



# **Collections Documentation Policy**

## **Introduction**

1. This policy covers how the Bradford Police Museum obtains, records, maintains and makes accessible information about its collections.
2. The Bradford Police Museum's collection includes both the physical collection and its related documentation. This includes in addition to historic information, information relating information relating to collections management activities.

## **An overview of current collections**

Bradford Police Museum has an extensive collection relating to policing in the city. The core collection is the material which was held in an earlier Bradford Police Museum which closed in the 2006 when the building which housed it (the former Bradford Police HQ) was demolished. The collection was then held at Bradford Industrial Museum and subsequently reunited with the current museum when it reopened in 2014. An original stock list for this collection exists on an Excel spread sheet.

Since 2014 the collection has grown considerably with additions to the collection from West Yorkshire Police and private donations. An historic police vehicle fleet was donated by West Yorkshire Police together with a learning resource library. More recently the former Keighley Police Museum donated their collection when they closed.

### **Museum Curator**

The museum curator has overall responsibility for managing and taking responsibility for the museum's heritage collection. With overall responsibility for assembling, cataloguing, managing and presenting/displaying the police museums cultural and historical collections.

The curator manages the work of a volunteer team of Curatorial assistants who also deal with the museums accession and documentation back log. Together they work to reduce the back log and ensure that the heritage collection is compliant with the museum's collections policy and the museums procedures comply with the requirements of the Spectrum documentation standard.

### **Person responsible for due diligence and discrepancy checks: The Curator**

#### **Curatorial Team Member**

A team of curatorial volunteers assist the museum curator in bringing the museum collections and catalogues up to best practice standards through use of Spectrum and the Modes data base. They take part in training programmes in order to develop and enhance skills on cataloguing, basic collections care, collections storage, public engagement with collections and more.

They work as a team to assist the curator in dealing with museums accessions and documentation and reducing the back log to ensure the heritage collection is compliant with the museum's collections policy. Making sure that the museum's collections are always kept preserved and secure. They also keep a diary record of their work.

All offers of donations or loans to the museum should be forwarded to the curator so that arrangements can be made to view and if necessary, receive donations. On receipt of items the procedures outlined in the *Documentation Process Manual*.

This will also determine whether the museum should receive or reject an object.

## **1. Different types of objects contained in the collection.**

There are two main types of objects in the collection. Each type will be treated differently in relation their documentation. Documentation (or Collections Information) being the information that the Museum collects, creates, holds and maintains about its collections.

- **Accessioned**

Accessioned objects are those that have been formally accepted into the permanent collection.

- **Unaccessioned**

These objects are not considered part of the permanent collection. and have not been formally accessioned.

**Cataloguing** will take place in all cases with the compilation and maintenance of records that contain key information objects in the museum. Different cataloguing procedures will apply depending on whether the object is **Accessioned** into the main collection or is **Unaccessioned**.

In all cases the procedure used in the museum will those standards defined in Spectrum 5 that conform with the standard required for museum accreditation. Also, in key information, formally identifying and describing objects will be maintained.

## **2. Spectrum Procedures**

The Bradford Police Museum will follow all relevant professional standards for documentation as laid out in SPECTRUM 5

Specifically, the museum will meet the minimum standards for the SPECTRUM primary procedures, these are as follows:

- Object Entry (S1)
- Acquisition and accessioning (S2)
- Location and movement control (S3)

- Inventory (S4)
- Cataloguing (S5)
- Object exit (S6)
- Loans in (S7)
- Loans out (S8)
- Documentation planning (S9)

## **S1 Object Entry**

- Deposits of objects will be accepted for consideration for accessioning into the collections, loans for copying or display or for identification.
- No object should be deposited without the authorisation of a member of the curatorial team.
- The museum will use the standard entry forms provided by the Collections Trust to record entry.
- An entry form must be completed for all deposits and a receipt issued to the depositor.
- All significant information relating to an object must be recorded on the entry form.
- Entry form will be completed by museum volunteers at which time owners must be made aware of the terms and conditions of deposit.
- A copy of the entry form must remain with the object until the accession number has been marked on the object and other copies will be distributed in accordance with the procedure outlined in the museum's Documentation Process Manual using the coloured copies on the entry form.
- Objects not accepted into the collections should be returned to the depositor.
- Objects entering the collection must be assessed for potential risks such as infestation or hazardous substances.

