Appendix

Dales Countryside Museum Collections Management Framework

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1. Overview

The Dales Countryside Museum Collections Management Framework sets out the strategic context for collections management. Its purpose is to set the standards of care by which the collection is governed to enable the Dales Countryside Museum to deliver on strategic objectives of the Authority.

1.1 Collections management is implemented through a set of policies and procedures which lay out our principles and methods for the management, development, documentation and care of collections and identify where our priorities are focused over the next five years. The Collections management policy areas that make up the framework are: collection development; documentation; access; and collection care and conservation.

1.2 Dales Countryside Museum aims to be open and transparent in how its collection is managed and this framework will be available to the public on its website. This approach is in line with other collecting institutions in the UK.

2. Purpose

2.1 The Collections Management Framework sets out the strategic context for collections management. Its purpose is to set the standards of care by which the collection is managed to enable the Museum to deliver on strategic objectives and corporate plan targets.

2.2 Collections management is an active and continual process through which the Museum develops, manages and cares for its collection for current and future use.

2.3 The Museum aims to achieve a balance between access, preservation, the needs of the collection, and the needs of the people who use it. Realising this balance is vital to successful collections management.

2.4 The Framework governs how those with responsibility for the collection will manage it and maintain a consistent approach in keeping with recognised cultural collections standards. It has been structured according to the recommendations in the Spectrum Collections Management Standard and the Museum Accreditation scheme which give recommendations for the management of cultural collections by collecting organisations.

3. Dales Countryside Museum Vision, Purpose and Aims

3.1 Museum vision: Dales heritage, there to inspire all, now and in the future

3.2 Museum strapline: Dales Countryside Museum shares the stories of the people and places of the Yorkshire Dales

3.3 Museum statement of purpose: The Dales Countryside Museum collects, preserves and interprets the heritage of the Dales in ways that inspire interest in, enable understanding of and enhance enjoyment of the Yorkshire Dales National Park by everyone.

3.4 Museum key aims:

- Create a welcoming site for all visitors to the Yorkshire Dales National Park.
- Place people at the heart of our heritage activities.
- Celebrate and share the Dales Countryside Museum collections.
- Provide opportunities for people to learn about and be inspired by the landscape, wildlife and cultural heritage of the Dales.
- Be a valued and integral part of the community.
- Contribute to the local and regional economy by attracting and retaining tourists.
- Develop creative partnerships to achieve identified objectives.

3.5 Review Procedure

The Collections Management Framework will be reviewed and published, at least once every five years in line with accreditation recommendations. The date when the policy is next due for review is on or before March 31 2031. Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Collections Management Framework, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

4. Collections Development Policy

Name of museum:
Dales Countryside Museum

Name of governing body:
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority

Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:
31 March 2026

Policy review procedure:
The collections development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review:
31 March 2031

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the collections development policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of collections.

4.1 Relationship to other relevant policies and plans of the organisation:

4.1.1 The governing body will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

4.1.2 By definition, the museum has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The governing body therefore accepts the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the museum's collection.

4.1.3 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

4.1.4 The museum recognises its responsibility, when acquiring additions to its collections, to ensure that care of collections, documentation arrangements and use of collections will meet the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. This includes using Spectrum primary procedures for collections management. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.

4.1.5 The museum will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the governing body or responsible officer is satisfied that the museum can acquire a valid title to the item in question.

4.1.6 The museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

4.2 History of the collections

4.2.1 The collection is composed predominantly of social history and industrial material from the Yorkshire Dales. It was established in the 1940s by the founder of the Museum, Marie Hartley, working initially with Ella Pontefract and later with Joan Ingilby. There was an initial emphasis on the Upper Dales such as Wensleydale and Swaledale.

4.2.2 The majority of artefacts collected up to the late 1990s relate to the period 1800-1950. The strengths of that collection include agriculture, dairying, tinsmithing, rural crafts and knitting. Many of these objects were documented in books by Hartley and Ingilby such as Hand-knitters of the Dales and Life and Tradition in the Yorkshire Dales. The objects have good provenance and are of a high quality.

