



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

# Historic Royal Palaces

## Collections Development Policy

(Incorporating the Acquisitions and Disposals Policy)

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### **Key Facts and Purpose**

- This policy applies to all Historic Royal Palaces (HRP) employees, volunteers and contractors working with HRP's collections.
  - This policy guides the future development and refinement of the collection owned by Historic Royal Palaces. It also outlines how loans will be used to supplement the HRP collection and how this development will occur in line with the professional standards for collections management.
  - This policy is approved through HRP's Board of Trustees and overseen by HRP's Collections Group.
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## HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

### **1. Introduction**

Our six palaces benefit hugely from the large and diverse collections in them, which comprise HRP's collection, alongside important treasures from the Royal Collection, the Royal Armouries, museums and private lenders. These historic objects and artworks are an integral part of the palaces' history and presentation. The purpose of this Collection Development Policy is to state what, how and why HRP collects and to ensure we fulfil our responsibilities in relation to collections development in line with our current Strategic Plan and resources available, through active collections management including acquisitions and disposals, where appropriate.

### **2. Scope of policy**

This document explains HRP's approach to expanding and refining the Collection in line with professional standards. The policy covers the acquisition and disposal of objects from HRP's Permanent Collection, and the use of loan objects. It takes into consideration the current organisational strategy and current themes for the development of collections including acquisitions and disposals, alongside international museum best practices and due diligence. It is one of a suite of documents that make up the wider HRP Collections Management Framework for the governance and care of collections. The policy is supported by a set of procedures for each of the associated activities.

The areas of our collections are set out in section 6.

### **3. Policy Implementation**

Our policies and procedures are informed by relevant legal and ethical frameworks, alongside appropriate national and international standards, as set out in the HRP Collections Management Framework.

Managers should ensure that the Collections Management Framework, and supporting procedures, and plans, are followed in the areas for which they are responsible.

### **4. Statement of Authority and Responsibilities**

#### **4.1 Statement of Authority**

HRP's Royal Charter 1998 established a Board of Trustees of Historic Royal Palaces. Under the Charter the "*objects of Historic Royal Palaces shall be, for the benefit of the nation:*

*to manage, conserve, renovate, repair, maintain and improve the palaces to a high standard consistent with their status as buildings of royal, historic and architectural importance; and*



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*to help everyone to learn about the palaces, the skills required for their conservation and the wider story of how monarchs and people together have shaped society by providing public access, by exhibition, by events and education programmes, by the preparation of records, by research and by publication and by such other means as are appropriate.”*

### 4.2 Responsibilities for the HRP collection

The Board of Trustees has ultimate responsibility for ensuring that the HRP collection at the palaces are acquired, maintained, used and where necessary disposed of in accordance with the ordinances of HRP's Royal Charter.

The Chief Executive and Executive Team are responsible for implementing the Collections Management Framework across the departments of HRP and for reviewing the policies.

HRP's Trustees and Chief Executive are responsible for the approval of major acquisitions as defined in this policy and the Board of Trustees are responsible for adherence to the Arts Council England (ACE) guidelines on disposal of collections as defined in Section 16 and for conforming to the Government Accounting guidelines for the Disposal of Assets.

## 5. History of the collections

HRP owns a relatively small but highly relevant and significant collection. Currently, there are over 35,000 object records catalogued on the museum CMS which approximately represents more than 200,000 objects when bulk accessioning and group lots are accounted for.

The majority are directly related to the palaces and derive their national and international significance from the Historic Royal Palaces themselves. These have been acquired either by transfer from the former Department of the Environment (the palaces' previous administrators on behalf of HM The King) or, since HRP's establishment, acquired for display or research according to this policy and its predecessors.

Important events in the history of this relatively young collection include the establishment of the Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection (pre-dating the Historic Royal Palaces Agency in 1989), the influential historic re-presentations of King William III's State Apartments and the Tudor Kitchens at Hampton Court, the King's State Apartments at Kensington Palace, in the 1990s, George III's Kew Palace and most recently Hillsborough Castle in Northern Ireland.

