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Collections Management

Collections Development Policy

Produced by:

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 Laura Waters, Curator Collections and Library

Approved by:

.....
 Karen Rigg, Chairman Collections Management Committee

Authorised Board of Trustees:

.....Date.....

**Karen Rigg, Chairman Board of Trustees,
 The Tramway Museum Society**

Date for next review: November 2024

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Collections Development Policy

Name of Museum: The National Tramway Museum

Name of governing body: The Tramway Museum Society

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body: November 2019

Policy Review Procedure:

This Collections Development Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time by the Collections Management Committee, when amendments are deemed necessary due to changes in collecting attitudes or other influencing factors.

As a minimum the policy will be reviewed at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: November 2024

Arts Council England will be notified of any significant changes to the Collections Development Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of the collections.

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

1.1 The Tramway Museum Society's Cause Statement and Core Purposes as defined in its Forward Plan are as follows:

Cause Statement:

To be an immersive and captivating experience that unites the past, present and future through tramway heritage. Trams move people. [February 2019]

Our core purposes are:

- To collect, preserve and share collections relating to tramcars and tramway history
- To inspire and educate through telling the story of tramways
- To provide an immersive educational experience to visitors
- To raise awareness of the past, present and future importance of tramways to the country
- To advocate for the contribution of tramcars to urban transport

1.2 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

1.3 By definition the National Tramway Museum has a long-term purpose and holds permanent 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 disposal of any items in the Museum's collection.

1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the governing body of the Museum itself, having regard to the interests of other Museums.

1.5 The Museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of the collections, documentation arrangements and use of the collections will meet 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 collections arrangements.

1.6 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.

1.7 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:

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- The disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection
- The disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)
- The disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored
- Extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
- The item under consideration lies outside the Museum's established core collection

2. History of the collections:

Context

The collections of the National Tramway Museum have been developed over the last 70 years, dating from before the governing body of The Tramway Museum Society existed. Through gift, bequest and purchase, and the generosity of donors, committed enthusiasts and the application of specialist knowledge and research, it has grown considerably.

The Museum's initial acquisition was tramcar Southampton 45, which was acquired in 1948 by an organisation Light Railway Transport League (LRTL), whose members had visited the Southampton tramway system for a final farewell tour and purchased the tramcar for the sum of £10.

With preservation of more tramcars in the offing, due to the closure of various tramway systems, a Museum Committee was established within the LRTL to tackle the issues of preservation. In 1955 the Committee was wound up, as it was recognised that there was a conflict between one part of the LRTL who were lobbying for the continuation of tramways and light railways, against those who were concerned for preserving the nations tramway history. As a result, The Tramway Museum Society was founded out of the LRTL in 1955 and to focus on the preservation of our tramway history.

Once this governing body existed, the small collection of tramcars that had been preserved in the early 1950s under the auspices of the LRTL (which included Southampton 45, Newcastle 102, Cardiff 131, Douglas Southern 1, Leeds 446 (Hull 132), Liverpool 429) were transferred to the Tramway Museum Society. The concept of a working tramway Museum became the focus of the newly-established organisation, and this became reality when in 1959 the Society found a home at Crich, in Derbyshire.

The National Tramway Museum has been established at its Crich location for 60 years. From the earliest days it was decided that the tramcars should be demonstrated in motion, rather than simply to remain static. This entailed providing rails, overhead wires and a power supply.

In 1962 the Society was converted into a Company Limited by Guarantee, and within the organisations' Memorandum of Association, provision was made:

“(g) To promote and further the study of and research into tramways, light railways and other forms of transport and the historical, scientific, social and other aspects thereof, and to catalogue, collect,

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collate, publish and sell material and information of service or interest to the members of the Society and to the general public, or calculated to promote the objects of the Society.”

Which assisted in the organisation becoming a registered National Charity in 1963.

The Library & Archive

Whilst the early years of the Museum were committed to moving the tramcar collection to Crich and the creation of a working Museum, there were other members of the organisation who were preserving the documentary side of tramways and transport history.

