

# Collections Care & Conservation Policy



**Name of museum:** Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum

**Name of governing body:** Warwick District Council

**Date on which this policy was approved by governing body:** August 2018

## **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:** July 2023

## **General**

Caring for the collections is a fundamental duty of all museums. Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum's collections care policy is based on a combination of preventative and remedial conservation.

Collections care and conservation will be undertaken by or in consultation with a professional conservator.

Care and conservation of the collections will take place in compliance with all appropriate laws and in line with best practice and the Museums Association's *Code of Ethics for Museums*.

Collections care and conservation issues will be communicated to staff via email, Daily Diary sheet, Team Diary meetings and Staff meetings.

Collections care and conservation issues will be communicated to users via, for example:

- labels in cases where objects have been removed / on any collections care equipment
- verbally by Customer Service Assistants, Duty Managers and other gallery staff
- press releases, website, social media and written articles where appropriate

## **Collections Condition Overview**

The MLA's *Benchmarks in Collections Care* will be used to assess the care of collections stored at the Royal Pump Rooms and the external store, and on display at the Royal Pump Rooms and Town Hall.

## **Environmental Monitoring**

A programme of collecting, recording, evaluating and monitoring temperature, Relative Humidity and light levels will be maintained as follows:

- Trend sensors installed as part of the Building Energy Management System keep a constant

record of temperature and relative humidity in Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum. Weekly printouts in the form of graphs are made and retained.

- Hanwell dataloggers record temperature and relative humidity every five minutes. This data is downloaded monthly and appended to a continuous log on the I drive (I:\dataloggers).
- Light readings are taken monthly and recorded on the I drive (I:\Light Readings).

### **Environmental Control**

Preventative conservation involves the control of environmental factors to stop or minimise the deterioration of objects in the collection. A system of environmental control will be maintained using the following:

- The Building Energy Management System controls the temperature and relative humidity of Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum. Should this fail to achieve the set targets at any time an alarm is sent to Warwick District Council's Energy Manager who organises remedial action.
- Mobile de-/humidifiers are used to supplement the Building Energy Management System in the stores and Temporary Exhibition Gallery as necessary. These are checked daily.
- There are no windows in the galleries or stores of Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum and light levels in display areas are controlled by moving or dimming lights. Light-sensitive objects on display are identified and regularly changed.

### **Provision of suitable building**

Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum is housed in the Grade II\* listed Royal Pump Rooms. The building was refurbished in 1997-99 to create high quality display and storage areas for the collections. The building is beside the river Leam and river levels are monitored and Floodline consulted if there appears to be a risk of flooding. Precautions against floods include flood barriers to protect the stores and display areas from river floodwater.

### **Housekeeping**

Cleaning and pest monitoring programmes are in place to guard against damage caused by pollutants and infestations. Objects that are vulnerable to infestation have been identified and regular checks are made. A quarantine area is used to house and monitor objects when they first come into Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum.

### **Disaster Planning**

An Emergency Manual exists and is regularly updated.

### **Remedial Conservation**

- Visual inspections are used to identify objects in need of remedial conservation.
- Priority is given to the conservation of objects for display or use.
- Leamington Spa Art Gallery & Museum will only use conservators on the Conservation Register operated by the Institute of Conservation or conservators with a proven reputation.
- All remedial conservation will be recorded on Modes Complete and documentation filed and retained.

### **References**

Collections Development Policy  
Documentation Policy  
Collections Care and Conservation Plan  
Emergency Manual