Throughout HRP's recent history, our historic building conservation has added material to its contextual archaeological and architectural collections, as an important research resource. Current collecting seeks out objects which enhance our strategy to be more inclusive, and include objects associated with more of the diverse people who made, visited and lived in these palaces.



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### 6. Overview of Current Collections

HRP's collections are divided into several functional areas. This includes the Permanent Collection, consisting of material acquired in line with this policy, which is formally accessioned.

We also manage and care for related material for display which is not accessioned, such as: the Support Collection, including authentic replicas, reproduction textiles, and models. The Scientific Sample Collection comprises material which is collected specifically for scientific analysis. The Handling Collection is a small collection comprising original and replica objects used by learning and community teams.

Each area of the collection is further divided by areas of responsibility and expertise, and this document outlines how each may be developed.

#### 6.1 The Permanent Collection

The Permanent Collection of accessioned objects is documented on the CMS under areas of responsibilities and categories as outlined in Appendix 2.

For the purposes of researching and presenting the collections, the Curators divide their collections responsibilities into broader areas which relate to the histories of the six individual palaces, as well as historical periods from prehistoric and Roman to the present, and major themes such as coronations. This means that objects of special significance to HRP are worked on by curators with more than one specialism.

The headings below represent how collections are organised for collections development, research, public display and access.

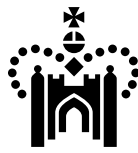
##### 6.1.1 Archaeology

The archaeology collection contains more than 4500 CMS Records which represent around 172,000 objects at item level, all of which are linked to contextual archival data.

Objects are collected from archaeological monitoring, evaluation, historic building recording projects, and archaeological excavations undertaken at all HRP sites and their estates, including additional areas previously covered by the lost palace at Whitehall. This includes archaeological work undertaken by HRP predecessor organisations.

The value of the archaeology collection and archive not only lies in its use as a research tool, but also for the enjoyment and education of our audiences. The objects in the archaeology collection help to further our understanding of the buildings and the people who inhabited and worked in them and to bring their stories to life, especially those who are otherwise often undocumented.

The archaeology collection also provides important insights into the uses of these places before the palaces were built, such as Anglo-Saxon Whitehall, Roman London, and the prehistory of southeast England. As such, the collection has important local significance, as well as some which are of national and international importance.



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New objects are added to this collection frequently, as new archaeological investigations occur regularly. Not all materials collected or created during the course of archaeological projects require retention but are selected using the Archaeological Archive Selection Strategy and is guided by Archaeological Archives Forum, Chartered Institute of Archaeologists and Historic England standards and guidelines.

### 6.1.2 Architectural Drawings

The Architectural Drawings Collection (ADC) is an archive of survey, design, technical, presentation and working drawings for five London palaces in HRP's care. The Collection principally supports HRP's strategic aim to 'pass on better the things we look after'. The bulk of the drawings were created by HRP's predecessor organisations and were inherited by HRP in 1998.

All of the drawings in the collection are classed as public records under the terms of the Public Records Act 1958 and are held by HRP as a Place of Deposit as designated by The National Archives.

The ADC is a non-accruing (i.e. closed) collection. New architectural drawings created either digitally or using traditional media are maintained and managed by HRP's Surveyors of the Fabric team. The ADC has a dedicated archivist-curator.

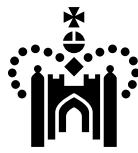
### 6.1.3 Architecture and Buildings

The architectural decoration and features of our palaces, as well as the fixtures, and fittings, either remaining as part of the fabric of the buildings, removed during repair, or discovered through onsite archaeology, are of great site-specific significance as a unique record of and research resource for the palaces' construction and development. The collection is an integral part of the physical history of the buildings and grounds, even when they have become detached from the building and been disassociated from their immediate context. The palace context gives value to the objects in the collection and also to the parts of the palaces still extant.

Many objects in this collection were made by renowned architects, artists or craftspeople, and fixtures and fittings that are less decorative are important evidence of the construction, life and use of the palaces. Some architectural elements can be studied in combination with the archaeology collection and archive, and architectural drawings, to understand parts of the palaces which are no longer extant. Other collection elements are works of art in their own right, including ceiling paintings and murals, and sculptural decoration of the palace buildings.

