

RUSSELL-COTES



HOUSE • GALLERY • GARDEN



Collections Care and Conservation Policy

Collections Care and Conservation Policy

Agreed by *[ie Management Committee etc]* on *[Date]*

Review by *[ie 5 years after date]*

Contents	
<i>1</i>	<i>Statement of Purpose</i>
<i>2</i>	<i>Context</i>
<i>3</i>	<i>People</i>
<i>4</i>	<i>The Buildings</i>
<i>5</i>	<i>The Collections</i>
<i>6</i>	<i>The Collections: Working Items</i>
<i>7.</i>	<i>Security</i>
<i>Appendix 1</i>	<i>Object Movement Policy</i>

1. Statement of purpose

This policy has been written in accordance with the museum's Statement of Purpose and the Collections Development Policy. All staff (paid and volunteer) have read and agreed to abide by the policy. The Collections Care and Conservation Plan sets out the way the policy will be put into action and should be read in conjunction with the Forward Plan, the Emergency Plan, the Collections Development Policy, Documentation Policy and Plan and Building Condition Survey (2020) and any other plans affecting the collections and the museum buildings.

The purpose of the Collections Care and Conservation Policy is to set a framework for:

- The preservation of the collections and buildings in the care of the museum
- Preventative and remedial conservation of the collections
- The safe use of and access to collections, within the limits of the museum's resources

2. Context

The museum aims to improve the care and conditions of all its collection in accordance with Benchmarks in Collections Care 2.1 (<https://collectionstrust.org.uk/resource/benchmarks-in-collections-care-2-1>) within the limits of its resources.

It undertakes continuous monitoring of its collections and the conditions under which they are stored, accessed and exhibited. It also abides by the Museums Association's Code of Ethics for Museums.

The safety, security and preservation of the collection will be considered as a key concern from the outset of any plans to alter the displays or storage, to modify the buildings or to allow access to any part of the collections.

.

3. People

The care of the collections is the responsibility of everyone who works or volunteers in or visits the museum.

Any concerns regarding the collections should be reported in writing to the Collections Team.

Training in handling collections and working in a historic environment is provided to all staff and volunteers who work with the collections or in the historic house. No untrained personnel are allowed to handle items from the accessioned collection, work unsupervised in the historic house or handle loans.

The RCAGM is committed to continuing professional development of its staff and volunteers and to the building of relevant knowledge and expertise.

Researchers or other visitors working within the historic house or with the collections will be briefed on how to handle the items they are working on, how to behave in the context of the historic house and will be supervised at all times.

The museum has access to the SWMD Conservation Development Officer (CDO) for regular advice.

Any problems or concerns relating to the care of the collection are referred by the Curator to the CDO or another appropriately qualified conservator.

The museum will check the suitability of conservators chosen to work or advise on the collections. An ICOM accredited conservator or a conservator listed on the Conservation Register will normally be chosen.

No item in the collections will be treated, modified or altered until advice has been obtained from a suitably qualified conservator.

Only suitably trained and qualified conservators will carry out remedial treatment on objects.

Conservation work should be underpinned by knowledge and understanding of the object. Critical to this is documentation of its condition and treatment and a long-term plan for the care of the object.

All treatments will be photographed and documented and recorded in the MODES Collections database. A post-treatment report must be provided by the conservator concerned and placed in the RCAGM Object History filing system. Records will be maintained in accordance to SPECTRUM standards, including the name and contact details of the person or company carrying out the conservation.

4. The Buildings

The Russell-Cotes recognises that the security and maintenance of its buildings is fundamental to the preservation of both the museum and its collection. It endeavours to keep its buildings in a suitable condition. The museum's collection is stored and displayed in the following buildings. The body responsible for the upkeep of the buildings is listed.

Building	Used for	Owner	Upkeep carried out by
Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum	Museum, offices, storage and catering	Russell-Cotes Art Gallery and Museum	BCP Council
Study Centre	Storage and office	BCP Council	BCP Council

The museum and BCP Council commission quinquennial Buildings Condition Surveys. In addition, BCP Council holds an Asset Management Plan for the upkeep of all buildings which are its responsibility.