4.2.3 Items previously displayed at Bolton Castle were taken into the collection by Hartley and Ingilby prior to its transfer to North Yorkshire County Council (NYCC) and the opening of the Upper Dales Folk Museum in 1979. Material has been added to the collection since that time. The NYCC collection was transferred to the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA) in 1997.

4.2.4 Since then, objects relating to all aspects of life in the Yorkshire Dales have been added. This has included archaeology, medicine, dairying, transport and material relating to the life and work of Marie Hartley and Joan Ingilby. In 2015 the Yorkshire Dales Mining Museum at Earby closed. Artefacts relating specifically to the Yorkshire Dales were acquired by the YDNPA following a decision by the Full Authority.

4.3 An overview of current collections

4.3.1 The Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority holds a resource for promoting understanding and enjoyment of the cultural heritage, wildlife and landscape of the Yorkshire Dales National Park. The collection housed at the Dales Countryside Museum, falls into the following broad subject areas:

- Social History
- Archaeology and Numismatics
- Arts – Ceramics, Costume, Textiles, Folk Art, and Contemporary craft
- Archives - Dialect poetry, Oral history

4.3.2 In addition to the social and industrial material described above, the museum also has a small collection of archaeological material, in particular material relating to the prehistoric and Roman periods. Important acquisitions are the Viking ring from Sedbergh, the Anglo Saxon reliquary from Littondale.

4.4 Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.4.1 New acquisitions will be considered in the context of their contribution to the existing collection, how they can be made accessible and in terms of their use for inspiring learning and interest in the heritage of the Dales.

4.4.2 In future, items relating to the following themes will be considered for acquisition if related to the area of the Yorkshire Dales National Park: rural crafts and industry including tools and products; agriculture including products, processing of products and marketing of farm produce, small tools, implements and machinery; working life; leisure time including friendly societies, clubs and unions; family life including costume and household objects; transport and communication; tourism; cultural, social and landscape change in the Dales; Marie Hartley, Ella Pontefract and Joan Ingilby and their life and work in the Dales.

4.4.3 Items will be accepted on loan only if of exceptional significance and on a fixed term basis.

4.5 Social History

The existing collection reflects social change within the Dales and is made up of objects drawn from everyday life as well as rare and exceptional items. The intention is to build upon the pioneering work of the founders of the Museum, Marie Hartley and Joan Ingilby. The collection needs to document and record change to enable a wide audience to relate to, appreciate and be inspired by the heritage of the Dales.

4.5.1 New acquisitions will help tell the story of ordinary people living, working and enjoying the Dales. They need to reflect the impact upon and changing relationship that people have had with the wildlife and landscape of the Dales over the last 10,000 years to the present day.

4.5.2 We will seek to reflect our communities in a way that recognises their economic and cultural diversity. This will include contemporary as well as historical material. Items must have clear local provenance, a recorded history and clear documentation of ownership.

Items we wish to acquire:

- Items relating to the creation and impact of the National Park including the use and enjoyment of the area by people from communities beyond the National Park boundary.
- Items relating to tourism and changes in the leisure use of the countryside such as walking, caving and adventure sports.
- Knitting sticks and items produced at the height of the knitting industry in the Dales such as hand knitted socks, a bump cap and Dales knitting patterns.

- Items which reflect significant local events, both negative and positive – e.g. Foot and Mouth 2001 and the re-opening of the Wensleydale Railway
- Items relating to significant local trades and industries not adequately represented in the existing collection e.g. stonemasonry, quarrying
- Items relating to the history of the Dales Countryside Museum as a railway station
- Small agricultural items and hand tools such as a strickle pricker, salving bowl, tar pan and marker, a conical milk churn, shepherd's crook, brine pot
- Items relating to traditional dance, music, games, events, shows and festivals e.g. a wallops set
- Examples of domestic textiles such as quilts and patterns, house decoration & lighting.