Between the years of the establishment of the Society in 1955, and 1979, there was nowhere to house would-be collections, or undertake such activities associated with them. Collections were generously housed in members' homes, with notable people such as Bob Parr taking care of photographic items, Roger Benton focusing on cine film material, and Barbara O'Connor taking on the paper-based collections. Some space was provided in a small stone building at the Museum, but it was unsustainable long-term for the growing collections.

In 1979, work was progressing on the building of rooms and display space behind the rebuilt façade of the former Derby Assembly Rooms. With this expanded space, the Library collections could be brought together and expanded as new donations and bequests were received.

At the same time as this Library collections storage was being built, some significant donations were being received as well as several key purchases made. The following are identified as key early acquisitions to Museum's Library and Archive collections:

Purchase of a collection of the periodical *Street Railway Journal*

Donation of original material collected by Fred Cooper from various transport municipalities; David Frodsham material acquired from St. Helens, and David Holt material acquired from Wigan.

Sizeable donation by Basil Miller of the journals *Tramway & Railway World*, *Transport World*, etc.

Donation from Mrs W H Bett, of her late husband's collection of ticket and fare collecting artefacts
Until 1983, work with the collections had been done on a voluntary basis by members, and with reference to Barbara O'Connor, who had become for many a main point of reference for making donations.

In 1983 under the Community Task Force and Manpower Services Scheme, the Museum was able to fund three people to work with the Museum collections, and start work on accessioning, cataloguing, indexing and ordering them in the new Library building, in line with professional standards.

By the end of 1983 the Museum had appointed Susan Fairham, as its first professional Librarian to oversee the growth of the Museum's Library and Archive collections.

In 1986, the Library was extended upwards with a third floor built and fitted out to store the expanding collections. Provision of humidity control and modern techniques in photographic preservation began.

As the Library maintained a core staff of full-time and part-time staff over a number of years, the Library and Archive collections continued to grow towards the Nationally Significant collection that now exists.

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Through the professional standards employed with the collections, a strong reputation was built and companies such as the British Electric Traction Company (BET), felt assured of moving their tramway records to the National Tramway Museum. The BET collection was transferred to the Museum in 1994.

Other notable deposits by companies and organisations have been the minutes of the Municipal Tramways Association and its successor the Association of Public Passenger Transport, the Bus and Coach Council archive, and a set of municipal annual transport reports from the Chartered Institute of Transport. Also local Acts of Parliament have been donated by the Department of Transport.

Individual archives of tramway historians have also been incorporated into the collections and provide a wealth of knowledge from those who have studied tramways for most of their lives.

In 1995, the Museum made one of its largest collection purchases in its history, with the acquisition of the Maurice O'Connor photographic collection. When this was put up for auction, the Museum was able to raise through Member donations, and a Prism Fund grant (£52,000) to acquire 12,000 of the 15,000 photographic items available. The collection is regarded as being of preeminent importance nationally.

Along with the O'Connor collection, seven other photographic collections that the Museum has been donated or bequeathed, constitute the most comprehensive overview of tramway history. The collections are:

H B Priestley (6000 items covering 1937 – 1980)

W A Camwell (1500 items covering 1936 – 1985)

J H Price (3500 items covering 1940 – 1995)

H Nicol (2500 items covering (1928 – 1960)

N N Forbes (3000 items covering (1945 – 1980)

R Brook (2500 items covering 1940 – 1960)

A K Terry (25,000 items covering 1945 – 1990).

In 1997 the Museum's entire collections holdings were included in the first set of 26 museums to be Designated as of National Significance under the newly-founded (Department of Culture, Media and Sport) DCMS Designation Scheme. It was also one of only a handful of Independent museums to be recognised as such within those selected.

In 2003 the Library and Archive was expanded again to provide not only additional storage facilities but also increase facilities for researchers. The extension of the library building, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and the Designation Challenge Fund, was opened by the Museum's Patron The Duke of Gloucester, and was renamed the John Price Memorial Library, as founding Society Member John Price had done much to enhance the collections, donating many items as well as bequeathing his own comprehensive collection to the Museum.