This collection also includes in situ inscribed and applied graffiti that has been created over many centuries, often by well-known residents without formal permission, instruction, or commission by a controlling authority.

New objects are added to the collection frequently as the palaces are conserved, updated, and remodelled. As part of conservation practice and to enhance the environmental sustainability of HRP within building projects, there may occasionally be scope to reinstate or reuse architectural elements within the palace from Permanent and Support Collections where appropriate.



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### 6.1.4 Visual Arts

This category includes paintings and works on paper, including all types of drawings, prints, free-standing sculpture, tapestries and embroideries and art photography as well as some contemporary works in various media. Some works of art have a long historic association with a particular palace, forming part of a planned royal interior scheme; most have been acquired in more recent years to support visitor interpretation of the palaces or the lives of their inhabitants, exhibitions, or for research.

There are two principal narrative areas: topographical works (landscape views of our palaces and gardens and historic scenes set within palace interiors) and portraiture (royalty and individuals associated with our palaces).

HRP occasionally commissions contemporary works of art and design, in support of new displays or presentations. These artistic collaborations are made to complement and work with the historic collections and interiors and usually support visitor interpretation.

### 6.1.5 Books and Manuscripts

HRP possesses a small collections' library which includes rare books and manuscripts, and historic archival documents. The majority of these have been acquired for display. There is a sub-collection of important books and historic documents which have been acquired for their direct relevance to palace history and for specific display purposes. Because of their rarity, value, and conservation requirements, or their historic value, these books are all treated and accessioned as items in the Permanent Collection, rather than included in our several research libraries.

### 6.1.6 Decorative Arts

The diverse nature of the objects in this category reflects the fact that the palaces under our care have been lived in or used constantly, in one case for more than a thousand years. This category includes metalwork, glassware and ceramics, paper hangings, decorative textiles (but excludes dress, furnishings, and tapestries) and historic models. These can be of a decorative nature or utilitarian objects valued for their social history significance.

Some of these objects have been acquired to refurnish historic rooms in order to improve visitors' understanding of life in the palaces. Objects have also been acquired because of their relevant history, for use in displays which to tell the stories of the people who lived in the palaces. In some cases, the objects in this category have been left behind by former residents and users of the palace.

HRP also commissions contemporary decorative artworks and design from time to time, as part of new displays or presentations. These are made to complement and work with the historic collections and interiors and are usually created to support the stories and other interpretation presented to visitors.

### 6.1.7 Furniture and Furnishings

The furniture and furnishings collection includes pieces from the 17<sup>th</sup> to the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Some pieces were inherited by HRP, and were either made for or have been used in the palaces in their original context. These items of furniture are of site-specific importance



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because of their provenance and some objects are nationally or internationally significant. Other items of furniture have been acquired because they are known to have been displayed in one of the palaces in a historic context or owned by a person closely associated with one of the palaces.

### 6.1.8 Palaces and People - Social History

The diverse nature of the objects in this category reflects the fact that the six palaces under our care have been lived in or used constantly, in the case of the Tower of London, for more than a thousand years. This collection includes a very wide range of material and content, including letters and postcards, photographic material, newspapers, magazines and cuttings, as well as personal effects and ephemera.

A special subcategory is our collection of oral history records (in the form of transcriptions and sound recordings), which currently have no other archival home at HRP. By its nature the social history collection includes types of objects that could also be included in other collection categories (such as decorative objects, photographs, prints, portraits) but are more usefully grouped in this part of the collection because of their social and local history content, rather than their media.

Many of these objects have been found at the palaces or donated by people with palace connections. Others have been acquired because of their relevant provenance, to tell the stories of the people who lived in the palaces or to furnish rooms to improve visitors' understanding of life in the palaces.