4.6 Archaeology and Numismatics

The Dales Countryside Museum wishes to build upon its existing holdings to represent significant and regional characteristics of the archaeological record of the Dales. As a result of limited display space we will concentrate on collecting objects and assemblages that tell the story of the people of the Dales from earliest times to the present day, covering Prehistoric, Roman, Anglian, Anglo-Scandinavian and Medieval periods.

There is a presumption that newly acquired material will be accompanied by reliable locality data (at least a 6 figure grid reference, contextual information and all accompanying documentary and digital archive). We will acquire archaeological material through donation and where feasible, purchase. All potential donors should follow the archaeological deposition guidelines.

4.6.1 Sources of new acquisitions will include:

- Existing collections amassed by individual collectors.
- Material found during community and small scale excavation, survey or by other means.
- Individual objects which are often offered to the museum following an enquiry.
- Treasure – objects will continue to be purchased through the DCMS treasure process if they meet all other policy criteria.

Items we wish to acquire:

- A select group of archaeological finds relating to Bainbridge Roman Fort that present a broad picture of life there at the time of the Romans.
- Items from the Medieval period
- Items from the Anglo-Scandinavian period.

4.7 Natural Science

The Dales Countryside Museum wishes to provide opportunities for people to learn about the ecology, biodiversity and relationship between people and the natural world, specifically in relation to the Yorkshire Dales National Park. However, because of limited staffing and space we will achieve this by means other than collecting.

4.8 Geology

The geological evolution of the Dales underpins the social history, wildlife and biodiversity of the area. It is therefore our intention to collect, modestly, fossils and associated contextual material from the Yorkshire Dales area. We will consider acquiring fossil material from adjacent to the Dales National Park if it will enrich our understanding of the geology of the area. There is a presumption that newly acquired material will be accompanied by reliable locality data, contextual information and accompanying documentation.

4.8.1 We will acquire geological specimens through donation. Sources of new acquisitions will include:

- Existing collections amassed by individual collectors.
- Material from the region that has been described, cited or figured in scientific literature.

4.8.2 With few exceptions, much of the scientific value of geological specimens lies in their associated geographical and geological context. It will normally not be our policy to acquire specimens without adequate documentation, unless they have overwhelming display or historical interest.

4.9 Ceramics

This section of the acquisition policy deals with all non-archaeological ceramics. We would like to acquire a representative range of ceramics made or used within the Yorkshire Dales National Park and that reflect social change.

4.10 Costume and textiles

The costume and textile collection is limited. It does not reflect subjects such as the historic economic diversity of the Dales, changes in technology, taste and trade. We would therefore seek to acquire items that contribute to the presentation of this subject, for example female and male dress of employees and employers in the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries. We recognise that such items are extremely rare and that it is unlikely that we will be able to acquire them.

- Hand knitting businesses exist within the Dales today and it would be prudent to acquire examples of items produced today.
- Quilt patterns and rag rugs.

4.11 Art and craft

We will collect both historic work that reflects the unique cultural, landscape and wildlife heritage of the Dales and contemporary work created as a direct response to the collection and the themes of the Museum and the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

4.12 Dialect Poetry

We will seek to acquire poetry in both the written and spoken form via the donation of recordings and where feasible, oral history.

4.13 Artefacts relating to the geographic area described and which date from the Prehistoric period to the present day will be considered for acquisition, particularly material dating from the post Prehistoric period up to and including the Medieval period. The period from the 1950s to the present day is not well represented and it is intended that this gap be filled via the collection of ephemera, photographs and oral history recordings. The latter will be collected in accordance with the practical and ethical guidelines laid down by the Oral History Society. This collection however, has its own procedures and requirements and for the time being will continue to exist independently of the main museum collection.

4.14 Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

4.14.1 The museum recognises that the principles on which priorities for rationalisation and disposal are determined will be through a formal review process that identifies which collections are included and excluded from the review. The outcome of review and any subsequent rationalisation will not reduce the quality or significance of the collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.

4.14.2 The procedures used will meet professional standards. The process will be documented, open and transparent. There will be clear communication with key stakeholders about the outcomes and the process.

