



Collections Development Policy

Version 2, January 2021

Written for the Crossness Engines Trust Board
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Crossness Engines Trust

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1. Introduction

1.1 Purpose

This policy was written in January 2021 by Alexandra Dolan (Museum and Archives Manager) for the Crossness Engines Trust (CET) Board. It is an updated version of the July 2015 Collections Development Policy, and supersedes it. This policy outlines which objects the CET will, and will not, aim to acquire for its museum collection. It is based on the Arts Council England Museum Accreditation collections development policy template, and was written as part of Crossness's preparation for accreditation.¹ It is intended for use by museum staff and potential donors.

1.2 Scope

This policy covers archive material and artefacts held by the Crossness Engines Trust in its museum and handling collections.

1.3 What is collections development?

Collections development is '... a series of functions and activities ... that support the active development of [a] collection ...'² Actively guiding the collecting aims of the museum is important for meeting user needs, and filling gaps in the current collection. It also helps to manage resources, as caring for material which is '... not part of the collecting remit ... is contributing to collection care costs.'³

2. CET Museum Aims

Collections development helps to achieve the aims of the Crossness Engines Trust:

- To give a wide range of audiences an enjoyable, stimulating and educational experience of the industrial heritage and steam engines of the Victorian age, and their contribution to the public health of London.
- To hold collections in trust for the benefit of the public.

3. An Overview of the Collection

The Crossness Engines Trust began collecting artefacts and archive material in 1994. The principle donors are Thames Water, the London Museum of Water and Steam, and former Crossness employees and their relatives. The Museum's collections bring to life the evolution of sanitary technology for the many visitors who flock to Crossness on open days, and seeing the restored beam engine in action brings hours of enjoyment to visitors of all ages. The archive and library materials are a key resource for a variety of research enquiries, from Crossness volunteers wishing to see engineering drawings to aid their restoration work; to family historians delighted to find their great grandfather mentioned in the Metropolitan Board of Works minute books. The ability of the archive material to bring to life the stories of the people who lived and worked at Crossness, sometimes in their own words, is a source of fascination for both archive staff and researchers.

3.1 Artefacts

The museum has over 200 nineteenth and twentieth century artefacts.

¹ Arts Council England, 'collections development policy template', December 2015, <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/document/collections-development-policy-template>.

² The National Archives, 'Collections Development Frameworks and Guidance, Understanding Collections Development', March 2018, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/understanding-collections-development.pdf>, p.2.

³ The National Archives, 'Collections Development Frameworks and Guidance, Understanding Collections Development', March 2018, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/understanding-collections-development.pdf>, p.8.

Beam Engine House

The Grade 1 Listed Beam Engine House contains four Victorian triple expansion beam engines:

- *Prince Consort* – this engine has been fully restored.
- *Victoria* – this engine is currently under restoration.
- *Albert Edward* – this engine is unrestored.
- *Alexandra* – this engine is unrestored.

Triple Expansion Engine House

Crossley diesel engines and centrifugal pumps, installed c.1948.

Museum Store

- **Sanitary Ware** (toilet bowls, cisterns, bed pans, chamber pots, baths, basins and commodes, soap dishes, chain pulls, toilet paper, and toilet paper holders).
- **Models** which demonstrate various scientific principles, and scale models of sludge vessels and Crossness buildings.
- **Sludge Vessels** (a ship's bell).
- **Personal Items/Found Objects** (items relating to Sir Joseph Bazalgette, and objects owned by former workers).
- **Paintings and Photographs** (of Crossness and Sir Joseph Bazalgette).
- **Tools** (plumbing tools and accessories).
- **Furniture** (furniture originally at Crossness, e.g. a Windsor chair).
- **Natural History** (insects, and a mummified rat found on site).
- **Archaeological Material** found on site during excavation work.

Valve House

A display of engines and pumps, most of which were operational in the local area.