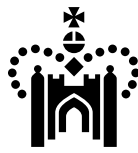
### 6.1.9 Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection (RCDC)

This is an important Arts Council England-designated collection of largely British royal, court and ceremonial dress, established at Kensington Palace in 1984 under HRP's predecessor, the Department of the Environment, and now based at Hampton Court. The Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection at HRP comprises objects from the 16th to the 21st centuries and comprises accessioned collections and significant long-term loans.

The Royal Collection and individual members of the Royal Family are significant lenders, whose collections care and storage is delegated to HRP. The collection also includes an important long-term loan from the AFH Bowden Settlement of 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century military and ceremonial dress and regalia, and other long-term lenders.

The principal areas of the RCDC are clothing worn by members of the royal family past and present and clothing worn at the royal court and palaces including court dress; ceremonial dress and uniforms; orders and insignia; related archival material; items used in the production and care of these types of clothes. A particular strength of HRP's own collection is its growing holdings of dress representing key historical figures, including that of Queen Victoria, and Diana, Princess of Wales.

The collection has a designated curator who manages the collection day to day and facilitates access and research to the collection by appointment.



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### 6.2 Non-Accessioned Collections

#### 6.2.1 The Support Collection

HRP has a group of materials that have been acquired in line with the collecting policy detailed below but are not accessioned into the permanent collection. This material comprises mainly specially commissioned replica material or architectural and other models but also contains antique furniture acquired to supplement displays. The Support collection also includes architectural features not deemed significant enough to accession into the Permanent Collection, but which have potential for re-use within the palace.

Decisions are taken as to the status of the material under consideration for acquisition, and its consequent care, at the point of acquisition and are recorded accordingly on the Collections Management System.

Material that falls under the Support Collection criteria may occasionally be accessioned into the Permanent Collection at the discretion of the Collections Management Group where a high degree of care for long-term retention is identified.

#### 6.2.2 Replica items

HRP commissions high-quality replica items for display alongside original material where originals are unavailable or unsuitable for display. (Replica items are also specially made for regular use by Public Engagement and are subject to a separate development policy and procedures.)

Replicas are normally only commissioned as part of a fully researched re-presentation project, where there is no possibility of returning original items for display. The design and manufacture of such replicas are normally of equivalent quality and materials to the item that is copied.

#### 6.2.3 Handling Collection

The Handling Collection items are used for public learning and community use and are added to HRP's Collections Management System to ensure oversight and are subject to the same entry and conservation procedures as all other collections. Items include deselected materials from archaeological project archives, which have not been deemed worthy of preservation in perpetuity but have a uniquely educational value in being used as a handling object. These objects will have undergone a rigorous selection procedure guided by HRP's museum policies, relevant procedures and external guidelines.

#### 6.2.4 Scientific Sample Collection

The Scientific Sample Collection is a collection of historic materials and decorative finish samples created specifically for scientific analysis and research. The samples are collected from buildings and objects undergoing conservation works and are selected from the material which would otherwise have been discarded as it was no longer fit for purpose, nor significant enough to enter the Permanent Collection. The Scientific Sample Collection is catalogued and managed in several discrete categories for the purpose of analysis and research. The collection includes architectural and building material samples, paint samples





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from both architectural and art historical contexts, and historic textile and tapestry samples collected specifically for analysis. The samples are collected to support both non-invasive and invasive analysis subject to strict research and conservation principles and criteria. This is an important international cultural and research resource.

### 6.2.4.1 Buildings Sample Collection

This collection of historic building materials, covering over 1000 years of architectural history, is primarily drawn from the six Royal Palaces under the care of HRP. This collection contains a wide range of historic building materials (including brick, stone, wood, metalwork, and mortar) with clear temporal and spatial provenance taken from the extensive documentary, architectural, and archaeological archives covering the palaces.

### 6.2.4.2 Paint Sample Collection

This collection of prepared and unprepared paint samples is primarily drawn from the six Royal Palaces under the care of HRP. The samples within this unique collection are collected in context from buildings, decorative features or paintings undergoing conservation work in accordance with clear research aims and approvals. This collection contains samples taken by HRP and samples commissioned from external consultants. These samples have been consolidated into a single collection with temporal and spatial provenance taken from the documentary resources produced during sample collection.