Building managers, supported by RCAGM staff, will be responsible for the provision and maintenance of suitable conditions and will work closely to achieve the best possible conditions for the display and storage of the collections, making full use of

defect reporting systems. BCP Council is responsible for inspecting buildings on a regular basis and undertaking repairs as required.

Collections are safeguarded through the management of the following systems:

- Building Maintenance
- Mechanical and Electrical (M&E) Maintenance
- Building Management Systems
- Intruder Alarms and Physical Security Measures
- Fire and Evacuation Systems

All relevant M&E systems will be covered by service contracts and inspected periodically.

When capital developments are planned the care of the collections will be taken into account and Collections staff will be involved in the planning process.

5. The Collections

The museum is aware of the risks to the collection from environmental factors, poor handling, storage and display materials and methods, and of the need to record the condition of the collection. The museum cares for the collections in store, on display and, by setting suitable requirements, on loan.

The details are listed in the Collection Care and Conservation Plan and include:

- Awareness of vulnerable objects
- Identifying threats to the collection including security
- Checking building condition
- Building maintenance
- Inspecting and cleaning the museum
- Housekeeping and cleaning objects on open display
- Condition checking the collection
- Collections care and conservation records
- Environmental monitoring including temperature, relative humidity, light and dust
- Environmental control and improving the environment
- Pest monitoring and managing the threat from pests
- Equipment maintenance
- Storage materials and methods
- Display materials and methods
- Transporting objects
- Collection care resources
- Professional advice
- Remedial conservation and working with conservators
- Training for the collection care team

6. The Collection: Working Items

The RCAGM has a small number of working clocks which will be surveyed and maintained annually by a suitably qualified clock conservator and conservation cleaned and serviced every 6 – 10 years.

7. Security

The RCAGM is an exposed historic building, while its visitor experience involves open displays of collection items. As a result, security is paramount. The RCAGM will maintain and improve its existing security measures. Security implications must and will be considered in all museum activities. As a result, access to collections must be measured against the need for security.

Appendix 1

Object Movement Policy

1. Introduction and Aims

- 1.1 This guidance is required as moving objects around the RCAGM's historic interiors incurs significant risks and poses specific challenges.
- 1.2 It aims to provide assistance to RCAGM staff in successfully moving collection items - many of which are often both fragile and heavy – in, out and around the museum without causing damage to the building, the object concerned or injuring staff.
- 1.3 It is vital that this guidance is followed especially when moving objects that do not belong to the RCAGM because of its commitment to treating such objects with the same care and attention that it shows its own collection items.
- 1.4 This guidance will be updated in the light of experience and everchanging exterior factors (eg access to East Cliff Path).
- 1.5 This guidance is object focused and is intended to be supplemental to the usual workplace Health and Safety requirements which must be followed.

2. Museum Documentation Requirements

- 2.1 All object movements must be accompanied with the relevant SPECTRUM Standard documentation such as Movement Tickets or Entry/Exit Forms. See the RCAGM Documentation Procedural Manual for further details.

3. Pre-Move Planning Including Health and Safety Risk Assessments

- 3.1 As each move is different a generic Health and Safety Risk Assessment has been written and stored on the server here: S:\HEALTH & SAFETY\RISK ASSESSMENTS Reading it will give the move planner insight. However, if the move concerned is extraordinary or is more expansive than the example given in the template then a specific Health and Safety Risk Assessment should be written.
- 3.2 All proposed moves should only be carried out with the approval of the RCAGM Collections Team after the proposed methodology has been determined.
- 3.3 Prior to any object move, especially when large, heavy, or valuable objects are involved, the route to be taken should be considered. The following factors must be considered:
 - What is the ultimate purpose of the move (eg a painting coming off display for loan)?