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In 2001, the Museum supported the then Photographic Curator, Glynn Wilton, to study for a Post-Graduate Diploma in Museum Studies, and subsequently in 2004 he was appointed as the Museums first qualified Museum Curator. A role which would support the already well-established Librarian professionals who had worked in the Library since the early 1980s.

In 2008 the Library and Archive collection was to significantly grow, as long-time Head of Library (voluntary position) and long-standing Society Member, Winstan Bond, passed away. He bequeathed his entire private literary collection to the Museum. The collection is of National and International importance and scope. Due to its size (over 9000 books and associated documents) and comprehensiveness it is held separately from all other collections, in order to maintain the collecting thoughts of its originator Mr Bond. Not only does the collection stand alone, but it also supplements and enhances the Museum's existing collections.

The Library and Archive collections continue to grow and are supported by a professional staff team of the Curator, Collections and Library, the Curatorial Assistant and the Librarian. This core staff team are supported by a team of more than 30 regular volunteers, who are involved in all aspects of caring for the collections.

The collections continue to expand in line with donations made to them, but also in its practice of responding to current collecting practices, and the development of second-generation tramways and light railways that now operate in this country, and the preservation of today's tramway history.

The Tramcar Collection

As already noted, the Museum's tramcar collection first started to take shape back in 1948, when members of the LRTL purchased Southampton 45, for £10. Some of those members would later become the founder members of Museum's governing body the Tramway Museum Society.

In the initial formative years of the Museum, the priority for collecting was placed on securing the future of tramcars which had already been preserved but were spread disparately round the country in temporary accommodation. Cardiff works car 131 was the first to move to the new Museum at Crich in 1959, and this was followed shortly after by Leeds 399.

As depot accommodation was built at the Museum, and tramcars started to move onsite, it was recognised that there needed to be some thought to how the collection could grow, and whether any limitations there should be placed on the number of tramcars to be preserved.

The Trams Sub-Committee was set up in May 1963 to consider such issues, and in August 1963 they issued the Museum's first report (policy) on the collecting of tramcars – *Report of the Trams Committee 1963*. In the report, they outlined the recommended criteria for acceptance of vehicle exhibits, the composition of a tramway museum, and the purpose of the museum, and these were then related to the existing collection of vehicles at the Museum.

The report recognised work already undertaken by the *Consultative Panel for British Transport Relics*, of which the Tramway Museum Society was represented by John Price the Museums secretary / chairman, which had already carried out a substantial amount of work to define stages of development

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in the evolution of the British tramcar. This foundational work underpinned the recommendations for future collecting by the Museum and established the categories for collecting.

The development of the Nationally significant tramcar collection is founded on the concept of a collection that by representation of one full-size complete tramcar, would represent each of the defined important evolutionary stages of the British tramcar. A recommended optimum size of collection was therefore suggested to be at the time around 40 vehicles, which might fluctuate by plus or minus five vehicles, due to subtleties in the evolutionary categories.

Since the original 1963 report there has been four further revisions, that have periodically reviewed the approach taken to collecting vehicles. In the 1978 updated report, the increased operating capacity of the developing Museum, influenced the collecting policy, as it suggested operational duplicates be introduced to assist with maintaining a tramway service for visitors.

The 1988 report revised some of the evolutionary categories and also extended the report to cover a period of time beyond that which had been the original cut-off period in the first two reports, as it felt there were collecting opportunities that needed to be adequately provided for.

The most recent update to the report in 2008, brought the report once again up-to-date and defined further evolutionary categories for collecting that considered contemporary collecting of second-generation tramway vehicles. It also incorporated the wider Museum collecting policy principles and standards of care for the collections in line with Museum Standards for the sector.

The rate of collecting within the tramcar collection has slowed in recent years, as the height of collecting took place in the 1950s and 1960s when tramways were closing, and vehicles became available.