4.14.3 Areas for future consideration will be duplicate items, particularly those relating to mining, sewing and domestic work.

4.15 Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

4.15.1 The museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

4.16 Collecting policies of other museums

4.16.1 The museum will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

4.16.2 Specific reference is made to the following museum(s)/organisation(s):

The Craven Museum, Skipton, particularly in relation to archaeology of the Craven area;
The Richmondshire Museum, Richmond;
The Georgian Theatre Royal Museum, Richmond;
The Green Howards Museum, Richmond
The Yorkshire Museum, York, particularly in relation to its North Yorkshire-wide collecting policy;
Upper Wharfedale Folk Museum, Grassington;
Museum of North Craven Life, Settle

4.17 Archival holdings

4.17.1 The collection includes farm account books, ledgers, letters and other archive material relevant to the themes above.

4.17.2 Any material offered for acquisition is considered in relation to the collecting policy of North Yorkshire Archives, Northallerton.

4.18 Acquisition

4.18.1 The policy for agreeing major acquisitions (such as those resulting from the closure of a Museum) or those outside the current stated policy is that they will only be made in very exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the YDNPA, having regard to the interests of other museums. The Museum Manager in consultation with the Museum Officer and Collections Assistant is authorised to acquire individual items that meet the specifics identified within the Collections Development Policy.

4.18.2 The museum will not acquire any object or specimen unless it is 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).

4.18.3 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 November 1 2002, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body 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.

4.19 Human remains

4.19.1 As the museum holds or intends 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.

4.20 Biological and geological material

4.20.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, the museum 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.

4.21 Archaeological material

4.21.1 The museum will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the governing body or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.

4.21.2 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 (i.e. the Coroner for Treasure) as set out in the Treasure Act 1996 (as amended by the Coroners & Justice Act 2009).

4.22 Exceptions

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

- acting as an externally approved repository of last resort for material of local (UK) origin
- acting with the permission of authorities with the requisite jurisdiction in the country of origin

In these cases the museum will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. The museum will document when these exceptions occur.

4.23 Spoliation

4.23.1 The museum 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.

4.24 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

4.24.1 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'.

4.25 Disposal procedures

4.25.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedures on disposal.

4.25.2 The governing body will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.

4.25.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, the museum 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.

4.25.4 When disposal is motivated by curatorial reasons the procedures outlined below will be followed and the method of disposal may be by gift, sale, exchange or as a last resort – destruction.

4.25.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the governing body only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the museum's collections and collections held by museums and other organisations collecting the same material or in related fields will be considered. Expert advice will be obtained and the views of stakeholders such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the museum will also be sought.

4.25.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, exchange, sale or destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use for the purposes of the collections or for reasons of health and safety), will be the responsibility of the governing body of the museum acting on the advice of professional curatorial staff, if any, and not of the curator or manager of the collection acting alone.

4.25.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection has been taken, priority will be given to retaining it within the public domain. It will therefore be offered in the first instance, by gift or sale, directly to other Accredited Museums likely to be interested in its acquisition.

4.25.8 If the material is not acquired by any Accredited museum to which it was offered as a gift or for sale, then the museum community at large will be advised of the intention to dispose of the material normally through a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

4.25.9 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of specimens or objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from other Accredited Museums. A period of at least two months will be allowed for an interest in acquiring the material to be expressed. At the end of this period, if no expressions of interest have been received, the museum may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain.

4.25.10 Any monies received by the museum governing body from the disposal of items will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the collections. This normally means the purchase of further acquisitions. In exceptional cases, improvements relating to the care of collections in order to meet or exceed Accreditation requirements relating to the risk of damage to and deterioration of the collections may be justifiable. 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 the Arts Council England.

4.25.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that they are spent in a manner compatible with the requirements of the Accreditation standard. Money must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection.

4.25.12 Full records will be kept of all decisions on disposals and the items 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 Spectrum procedure on deaccession and disposal.