### 6.2.4.3 Tapestry Fragments and Textile Collection

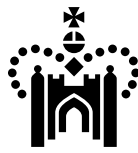
This collection of historic and replica tapestry and textile samples was created to support research into historic tapestries and dyes as part of two major research projects undertaken by the Textile Conservation Studio at HRP, which has a long history. The collection contains historic tapestry samples drawn from external sources and specifically sourced for this collection and is supplemented by textile samples created through ongoing conservation work on the permanent collections.

## 6.3 Related collections at the Palaces - The Royal Collection and Royal Armouries

Many of the important works of art displayed at the palaces form part of the Royal Collection. They belong to HM The King, and are administered by Royal Collection Trust, a separate charitable trust from HRP. Ownership of the respective collections is distinct and recorded separately, although there is some sharing of respective collections data. In addition, HRP also displays, interprets, maintains and sometimes conserves items from the Royal Collection by formal agreement and under the terms of our Memorandum of Understanding.

The displays of arms, armour and related material in and outside the White Tower at the Tower of London belong to the Royal Armouries, a national museum with some of its own staff based at the Tower. HRP sometimes borrows long-term loans from the Royal Armouries for display outside the White Tower and at other palaces.

Whenever HRP considers acquiring items for the HRP collection that are of possible interest to either of these partner organisations, we will consult with them and reach agreement as to



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who is the most appropriate organisation to pursue the acquisition (see also Collecting Policies of Other Museums).

### **7. Themes and priorities for future collecting**

#### 7.1 Additions to the HRP Permanent Collection

Acquisitions will normally only be considered if they support HRP's Cause and if HRP procedures for Acquisitions and Due Diligence have been followed. Specifically, collecting will take place according to the following criteria. The Curators produce an Acquisitions Strategy for acquisitions, which is updated annually, to help guide decisions on acquisitions and prioritise financial resources. Proposals for acquisitions which meet one or more of the following criteria, and fall within the current strategy will be given greater weight. The Acquisitions Strategy is shaped by our Cause, current executive strategy and the Annual Operating Plan.

- a) Original contents or material deriving from the existing buildings and estates of the six palaces.
- b) Original contents or material deriving from parts of the palaces that are no longer extant. These items should be of significant historic or cultural value and suitable either for public display or of unique research value to the work of HRP.
- c) Original objects with a direct connection to members of the royal family, historic figures or any people associated with the palaces. These items should be illustrative of the activities that associate these people with an individual palace or palaces.
- d) Works of art and historic objects that directly inform the re-presentation and interpretation of the palaces for visitors. These may include contemporary art and craft commissions which are informed by the stories of their palace location, when rights of ownership are transferred to HRP.
- e) Works of art and historic objects of equivalent historic significance and appearance that can be displayed in lieu of missing or destroyed originals as part of the historic re-presentation of the palaces.
- f) Exceptional authentic and researched replicas of missing, unavailable or destroyed original contents of the palaces where the original's replacement is considered essential for the effective interpretation and re-presentation of a specific palace area. Acquisitions made under criteria f) will only be added to the support collection and not accessioned unless specially agreed by the Collections Group.
- g) Acquisitions can also be made of objects that satisfy the unique collecting profile of the RCDC including dress worn by members of the royal family, ceremonial dress, regalia, civil uniforms, uniforms of the royal household, court dress; archival items or ephemera that pertain to the design, production, and use of objects contained within the RCDC.
- h) Scientific samples from other historic buildings or objects which provide useful comparator material for the Scientific Samples Collection. This material should be carefully



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assessed to ensure it has clear spatial and temporal provenance in line with the existing collection. This material will not normally be purchased on the open market.

### 7.2 Loans to Historic Royal Palaces

HRP has a well-established history of long-term loans supporting its own collection. These are in addition to those objects from the Royal Collection which are displayed in HRP-managed palaces in the original contexts for which they were made (known as 'in-situ'). All other loans are covered by a fixed-term loan agreement (contract) and have to meet the terms and conditions of individual lenders. Whenever appropriate, long-term loans will be negotiated with the intention to future acquisition through gift, bequest or sale.