Notable additions to the collections in recent years, have been the transfer from the Science Museum Group, of the South Staffordshire truck, Chesterfield horse tram no. 8 and double-deck open-tram Bournemouth Corporation tram no. 85.

Buildings and Street Furniture

In creating a working tramway Museum, much thought was given to how that could develop and be shaped to provide context for the tramcars when operating. Such a report was produced by the Museum's, Tramways Sub-Committee in 1967, which put forward the framework for creating an '*authentic British tramway atmosphere*'. This therefore led to the collection of street furniture items, and at-risk buildings being relocated to the Museum, which would lend context to the tramcars.

In the creation of a period street to produce an urban environment around the tramcar collection, the Museum displays relocated previously at-risk buildings from diverse locations and uses, which include a Grade II listed façade. The buildings which have been dismantled and rebuilt are the Red Lion public house from Stoke -on -Trent, parts of the Burnley Corporation Tramway Office and Yorkshire Penny Bank from Nelson Lancashire, and the Derby Assembly Rooms.

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Other relocated structures include a local authority bandstand and an ironwork bridge. Original buildings on the premises have been sympathetically redeveloped to perpetuate the street appearance

A nationally comprehensive collection of over 100 street furniture and infrastructure items have been collected over the years, with street furniture examples being within the three categories: Highways, Public Utilities and Communications as defined by Historic England.

Historic England categories, Infrastructure: Utilities and Communication, and Infrastructure: Transport, items also feature.

Within the collection there are examples in all these categories, with Grade-Listed items which include a telephone kiosk, a Victorian post box and police box.

Within the Historic England Highways category specifically, the street furniture and utilities are associated with tramway operation, which provide the core of the collection, and represents in use in the original context, objects which includes decorative cast-iron section boxes, pole bases and stop signs. Public Utilities include a functioning street urinal and water trough and Communications include an operational post box and telephone box. Tramway and other shelters identify as part of the Infrastructure: Transport category of items.

3. An overview of the current collections:

The National Tramway Museum is a single subject museum and all of its collections are Designated under the Arts Council England Designation Scheme as being 'An Outstanding Collection' and nationally representative of tramway history.

The collections cover the period from the date considered as the introduction of street running tramway systems (c.1830 USA, c.1860 UK) to present. Material prior to those dates will be considered to illustrate the development of technology that influenced later tramway technologies, or as contextual evidence of the influence of the introduction of tramway systems.

The collections cover all aspects of tramway history and include collections of bus, trolleybus and railway material to provide a contextual picture of the development, operation and decline of the British tramways. Overseas material is also collected for the same purpose.

The collection falls into the following sub-divisions:

Tramcar and tramway vehicle collection

The Museums tramcar and tramway vehicle collection consists of nearly 90 historic vehicles, including from across the British Isles, which illustrate the development and evolution of the British tramcar, as well as the vehicles used to service the tracks and overhead equipment.

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The collection has developed based on the principle of acquiring an example of 'each important stage in the evolution of the British tramcar', a principle which covered the technical development and the various design layouts for the accommodation of passengers and crew. There are more than 20 different tramway systems represented within the collection, and all the leading tramcar manufacturers are represented.

The oldest tramcar in the collection is a horse tram from 1873 used in Oporto, Portugal and manufactured in this country at Birkenhead. There are several other horse drawn tramcars in the collection. The steam era is represented by a tramway locomotive used in New South Wales, built in Manchester in 1885 and a typical passenger carrying trailer car from Dundee, dating from 1894. The first electric tramcars are represented by Blackpool 4, which dates from 1885. This was one of the first fleet of electric tramcars to operate on the street of a British town. Other vehicles in the collection represent the development of the electric tramcar across the period 1900 – 1960, and they include the Museums first acquisition Southampton Corporation Tramways No. 45 built in 1903, to the ultra-modern Leeds Railcar No. 602 which was built in 1953.