4.26 Disposal by exchange

The nature of disposal by exchange means that the museum will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The governing body will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

4.26.1 In cases where the governing body wishes for sound curatorial reasons to exchange material directly with Accredited or non-Accredited museums, with other organisations or with individuals, the procedures in paragraphs 16.1-5 will apply.

4.26.2 If the exchange is proposed to be made with a specific Accredited museum, other Accredited museums which collect in the same or related areas will be directly notified of the proposal and their comments will be requested.

4.26.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, the museum will place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, or make an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist publications and websites (if appropriate).

4.26.4 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in the museum's collection and those intended to be acquired in exchange. A period of at least two months must be allowed for comments to be received. At the end of this period, the governing body must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

4.27 Disposal by destruction

If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the governing body may decide to destroy it.

4.27.1 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles or common specimens which lack significant provenance) where no alternative method of disposal can be found.

4.27.2 Destruction is also an acceptable method of disposal in cases where an object is in extremely poor condition, has high associated health and safety risks or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.

4.27.3 Where necessary, specialist advice will be sought to establish the appropriate method of destruction. Health and safety risk assessments will be carried out by trained staff where required.

4.27.4 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the museum workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

5 Dales Countryside Museum Documentation Policy

5.1 Introduction

Dales Countryside Museum holds collections relating to the people and places of the Yorkshire Dales. We are committed to making the collections accessible and information underpins every aspect of this work. The recording of collection information is central to being accountable for the collection, for its effective management, for its security and for providing access to the objects within it. Good documentation also encourages co-operation between museums and allows professional standards to be met. The Museum collections include both physical and digital collection items. Collection information is stored on collections databases or as hard copies.

5.2 Objectives

5.2.1 This policy sets out how the Museum will maintain professional standards and attain a high standard of documentation and collections information management. It demonstrates how we will strengthen the security of the collections through accurate collections information and how we will maintain accountability for collections and collections information.

5.3 Definition

5.3.1 Collections information is all the information that we collect, create, hold and maintain about our collection and/or collected items. This information can include a broad range of knowledge, such as interpretation, stories, research and recorded conversation.

5.4 Principles

5.4.1 We will be fully accountable for all objects that enter, or are already within, the Museum.

5.4.2 We will create and maintain up-to-date information according to the procedures outlined in SPECTRUM and will seek advice where necessary from Museum Development North.

5.4.3 We will ensure that legal ownership and copyright are obtained and recorded for all newly accessioned items, and that due diligence paperwork is created and maintained.

5.4.4 Items will be documented so that we know the permanent or temporary locations of all items held by the Museum.

5.4.5 We will respect and protect the confidentiality of the data in our care.

5.4.6 We will undertake regular reviews of the collection management databases to ensure they are fit for purpose and that collection information is appropriately safeguarded against potential future obsolescence of the systems.

5.5 Specific Ethical and Legislative Considerations

5.5.1 All our data is held securely, and the security of the collection management databases will be maintained in line with the Data Protection Act (2018). We will comply with all relevant legislation e.g. Freedom of Information (2000) when responding to requests for information, especially confidential data such as donor information, environmental information, valuations or site details, on a case by case basis, and in accordance with the applicable legislation and any legal agreements or conditions of gift.

5.6 Acquisition Records

5.6.1 All items entering the Museum will be issued with a receipt and entry number at the time of entry. We will capture information concerning legal ownership, copyright holders and will follow our accession procedure before allocating and maintaining a unique number for each accession.

5.6.2 We will create and maintain good quality and up-to-date information on the collections management database which conforms to appropriate national and international standards for collection items.

5.6.3 Information will be recorded for each object or group of objects sufficient to allow unequivocal physical identification of that group of objects and provide full accountability and accessibility to the collections. This will include:

- Object number
- Number of parts or specimens
- Object name or title
- Museum storage location
- Legal ownership history and details
- Copyright information
- Geographical provenance (for scientific, natural history and archaeological items)
- Additional information required to uniquely identify an object or group of objects in accordance with our Accessioning procedure.