HRP will only borrow items that meet the acquisition criteria detailed above, or where they are particularly required for a specific temporary exhibition and will adhere to the relevant procedures as detailed in HRP's Collections Management Procedural Manual. In all instances, the loan will be reviewed and considered with the same rigour that is applied to acquisitions, with a view to the long-term resourcing and implications for HRP.

## **8. Themes and priorities for rationalisation, de-accessioning and disposal of collections**

HRP has a long-term purpose and holds the HRP collection in trust for everyone in relation to its Charter and Cause. The Board of Trustees accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the HRP collection and will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency in order to increase public benefit derived from the HRP collection and to comply with Arts Council England Museums Accreditation Standard.

We operate a transparent approach to de-accessioning and disposals which adhere to legislation, codes of ethics and museum industry standards. HRP will carry out disposals for curatorial or conservation reasons only in accordance with HRP's Procedures for De-Accessioning and Disposal and Due Diligence.

Objects will be identified and considered by curators and conservators as candidates for de-accessioning and disposal for one, or more of the following reasons only:

- a) Irreparable condition and of no research value
- b) Duplicate object – where not part of a set or associated group of objects
- c) Object hazardous to health/or other collection objects and where safe storage cannot be arranged
- d) Does not fall within any of HRP's collecting criteria and policy
- e) Objects without provenance AND having no useful purpose identified by HRP



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### **9. Limitations on collecting**

HRP recognises its responsibility, in acquiring additions to the HRP collection, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Arts Council England Museums Accreditation Standard. The Collections Group at HRP has oversight of these areas from a collections point of view. We will as far as possible take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, display, public access, security, storage, resources, budgets and care and conservation of collections.

### **10. Collecting policies of other museums**

HRP will take account of the collecting policies of other national and neighbouring local museums and galleries collecting in similar areas. We will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

Specific reference is made to the following organisations and museums:

The Royal Collection Trust, The Royal Armouries, British Museum, The Fashion Museum Bath, London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre, Museum of London, National Museums of Scotland, Victoria and Albert Museum.

### **11. Acquisitions not covered by the policy**

Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by HRP's Board of Directors and Trustees, having regard to the interests of other museums and heritage organisations.

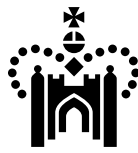
### **12. Acquisition and Due Diligence Policy**

All acquisitions will follow the procedures as laid down in the HRP Collections Management Procedures Manual, which are regularly reviewed and updated in line with current good practice.

HRP will exercise due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless our Trustees or collections staff responsible are satisfied that HRP can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

In particular, HRP will not acquire any object or specimen unless we are 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).

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 1 November 2002, and the Dealing in



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Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, HRP will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. HRP's Trustees 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.

So far as biological and geological material is concerned, HRP 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.

HRP will not acquire archaeological antiquities (including excavated ceramics) in any case where HRP's Trustees or the responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

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 as defined by the Treasure Act 1996.

Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because HRP is:

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acquiring an item of minor importance that lacks secure ownership history but in the best judgement of experts in the field concerned has not been illicitly traded
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin
- in possession of reliable documentary evidence that the item was exported from its country of origin before 1970

In these cases, HRP will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority.

As HRP holds and continues to acquire human remains from any period, it will follow the procedures in the 'Guidance for the care of human remains in museums' issued by DCMS in 2005 and HRP's Human Remains Policy, 2024.

### **13. Spoliation**

HRP 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.



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### **14. The repatriation and restitution of objects and human remains**

HRP's Trustees, acting on the advice of our professional staff, 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. HRP will take such decisions on a case by case basis; within our legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance.

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' and HRP's Human Remains Policy, 2024.

### **15. Management of historic archives**

As HRP holds and intends to acquire historic archives, including documents, photographs and printed ephemera, our Trustees will be guided by the *Code of Ethics*, International Council on Archives (ICA), 1996.

### **16. Disposal Policy**

#### **16.1 Principles**

HRP's Trustees will ensure that the disposal process is carried out openly and with transparency in accordance with the De-accession and Disposal procedure as laid down in the HRP Collections Management Procedures Manual.