The Museum has in 2019 completed the purchase of an early 'tram replacement' bus, Barnsley & District no. 5 dating from 1913, which represents the evolution of transport in the context of the tramcar, and what was rivalling it in terms of service for the general public. The purchase of the bus is a key step in expanding the vehicle collection, to include a select few vehicles that will provide a wider transport context for the evolution of the tramcar.

Tramway infrastructure + street furniture

The Museum's operating tramway runs for 1 mile from the terminus at the southern end of the Museum, 'Town End', through the 'Village' of reconstructed, newly built and original buildings.

The track displays feature traditional to the first generation of British electric tramways. The overhead power lines, similarly, are constructed to be authentic to that of the original British tramways.

The Museum has followed a stated objective of creating a period street around the tramcar collection to demonstrate the vehicles in a traditional setting. The buildings and street furniture have been drawn from a variety of locations.

The Red Lion public house is a traditional ceramic and terracotta façade and stood opposite the Stoke tramways depot. The Burnley Tramways Office façade is a relic of that tramway system and stood adjacent to the Yorkshire Penny Bank façade also saved by the Museum. The Derby Assembly Rooms building is a grade 2 listed building.

Library and Archive

The National Tramway Museum's Library and Archive holds the most complete collection anywhere in the country of books, pamphlets and reports covering the history of British, North American, European and other foreign and light railways. For example, there is a comprehensive collection of Acts of Parliament (from the Ministry of Transport) covering tramways, railways and trolleybuses. Material on modern rapid transit systems and second-generation tramways is also being collected.

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Printed book collection

The printed book collection contains descriptions of the world's tramway and light rail systems, as well as works on electric, steam, cable and horse traction, the manufacturers, transport law and town planning.

Periodical collection

The periodical collection includes runs of all the leading journals associated with tramways and includes one of the most complete runs of Tramway and Railway World in the country. Also collected are magazines covering modern transport, historical research and the work of preservation societies worldwide. There is a large foreign language collection. The collection also covers acquisitions of unpublished theses relating to urban transport.

Archive

The archive holds a large collection from the British Electric Traction company, records previously lodged with the Bus and Coach Council, as well the minutes of associations such as the Municipal Tramways and Transport Association and the Municipal Passenger Transport Association.

Many of the journals and books also contain material on buses, trolleybuses and underground and suburban railways, so the development of a towns transport can be studied in total. Other subjects covered included technical design, labour relations, town planning and the role of women at work.

Technical Drawings

The technical drawings collection, numbers well over 6000 drawings, and includes the drawings of the Electro Mechanical Brake Company, Maley & Taunton Limited, as well as numerous individual operators. There is also a large collection of maps, guides and timetable.

Ephemera

This collection presents the wider context of the tramway operations and the items are often personal to a tramway employee or unique to a tramway system. Examples include letters, songs and poems, notices, press cuttings, posters, sound recordings, certificates and commemorative items such as stamps, menus, programmes and exhibition catalogues. The number of original postcards in the collection numbers well over 40,000 and covers worldwide street scenes.

Three dimensional objects

Three dimensional objects are also included in the ephemera collection, such as models, uniforms and scientific instruments. Tickets, together with ticket holders and machines,

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represent the tools of the trade for tram conductors. Buttons, badges, medals and token are also collected.

Photographs

One of the larger areas of the Museum's collections, prints, film negatives, glass plate negatives, lantern slides and colour transparencies have been collected.

The museum's collection is largely made up of individual collections; some donated by members of the society, others taken by professional photographers have been purchased.

Cine Film

The cine film collection, which has more than 600 titles in it, includes historic film footage of tramway operations, as well as commercial productions. The earliest film footage in the collection dates to the late 1890s.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting:

The National Tramway Museum is a single subject museum. Within the subject the collection falls into the following sub-divisions:

- Tramcars and tramway related vehicles
- Tramway infrastructure
- Tramway and urban transport related documents
- Commercially published works on the subject of tramways, tramcars and urban transport
- Photographic images, postcard images, film and video of tramways and urban transport
- Tramway related ephemera
- Street furniture.

