



DOCUMENTATION POLICY

1. Introduction

- 1.1. Documentation is a fundamental activity in all museums. Keeping records of information is central to accountability, accessibility, management, research, study and use of collections.
- 1.2. This Policy for the documentation of the collections is to ensure that all information we hold relating to the items in the collection is accurate, secure, reliable and accessible. It complies with SPECTRUM standards (The UK Museum Collections Management Standard, 5.0, Collections Trust, 2011)

2. Aims and Objectives

- 2.1. The aim of this Policy is to ensure that Liskeard & District Museum fulfils its guardianship, stewardship and access responsibilities. Through the implementation of this Policy our objective is to:
 - 2.1.1. Improve accountability for the collections
 - 2.1.2. Maintain at least minimum professional standards in documentation procedures and collection information
 - 2.1.3. Extend access to collections information
 - 2.1.4. Strengthen the security of the collections
- 2.2. The great majority of our collection is recorded on the Modes computerised database this information only includes descriptions and provenance, where known. We will, in time, add conservation and other information to this database, in order to increase accessibility to our records (see 'Definitions' below).

- 2.3. We take a pragmatic, common-sense approach to the level to which we document collections. Ideally we will document to individual item level but, in the case of large collections of similar items such as archives, we will, at least initially, document at group level. We therefore aim to have a basic 'inventory' record for all identified items and groups within the collection, whilst some items will be documented to a more detailed 'catalogue' level. These are defined below.

3. Definitions

- 3.1. We will document our collections to either 'inventory' or 'catalogued' level, as described below:

- 3.1.1. 'Inventory' level – this includes sufficient key information and photographs to allow any object in our care to be individually identified and verified. All accessioned items, loans in and loans out and any other un-accessioned objects as appropriate are documented at this level

- 3.1.2. 'Catalogue' level – we will identify collections that merit further, more detailed, documentation, thus raising the standard of information to 'catalogue' level. Such documentation will include the known history of an object, references to any relevant characteristics, publication, details of its conservation history, photographs etc.

4. Accountability

- 4.1. Accountability ensures that museums fulfil their key responsibilities for collections and any associated information. A museum should know exactly what it is legally responsible for at any given time (including both permanent and loan items) and where each item is located.

5. Access to Information

- 5.1. All requests for information will be considered in terms of compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000), the General Data Protection Regulation and the Data Protection Act 2018 and the Environmental Information Regulations (2004). We will review requests for confidential data, such as donor information, environmental information, valuations of site details, on a case-by-case basis and in accordance with the applicable legislation and any legal agreements or conditions of gift.

6. Security of Information

- 6.1. We have in place measures to ensure the physical security and long-term preservation of all documentation records, whether paper-based or computerised. We will update all manual and computerised records as appropriate. Paper copies of key documentation will be made regularly and held in a safe on-site. Weekly backups of digital data will be made to secure off-site storage.
- 6.2. We have measures in place to mitigate against the risk of potential obsolescence of electronic systems to ensure the long-term accessibility of the information they hold.