5.6.4 Where reasonably possible we will create a digital image of each collection item or group of items as the items are Accessioned.

5.6.5 We will preserve all primary collection-related data even when superseded by new information.

5.6.6 We will enhance basic records as more information becomes available via research and use of the collection.

5.7 Audit and Accountability

5.7.1 We will ensure that the collection management databases are the primary tools for creating and managing collections information and items for which the Museum is legally responsible.

5.7.2 We will continue to digitise older paper records as time and resources allow.

5.7.3 We will keep copies of paper records and collection information in secure storage locations.

5.7.4 We will ensure that all data is traceable through an audit trail including who created or edited it.

5.7.5 Entry, location, movement and exit documentation will be maintained for all items that enter, move within or exit the Museum for whatever purpose, regardless of the ownership status.

5.8 Physical Verification

5.8.1 Physical verification is the process whereby the Museum establishes, at a given point time, the physical presence and location of a particular object/specimen in its care. Details of gaps and backlogs of documentation are maintained where relevant. A plan to complete cataloguing gaps, particularly with regard to the Yorkshire Dales Mining Museum collection is in place and will be progressed as resources permit.

5.8.2 We will undertake the physical verification of our collections by taking a project-based approach. This will entail the systematic verification of areas of the collection to suit the needs of broader projects, storage relocations, exhibitions and research projects.

5.8.3 Physical verification of our collections will be undertaken during use, e.g. the recording of new movements during loan, exhibition, conservation, photography, research or enquiries.

5.8.4 The outcome of the verification process will be recorded on our collections management databases and may be accompanied by paper records, e.g. movement forms.

6 Dales Countryside Museum Access Policy

6.1 Introduction

Dales Countryside Museum aims to welcome all visitors by creating an engaging, inspiring and welcoming environment. The Museum seeks to minimise any physical, intellectual, sensory, geographic, cultural, financial, emotional barriers that prevent potential audiences from enjoying, participating in and benefiting from the facilities and services provided by the Museum.

Through our events programme, Young Creatives project, Young Archaeologists' group and learning programme, there are opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to get involved. Activities are planned to be enjoyable and provide an insight into and understanding of the cultural heritage of the Yorkshire Dales. It is hoped they will encourage a deeper interest and appreciation of the history and special qualities of the area and foster a wish to return.

As an Authority, the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority values diversity; recognising the strengths it brings to our communities and workforce. By fostering an inclusive culture, we enable a broader range of perspectives, experiences and skills, creating a productive environment and positive experiences for all.

6.2 Scope and status of this policy

This policy applies to the provision of the Dales Countryside Museum services to the public. It encompasses how people can see, use and reference the Museum collection, how the collections are interpreted, how people gain access to the museum buildings and site and how we share information about the collection and the activities on offer.

6.3 Barriers to access

6.3.1 Physical: We enable people with physical disabilities, the elderly or infirm and those caring for children and young people to connect with the museum collections and access the service offered.

6.3.2 Intellectual: We recognise that people of all ages have different learning styles and we will meet this by interpreting the collection in different ways.

6.3.3 Sensory: We will build a range of different sensory experiences into the activities, exhibitions and displays we devise.

6.3.4 Geographic: We are aware that some people will live too far from the museum to gain physical access to the activities and collections. Within our available resources we offer to take collections out to groups and schools, we share our collections database via the Museum Data Service website and provide access to information in different forms via our website.

6.3.5 Cultural: We recognise cultural differences and share different cultural and lived experiences and issues relating to the cultural heritage of the Dales through our programmes and exhibitions.

6.3.6 Financial: We aim to minimise financial barriers to the use of the Museum and the collections where possible. We aim to offer a value for money admission price, free access for children to the site and one free learning activity per year for school pupils.

6.3.7 Emotional: We value the people who work for us and will ensure that they are equipped and empowered to provide professional services to the public and able to make all visitors feel welcome and valued.

