

## Whittlesey Museum Care and Conservation Policy

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

- The preservation of all objects and premises 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

The museum aims to improve the care and conditions of all its collections in accordance with approved standards, within the limits of its resources. This may include seeking external sources of funding to support conservation and collections care.

The safety and preservation of the collection will be considered from the outset of any plans to alter the displays or storage or modify the buildings.

### **Personnel**

The care of the collections is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers, in particular the governing body and Curator.

Any concerns regarding the collections should be reported to the governing body or Curator.

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

Any problems or concerns relating to the care of the collection which cannot be resolved in-house are referred by the Curator to the CDO or another appropriately qualified conservator.

Volunteers and visitors working with the collections will be briefed on how to handle the items they are working on and will be supervised by the Curator. Suitable equipment (gloves, Plastazote sheets to pad tabletops, etc) will be provided by the museum as required. The exception to this are the museum objects included in the Schools Loan Boxes, which may be handled as part of regular Loan Box use without direct curatorial supervision.

### **Treatments**

No item in the collections will be modified or altered until advice has been obtained from a suitably qualified conservator, unless the action is a continuation of previously-established practice and intended solely to maintain or improve the current condition of the item (eg: painting of items stored outside in the museum yard as a form of weatherproofing, treatment of active woodworm etc). Even in these cases, examples of such procedures should be highlighted to the external conservator during the regular conservation audit of the museum in case any improvements to practice can be made. Any object treatments not carried out by a professional conservator should be kept to an absolute minimum and should aim to be fully reversible in their effects on the object.

The museum will keep detailed records of all treatments carried out on objects, including the name and contact details of the person or company who carried out the work if external contractors are employed.

Whittlesey Museum does not support any working historic items as part of the general display, and does not undertake to maintain items in working condition except through prior undertakings to maintain the current condition of objects within the limitations of available resources and aim to avoid their degeneration whilst they are part of the museum collection.

### **Premises**

Whittlesey Museum recognises that the condition of the museum premises is fundamental to the preservation of the collections and endeavours to keep the buildings in a suitable condition in accordance with the terms of the museum lease and the listed building status of the museum. The museum undertakes to promptly alert the building owners of any remedial or maintenance work required and to co-operate with them to enable such works to be carried out.

### **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.

Areas for action are described in the Care and Conservation Plan and include:

- monitoring and improving environmental conditions including temperature, relative humidity, light and dust
- managing the threat from pests
- housekeeping
- conservation cleaning of objects on open display
- documentation of the condition of the collection and of any treatments carried out on objects
- storage materials and methods
- display materials and methods
- transport methods

The Care and Conservation Plan should be read in conjunction with the museum Forward Plan, Emergency Plan and any recommendations/reports from Conservation audits of the museum.

Date of creation of Care and Conservation Policy: September 2014

Date of last review of Care and Conservation Policy: September 2014

Date the next review of Care and Conservation Policy is due: September 2019