Examples of non-tramway material:

- Urban planning reports / studies;
- Population distribution studies;
- Council minutes;
- Traffic committee reports;
- Material pertaining to the Museum site or local / regional history.

These cases will be considered on an individual basis by the Curator, or relevant committee.

The Museum will collect material for purposes other than formal inclusion into the collections:

- For the continued maintenance of the operating tramcar collection
- For the development of the contextual street scene
- For development of the interpretative exhibitions
- For the enhancement of the Museum's learning services

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A collection is regarded as all material formally accessioned by the Museum, or for which the Museum holds legal title. Ownership of the collections resides with The Tramway Museum Society.

Many areas of the collection are fully representative of their subject. The Museum would seek to prioritise acquisition for those areas of the collections that are regarded as not yet being entirely representative of tramway history.

Current Acquisition priorities would be:

- Horse tramways
- Steam tramways
- 'Alternative power' tramways such as cable, gas, battery or petrol powered
- Early electric (experimental period) tramways
- Pre 19th century, and up to pre WW1 documents and publications
- First and Second World War photographic material
- Second generation UK tramway vehicles and tramways
- Digitally produced assets relating to collecting themes

These headings would be subject to the priorities identified within the *Trams Report* and vehicle *Attitude Statements*, in regard to the Tramcar and Vehicle collection.

Digitally produced contemporary material

The Museum recognises that there is a significant amount of material being produced in relation to second generation tramways, that is solely held and published as a digital asset. This trend is likely to continue to develop in the coming years, and the Museum recognises the need to work with other Museums and Tramway Operators, to retain this information and make it accessible for future generations at a national level.

It is the intention of the Museum to develop its collecting strategies and methods in relation to this material over the next 5 years.

Limitations on Collecting

The Museum recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to its collections:

Models – The acquisition of models has in the last few years become a more pressing matter due to the influx of toy models in donated collections. It is felt that the acquisition of models for the collection needs to be governed by set criteria otherwise the continued acceptance of any model will become unsustainable for the future of the collection. The following criteria will be applied:

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The Museum will only acquire models if they are:

- a) In themselves of historic interest, i.e. manufacturers trade or design pieces or have been commissioned by or for an important person
- b) Considered to be reasonably accurate / demonstrative representations of the original vehicle, including contemporary vehicles (Priority would be given to models that are representative of tramway systems, tramcars and works vehicles that are not represented within the actual full size tramcar collection)
- c) Toy models (i.e. Dinky) ones will only be considered if they are early models pre 1940, or are known to be rare examples produced in a small quantity

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

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 the review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more usable, 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 stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

5.3 Priorities for rationalisation relate to material in very poor and unsafe condition or that do not have a part to play in telling the story the Museum aims to communicate. Duplicate material will also be identified and reviewed with material possibly being disposed of in line with the standards of this policy.

5.4 Rationalisation of the Museum's offsite store, Clay Cross will be prioritised in the coming years, as we look to review the collections, inline with the potential relocation of the store. Historic practice has been to send items down to the store with little or no documentation attached to them, or it has been treated as an overflow spare parts store for the Conservation Workshop and therefore requires careful review and rationalisation before any relocation is undertaken.

Disposals as a part of the review, would be considered where the following criteria apply:

- a. Research reveals that items do not fall within the categories described in this policy.
- b. Items are found to be, to all intents and purposes, duplicates.
- c. Items have been damaged or have deteriorated beyond the museum's ability to repair them.
- d. Items are discovered to pose a threat to health and safety.
- e. Items have been identified as spoliated during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period.
- f. Items have been subject to a request for repatriation or restitution.
- g. Items are of no use to the Conservation Workshop and restoration / maintenance work carried out by them

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Where disposal is being considered this will be carried out in accordance with the disposal procedures, outlined below in Section 16.

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

6.1 The Museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museums Association Code of Ethics (2015 approved version) when considering acquisition and disposal. It will also use the Museums Association Disposal Toolkit Guidelines for Museums (March 2014 edition) as a guide for correct practice.