3.2 Archive Material

- **Reference library** of over 1,000 books, which cover topics such as engineering, Victorian London, and sanitation.
- **Official Records** (Metropolitan Board of Works minutes from 1850 to 1889; London County Council order books from 1899 to 1944; daily records of sewage treated from the 1920's to the 1960's).
- **Patents** (over 500 patents for sanitary ware items, ranging from advertising on toilet paper, to improvements in sewage treatment methods. These date from 1894 to 1949).
- **Media** (videos, CDs, slides, negatives, and photographs).
- **Sludge Vessel Records** (1960's - 1980's LCC memo books).
- **Staff Records** (sick book; information from former Crossness staff members and their families).
- **Publications** (newspaper articles; *The Record* (The Crossness Engines Trust newsletter); magazine articles; publications by industrial and historical societies).
- **Plans** (over 1,500 engineering drawings, site plans, and maps).

- **Digital Records** (photographs emailed by relatives of former Crossness workers).

4. Gaps in the Current Collection

4.1 Artefacts

While the artefact collection covers most aspects of sanitary ware development, there are some gaps, such as luxury 'Unitas' toilet pans, and ornately decorated toilet pans. Modern objects, such as a 'Portaloo', would also be useful for exhibitions examining the timeline of toilet manufacture.

4.2 Archive Material

There are several subjects which are currently under-represented in the archive collection:

- The lives of women and children at Crossness in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.
- Details of social events held at Crossness for staff and their families (e.g. dances and cricket matches).
- The impact of the First World War on Crossness and its staff.

5. Collecting policies of other institutions

5.1 The museum will consider the collecting policies of other museums and archives with similar collecting aims.

5.2 Archive collections should ideally be kept together at one institution – if Crossness is offered material which is already substantially collected at another institution, it will ask the other organisation if they are interested in acquiring the material.

5.3 Specific reference is made to the following:

Organisation	Collecting Remit	Overlap
London Museum of Water & Steam	'Diesel, electric, water and animal powered pumping engines.' ⁴	Engines and pumps.
Museum of London	'London's role as a global city; people, things and events uniquely associated with London; objects related to industry and creativity in London.' ⁵	Objects and archive material about London.
Bexley Heritage Trust	'Historic archive collections and family history resources relating to the London Borough of Bexley ... including records of local government and other statutory bodies in Bexley, all religious denominations, businesses, clubs and societies, individuals, families and estates, businesses, political parties, trade unions and schools.' ⁶	Objects and archive material about Crossness and its local area.
London Metropolitan Archive	'Original records relating to a) the City of London or b) the Greater London area which are London-wide in significance, particularly those of religious	Government (MBW, LCC, GLC) records related to Crossness; photographs of Crossness.

⁴ London Museum of Water & Steam, 'Our Engines', <https://waterandsteam.org.uk/our-engines/>.

⁵ Museum of London, 'Collections Development Policy' (2018), https://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/application/files/7115/5240/9439/Collections_Development_Policy_2018_final_formatted_v1.0_EXTERNAL.pdf, p.15.

⁶ Bexley Heritage Trust, 'Archive Centre Policies', <https://www.bexley.gov.uk/discover-bexley/archives-and-local-history/archive-policies/bexley-local-studies-and-archive-centre-policies>.

	bodies; private institutions, businesses, families and minority communities. ⁷	
Institution of Civil Engineers Archive	Drawings, photographs, notebooks, diaries, and letters, relating to civil engineering projects (e.g. canals, railways, bridges, sewers). ⁸	Engineering drawings and plans of Crossness, and the wider Metropolitan Main Drainage Scheme. Also, objects related to Sir Joseph Bazalgette.

6. Priorities for Future Collecting – Artefacts

6.1 Themes

The Trust is looking to collect artefacts relating to:

- Living and working at Crossness.
- Victorian London.
- Engines and pumps.
- Relevant notable people (such as Sir Joseph Bazalgette).
- Public health (especially water borne nineteenth century diseases such as cholera).
- Sanitation.

The Museum will actively aim to collect artefacts which fill the gaps identified in section 4.1, where it has the resources to do so.

The Trust's ability to care for an object, and its informational value, will be taken into account when considering the acceptance of new items.

