13.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum 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 in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).
- 16.13.4 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

- 16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15 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.
- 16.16 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.
- 16.17 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.
- 16.18 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.