- What is the nature of the object concerned (eg its weight, fragility, condition)?
- Is time a factor (eg at what time is a loan being collected)?
- Are there any doorways, steps, stairs, tight turns, and other obstacles that might prove challenging?
- What equipment that might be required (eg piano wheels, ladders etc)?
- Does the object need to be packed or wrapped as part of the process?
- How many members of staff might be required? Do they need any specific training or skills (eg ladder training)? Consider the need for Banksmen both inside and outside of the building.
- What is the weather like?
- What size vehicle is doing the delivery/collection? Where will it need to park?

3.4 Once the route has been planned then it should be written down on the Front of House Booking Sheet submitted for the task. These can be found here: S:\FOH\BOOKINGS\BOOKING SHEETS The Booking Sheet should also list any staff required, equipment needed and doors that need to be taken off alarm etc.

3.5 As part of the above process a walkthrough of the proposed operation and route through the building should be carried out. Attention should be paid to any obstacles and house fittings etc that may present problems. It is also advisable to fully brief the team members carrying out the move before starting – including a walk through if required. It is essential that one person is in charge and takes responsibility for the move and leads the operation.

3.6 Some general points:

- Ideally all large-scale moves should be carried out on a Monday (or before 10am) when the RCAGM is closed to the public.
- While crates make handling an object easier and provide protection they add considerably to weight and size. If necessary, consideration should be given to moving an object to a suitable location (or even the interior of a collecting vehicle) for crating or de-crating rather than moving it in its crate through the building.
- Following on from the above it may be advisable to use T-frames rather crates for suitable paintings going on UK loans as they are both lighter and thinner.
- The use of the silicone plastic sliders/piano wheels is recommended to prevent damage to the historic floors and to save the strength of those moving the material.
- Due to subsidence issues, there is a limit on the size of vehicle which can access the East Cliff Path. Only large panel vans (eg long wheelbase Mercedes Sprinter vans) can gain access.
- There should be an absolute minimum of three members of staff involved if moving objects via the East Cliff Path (two to carry and one to act as banksman).
- The Rothesay Door in UG22 (Gallery III) is wide enough for many paintings but has a lower height than a usual door.

- Additionally, consideration should be given to the boundary wall on the other side of the Rothesay Door.
- Be aware of the magnetic alarm units placed in the middle top of the door frame of the Rothesay Door.
- There is a weight limit on the wheelchair lift in Gallery I (LG21) of 400kg. Consideration should be given to the operation of the doors and the necessary change in direction to enter/exit the lift.
- The section of decorative fretwork which hangs from the Balcony over the bottom of the Main Hall staircase necessitates going to the left or the right of the centre but not so close as to put the candelabras on the end of the banisters at risk.
- The arched doorways in the Old Entrance area allow vertical movement of tall items but the actual Old Entrance front door is only a standard sized door frame, so items may have to be held lower or tilted to get through.
- A route through the Conservatory (LG11) to the modern wing might be a better alternative to using the Pink Corridor (LG3) which requires a sharp turn to exit the Dining Room (LG12)
- There is a weight limit on the passenger lift in the 1991 Extension of 400kg.
- The doorway to the passenger lift in the 1991 Extension of the building is smaller than the cabin of the lift itself.
- The staircase inside the modern wing has restricted height at the very bottom and between the ground and second floors. Only lighter narrower items are recommended to travel via these stairs.
- Be aware of the magnetic lock units placed in the middle top of the door frames of PS1 and PS2.

4. Suggested Routes

- 4.1 The two main routes in and out of the historic house/art gallery extension are via the Rothesay Door or the Old Entrance. The choice of route should be dictated by the material being moved.
- 4.2 For small to medium sized material (eg 'Venus Verticordia' crated) and material which will not fit through the Rothesay Door then the Old Entrance via the Main Hall staircase is the best route. Care should be taken to avoid the fretwork and candelabras at the bottom of the stairs and a pause on the landing for a rest and change of direction is recommended before tackling the staircase.
- 4.3 If material can be taken out of the Rothesay Doors then it should be. However, the boundary wall on the other side and the East Cliff slope should be taken into consideration. Sliders or piano wheels may be required.
- 4.4 The suggested route from the Historic House through the 1991 Extension is to go via Dining Room (LG12) using either the Pink Corridor (LG3) or the Conservatory (LG11) to the Café Gallery (LG28). From that point the lift can be used or the stairs if necessary (refer to points above). Be aware that the Pink Corridor route does require a significant turn from the Dining Room and that the fire doors at the end of the corridor reduce its width. Likewise, the route through the Conservatory has steps at either end.