6.4 Collections

DCM is committed to providing public access to the DCM collection and information associated with those collections, to promote understanding and enjoyment of the heritage of the Yorkshire Dales. We will provide sustainable access to collections, with any access demands that impact upon the long-term care of collection items being managed in accordance with the outcomes of a collection care risk assessment.

We provide welcoming staff and opportunities for audiences to engage with the collections and themes of the YDNP in different ways. This includes events, displays and temporary exhibitions, study days, volunteering opportunities, hands-on workshops, learning sessions and object loan boxes for handling.

By partnering with other organisations and businesses we tailor our programmes to meet the needs of specific groups when exploring collections. We promote our activities and collections through social media and the DCM website.

Access to the archive is supported by our volunteer team two days a week and requests to view collections can be made by appointment.

6.5 Interpretation

DCM interprets the collection in various ways including through interpretive panels, labels, age related hands-on activities, film, audio, art and craft, storytelling, art installations, temporary exhibitions and online resources.

The Museum is signed up to Kids in Museums and works in accordance with their manifesto. We provide SEND resources for families to use on site and symbols are used throughout the museum and on the route planner to help families have a positive experience and make connections with the collections.

We offer large print guides and use of the RNIB PenFriends for customers to access sound labels.

6.6 Building and site

The buildings and site are audited every two years. We follow national standards, ethical codes and best practice guidelines including, but not exclusively, BS8300 Design of buildings and their approaches to meet the needs of people with disabilities, BS 8477:2007 Code of practice for customer service, PAS 197:2009 Code of practice for cultural collections management and BSI PAS78 Guide to good practice in commissioning accessible websites.

We provide a visual story on the website to enable visitors to familiarise themselves in advance of a visit to the museum.

6.7 Identifying needs

We consult with our customers through surveys, family feedback cards, exhibitions comments books, activity evaluation and mailchimp surveys. Through this we identify our core audience and potential non-users. We carry out surveys of non-users to explore the barriers which may be preventing people from visiting, engaging with or accessing the DCM facilities, services and collections.

We work with access consultants including Access the Dales and the RNIB to identify ways to improve the visitor experience.

7. Dales Countryside Museum Collections Care and Conservation Policy

7.1 Purpose

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

- The preservation of the collections 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 museums' resources

7.2 Context

7.2.1 The museum cares for its collections in accordance with Benchmarks in Collections Care, or other approved standards, within the limits of its resources.

7.2.2 The safety and preservation of the collection will be considered 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.

7.3 People

7.3.1 The care of the collections is the responsibility of everyone who works in or visits the museum. Any concerns regarding the collections should be reported to the Museum Manager.

7.3.2 The museum trains all staff and volunteers who handle the collections in the course of their work. No untrained personnel are allowed to handle items from the accessioned collection.

7.3.3 Researchers or other visitors working with the collections will be briefed on how to handle the items they are working on and will be supervised at all times.

7.3.4 The museum has access to freelance conservators for specialist advice. Any concerns relating to the collection are referred by the Museum Manager to an appropriately qualified conservator.

7.3.5 The museum will check the suitability of conservators chosen to work or advise on the collections. A professionally accredited conservator, a conservator listed on the Conservation Register or on the Heritage Crafts register will normally be chosen.

7.3.6 No item in the collections will be 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.

7.3.7 The museum will keep detailed records of all treatments carried out on objects, including the name and contact details of the person or company.

7.4 The Buildings

7.4.1 The museum recognises that the maintenance of its buildings is fundamental to the preservation of both the building and collection and endeavours to keep the buildings in a suitable condition. The museum's collection is stored and displayed in the Museum building and Railway Carriages, which are owned and maintained by the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (YDNPA).

7.4.2 The Estates Officer (YDNPA) is working to a 10-year capital development plan and manages an annual maintenance budget for the upkeep of the museum buildings. Annual inspections are carried out to plan any remedial or maintenance work required.

7.5 The Collections

7.5.1 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. It does not contain any working historic items that are currently operated.

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

- Awareness of vulnerable objects
- Identifying threats to the collection
- 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

Collection Management Framework

Date Approved:

Renewal date: 31 March 2031