7. Collecting policies of other museums

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

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

The National Railway Museum
London Transport Museum
The Science Museum Group
Beamish, The Living Museum of the North
Black Country Living Museum
Blackpool Transport Services
Relevant transport museums where appropriate.
Tramway Operators
Local Authority Archives / Local Studies Libraries

8. Archival holdings

8.1 The Museum's Library and Archive collections have long held material loosely described as 'archives', the British Electric Traction records, being one such example.

8.2 The Museum holds other isolated archive collections, such as the Holroyd Smith collection which is a sub section of a larger bequeathed collection. The Library and Archive also incorporates the Museum's own company Archive.

8.3 Archives of considerable size are only acquired in exceptional circumstances. The Museum has a limited capacity to look after archives and only acquires historical tramway operator, personal or institutional archives where it is able to manage these archives and make them accessible to a standard consistent with professional practice.

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8.4 Archives considered for acquisition must relate to the Museum's existing archive collections, or the subject interests and development aspirations as outlined in this policy.

8.5 Where the Museum holds or intends to acquire archives it is guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums in the United Kingdom (2002)

9. Acquisition

9.1 The decision to acquire material for the collections is made by the curatorial team headed by the Curator, Collections and Library.

9.2 The curatorial team have the authority under the Curator to accept or decline donations or bequests on a day to day basis and are guided by the collecting priorities within this policy.

9.3 The curatorial team have authority to purchase items deemed relevant to the collections up to the value of £500 and are allowed to make purchases based on their knowledge and research of what the item is worth.

9.4 All purchases over the £500 limit, are presented to the Collections Management Committee, for approval, and are then forwarded to the Museum's Board of Trustees for final approval to purchase.

9.5 Donations and bequests of a sizable nature, that are deemed by the Curatorial team to have an impact on existing collections, and storage space are considered carefully before acceptance, as to whether they can safely be received and processed. If such a collection is accepted it is generally notified to the Collections Management Committee, at their quarterly meeting to acknowledge the increase in material to the collections.

9.6 For collections that raise an issue / dispute, the curatorial team will be consult with other departments within the Museum for advice. The item will then be raised on the Collections Management Committee agenda for review, and onward advice / guidance to the Board of Trustees for final approval / decline of the collection.

9.7 For large acquisitions such as vehicles and engineering components, the Curatorial team will take the acquisition request to the relevant committee, either the Tramcar Conservation Committee, or the Collections Management Committee¹, for review before onwards recommendation and endorsement from the Board of Trustees.

9.8 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).

¹ The Tramcar Conservation Committee and the Collections Management Committee, are delegated committees from the Board of Trustee's with specific Terms of Reference to govern them. They each comprise of members of the Museum staff, current Board members, former Board members, learned Tramway Museum Society Members, Voluntary Officers of the Society and the General Manager.

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9.9 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

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

11. Biological and geological material

11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the Museum will not acquire by any direct or indirect means any specimen that has been collected, sold or otherwise transferred in contravention of any national or international wildlife protection or natural history conservation law or treaty of the United Kingdom or any other country, except with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

12. Archaeological material

12.1 The Museum will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

12.2 In England, Wales and Northern Ireland the procedures include reporting finds to the landowner or occupier of the land and to the proper authorities in the case of possible treasure (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009)

13. Exceptions

13.1 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 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

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14.1 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

15.1 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.

15.2 The disposal 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”.

16. Disposal Procedures

16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal and the Museums Association Disposal Toolkit Guidelines for Museums (March 2014 edition)

16.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will 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 the public benefit, the implications for the Museum’s collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. 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 of the collection acting alone.

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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, unless it is to be destroyed. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

16.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited Museum to which it was offered directly as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material, normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Associations 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 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 unaccredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16. 1-5 will apply.

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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 risk or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisations 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, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Revision and Review

This Policy must be reviewed and, if necessary, revised by the Curator Collections and Library, at least every 4 years or sooner should there be any change in the organisation and/or managerial structure of The Tramway Museum Society or in legislation.