- 4.5 Material which is narrow enough can, in theory, exit the building via the Morning Room (LG13) exterior doors. However, the Terrace steps down to the garden are a significant challenge and this route should only be used as a last resort.
- 4.6 Using the Garden Entrance/Shop (LB1) is the best route into the 1991 Extension because of the lift access but consideration must be given to the low clearance just inside the door thanks to the staircase above.
- 4.7 The fire escape doors on the Learning Gallery (B32) can be used as an object entry/exit point particularly for access to PS2 and especially in an emergency/disaster situation. However, this route should only be used when the public are not present.

5. Dimensions of Key Doorways

N.B. The dimensions given are the narrowest part of the aperture concerned which occasionally may not be the actual doorframe because of door closure devices or security sensors. Checking is advised as part of the pre-move planning process.

Name	Room	Dimensions (mm)
Rothsay Door	LG22	1930 x 1710
Gallery 1/Main Hall Door	LG21/LG16	2220 x 1410
Old Entrance Door	UG22	2240 x 1410
Dining Room/Main Hall Door	LG12/LG15	2120 x 890
Morning Room/Terrace Door (inner)	LG13/LG25	2280 x 790
Morning Room/Terrace Door (outer)	LG25	2280 x 790
Dining Room/Pink Corridor Door	LG12/LG3	2210 x 890
Pink Corridor/Café Door	LG3/LG10	2000 x 860
Dining Room/Conservatory Door	LG12/LG11	2440 x 890
Conservatory/Café Door	LG11/LG28	2000 x 990
Head of the 1991 Extension Staircase in Café Gallery	LG28	2470 x 930
Learning Gallery entrance to 1991 Extension Staircase	B32	2470 x 930
Fire Exit Doors on Learning Gallery level (leading to exterior staircase and Café Terrace)	B32	2210 x 840
Landing on 1991 Extension Staircase	LB1/B32	2200 x 950
Bottom of the 1991 Extension Staircase in the shop area	LB1	2120 x 980
Garden Entrance Door	LB1	1800 x 2220

6. Lift Dimensions

Name	Rooms	Dimensions (mm)	Weight (kg)
1991 Extension Passenger Lift	LB1/B32/LG28	1990 x 800	400
Wheelchair Lift	LG16	1990 x 850	1,000
Wheelchair Lift	LG21	2050 x 770	1,000

7. List of Equipment and Where it is Stored

- Piano wheels = PS1 and PS2
- Silicone sliders = Collections Cupboard (B9) and Under-stairs Cupboard in Main Hall (LG17)
- Pallet pump truck = Under-stairs Cupboard in Main Hall (LG17)

- Picture winch = Sculpture Terrace (LG25)
- Picture trolley = PS2
- Blue flatbed trollies = Learning Cupboard (B10) and Shop Cupboard (B5)
- Plastazote foam blocks = PS1 and PS2

Index of Documents

- (1) Forward Plan
- (2) Action Plan
- (3) Risk Assessment of Security (*Confidential*)
- (4) Emergency Plan (*Confidential*)
- (5) Collections Development Policy
- (6) Documentation Policy and Plan
- (7) Disposals Plan
- (8) Documentation Procedure
- (9) Loans Policy
- (10) Collections Care and Conservation Policy**
- (11) Collections Care and Conservation Plan
- (12) Audience Development Plan
- (13) Access Policy
- (14) Access Plan
- (15) Interpretation Strategy
- (16) Exhibition Policy