By definition, HRP has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for society in relation to its stated objectives. HRP's Trustees therefore accept the principle that sound curatorial reasons for disposal must be established before consideration is given to the disposal of any items in the HRP collection.

HRP will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item and agreements on disposal made with donors will be taken into account.

When disposal of an object is being considered, HRP 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.

#### **16.2 Motivation for disposal and method of disposal**

When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined in the De-accession and Disposal procedure as laid down in the HRP Collections Management Procedures Manual will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale or exchange.

HRP will not undertake disposal motivated principally or solely by financial reasons.



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### 16.3 The disposal decision-making process

Whether the disposal is motivated either by curatorial and/or financial reasons, the decision to dispose of material from the HRP collections will be taken by the Trustees only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including the public benefit, the implications for the HRP collection and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. External expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by HRP will also be sought.

All disposals will be undertaken with reference to SPECTRUM procedures on disposal and follow the procedure as laid down in the HRP Collections Management Procedures Manual.

### 16.4 Responsibility for disposal decision-making

A final decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction will be the responsibility of HRP's Trustees acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff and not by any HRP individual acting alone. Where appropriate this final decision will be delegated to the Collections Group and the Palaces & Collections Director.

### 16.4 Use of proceeds of sale

Any monies received by HRP's Trustees from the disposal of items will be applied for the benefit of the HRP collection. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements may be justifiable if it reduces the risk of damage to and deterioration of the HRP collection. 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.

The proceeds of a sale will be ring-fenced so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard.

### 16.4 Documenting disposal

Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the objects 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 HRP's procedure on De-accession and Disposal.

## 17. Document Controls

### 17.1 Policy review procedure

The Collections Development Policy will be reviewed and published from time to time, at least once every five years. The Collections Development Policy is next due for review on or before July 2029.



## **HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES**

Arts Council England (ACE) will be notified of any changes to the Collection Development Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of the existing HRP collection.





## HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

### Appendix 1 - HRP Levels of approval for acquisitions and disposals

#### Levels of approval for acquisitions

[These levels may be revised periodically in line with inflation and HRP Financial Reviews]

Gift, Bequest, Transfer or Expenditure up to £10,000	Chief Curator
Gift, Bequest, Transfer or Expenditure from the Designated Acquisitions Fund or specifically allocated project budget, of up to £35,000	CEO or P&C Director reported to Trustees in the next CEO's monthly report
Gift, Bequest, Transfer or Expenditure from the Designated Acquisitions Fund or specifically allocated project budget, in excess of £35,000	Board of Trustees on recommendation of the CEO or P&C Director

The valuation should include any attendant costs such as conservation or transport to determine the approval level.

In exceptional cases where a rapid decision is required between meetings of the Trustees to secure a high-priority acquisition costing in excess of £35,000 the Chairman of the Board of Trustees and Chief Executive can be called on to act on behalf of the Board of Trustees.

All acquisitions over £5,000 value become financial Fixed Assets, but are specially treated as 'Artefacts', with their value maintained over time.

#### Approval levels for Disposals from Fixed Asset Register

Proposed Level (net book value)	Authorisation level – Heritage Assets	Authorisation level – Fixed Assets
Up to £10,000	Collections Group / Chief Curator	Heads of Department
£10,001-£35,000	P&C Director and reported to Trustees in the next CEO's monthly report	Director
>£35,000	Board of Trustees on recommendation of the CEO and P&C Director	Chief Executive



HISTORIC ROYAL PALACES

## Appendix 2 – Areas of Responsibility

<b>Categories / Areas of Responsibility as listed on the HRP Collections Management System (CMS)</b>
HRP Archaeology Collection
HRP Architectural Drawings Collection
HRP Architectural Drawings Archive
HRP Architectural Fixtures Collection
HRP Art Collection
HRP Books and Paper Collection
HRP Decorative Arts & Social History Collection
HRP Furniture Collection
HRP Handling Collection
HRP Royal Ceremonial Dress Collection
HRP Textiles Collection