## **S2 Acquisition**

- Criteria for acquisition are laid out in the Collections Development Policy.
- Transfer of title for all objects will be sought in writing upon acquisition and copyright status clarified. The Collections Trust entry form enables transfer of title to be acknowledged on entry on the entry form.
- All donors are to be made fully aware of the terms and conditions by which their gift or bequest is accepted including that not all objects will always be on display or might be disposed of in the future.
- Each object entering the collection will be given a unique number and it will be securely labelled or marked with this number.
- All accessions will be recorded on the Modes data base which provides a unique number after first being entered in the museums Accessions register which is a hard copy book record of all accessions to the collection.

The museum currently use the MODES data base to record data and information about museum objects that have been **accessed** into the museum's collection. This data base enables cross referencing and searching for information in relation to individual objects and types of objects.

Items that are **not** immediately accessed into the museum's collection (**Unaccessioned items**) will still be catalogued in the museums **Inventory** with sufficient information about an item to make it identifiable – including Object Number; Object Name; Title; Brief Description – and traceable through Current Location; Cataloguer; Catalogued Date; Object Status.

**See the museums *Documentation Process Manual* for procedures in relation the Inventory which will be kept on a the excel database.**

### **S3 Location and movement control**

- An up to date location record will be maintained for all objects in the collection using the Modes Data base.
- Movement ticket must be completed for any object move.
- Environmental monitoring records need to be maintained to ensure environmental standards are being met.
- All storage areas must be locked at all times when not occupied and objects on display must be within securely locked cases or fixed in a secure manner to walls or screens.
- Inventories must be maintained for all items on display.
- An object risk assessment must be completed for most object movements.

### **S4 Inventory**

- Will enable a complete list of every object or group of objects in the collection to be produced.
- Every object or group of objects will have a recorded name and brief description.
- We will be able to identify who owns each object or group of objects in our care and how they were acquired.
- Types of collection will be easily distinguished from each other e.g. accessioned objects and handling collection.
- Where we do not meet the requirements for inventory there will be an appropriate plan to do so within an agreed time. *See Museums Collections Plan.*

### **S5 Cataloguing**

- New acquisitions will be catalogued as soon as possible and within not more than six months after acquisition.
- Entries must meet the minimum inventory standard.
- Each object entering the collection will be given a unique number and it will be securely labelled or marked with this number.
- Catalogue records must cross-refer to relevant information held whether paper or digital records.
- Modes and Excel data bases should be backed up at regular intervals.

## **S6 Object exit**

- Object exit will adhere to the guidelines as laid out in the Collections Development Policy.
- All accessioned objects and archives permanently leaving the museum will have a formal report and exit form completed recording the reasons for disposal and the method used.
- Appropriate authorisation must be given for each permanent exit.
- the Modes data base must be updated to reflect object exits whether permanent or temporary.

## **S7 Loans In**

- Loans in will only be accepted as laid out in the Collections Development Policy.
- Loans in will be recorded using a loan in agreement which will clearly lay out standards and terms and conditions.
- All loans in will have their condition noted on receipt in case of damage.
- Each loan in will have an individual file documenting details of the loan.

## **S8 Loans Out**

- Requests for loans out will be considered provided that the object(s) or archives are in a suitable condition, are not required for display or other use and that the purpose for the loan is clearly stated.
- Objects may be loaned to other Accredited museums. Other organisations
- Venues will be considered providing they meet the necessary standards for the care of objects.
- Loans out will only be made if the standard conditions of loan are met.
- All reasonable costs incurred in the preparation of items for loan will be recovered from the borrowing organisation.
- All loans out will be recorded on Modes.
- All loans out will have a written agreement signed by both parties before the loan begins with clear reference to the care standards, they agree to meet and other terms and conditions.
- Each loan out will have an individual file documenting details of the loan.

## **S9 Documentation Planning**

The Museum will maintain a Documentation Plan to support this policy. Any work to improve collections information should be directed by priority areas identified in the Documentation Plan. See the museums *Documentation Plan*.