6.2 Formats

The Museum will collect artefacts in a variety of formats, including:

- Ceramic.
- Wood.
- Metal.
- Plastic.
- Glass.

6.3 Handling Collection

The Museum also has a separate handling collection, which is not accessioned, and has been assembled for its educational value. It is stored separately from the main collection, and is used during school visits to support learning and outreach programmes.

6.4 Objects the CET will NOT collect

- Human remains.
- Biological or geological material.
- Any further archaeological material, unless it is found on site.
- Further items of furniture or natural history, unless they are of express relevance to the Crossness site.
- Objects which pose a risk to the health of staff and researchers.
- Duplicate items (which may be acquired for the handling collection, if appropriate).

⁷ London Metropolitan Archive, 'Collections Acquisition and Management Policy', <https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/things-to-do/history-and-heritage/london-metropolitan-archives/about-lma/collections-acquisition-and-management-policy>.

⁸ Institution of Civil Engineers Archive, 'Collection', <https://www.ice.org.uk/knowledge-and-resources/ice-library/ice-archive>.

6.5 Relevance of the Current Collection

The Collections Manager conducts regular collection reviews, and seeks approval from the Board to de-accession any objects which are not believed to be relevant to the collecting aims following approved disposal procedures (see section 9).

7. Priorities for Future Collecting – Archive Material

7.1 CET Records

The Trust will actively manage its own records. It will create a retention schedule, and a policy for transferring records to the Archive when they are no longer active. The archivist should be consulted about the potential value of records as archive material before any records due for review are destroyed. The archivist actively collects newsletters published by the Trust, and Board meeting minutes.

7.2 Other Records

The Crossness Archive aims to collect archive material relating to:

- Living and working at Crossness.
- Victorian London.
- Industrial archaeology.
- Engineering.
- Personalities involved in the sanitation of London (such as Sir Joseph Bazalgette and Edwin Chadwick).
- Public health (especially water borne nineteenth century diseases such as cholera).
- Sanitation.

A key priority is expanding the Archive's existing family history resources (records about the people who lived and worked at Crossness, as well as photographs and plans of the site). The Museum will actively aim to collect archive material which fills the gaps identified in section 4.2, where it has the resources to do so (e.g. by asking questions about women and children who lived at Crossness when interviewing former residents).

The Trust's resources (i.e. storage space and finances) will be taken into account when considering the acceptance of new items, to ensure that all objects have adequate care. The informational value of potential acquisitions for researchers will also be considered.

The Museum will:

- Catalogue these materials according to SPECTRUM procedures, and make them accessible to the public (while meeting copyright and data protection legislation).
- Provide suitable conditions for the storage and preservation of all of the archive materials held by the Trust.

7.3 Formats

The Museum will collect archival material in a variety of formats, including:

- Paper records.
- Oversized items (maps/plans).

- Books.
- Photographs.
- Negatives on a polyester film base.
- Slides.
- Videos.
- CDs and DVDs.
- Digital records - the Museum aims to collect digital records where relevant to the collecting themes, but is aware the infrastructure for storing and migrating digital material needs to be upgraded.

7.4 Items the CET will NOT collect

- Objects which are prohibitively expensive to look after, and/or need specialist storage conditions (e.g. cold storage) which Crossness cannot provide. Examples include moving image film, and historical sound formats (wax cylinders, open reel tapes and shellac records).
- Obsolete formats, when we do not have the necessary equipment or expertise to access the information they contain (e.g. floppy disks).
- Items in poor condition, or degrading materials which could be hazardous to human health, such as:
 - Active mould.
 - Insect damage.
 - Water damage.
- Cellulose Nitrate film, which would be a fire risk to rest of the collection.
- Duplicate items (which may be acquired for the handling collection, if appropriate).
- Copies of archive material held at another archive, or available online, as this would breach copyright legislation.

7.5 Relevance of the Current Collection

The archives are mostly relevant to the collecting aims outlined in this policy, but there are some items (e.g. a Eurotunnel poster) which are not pertinent. A collection review will help to identify these items. Archive material found to be irrelevant to the collection aims may be de-accessioned following disposal procedures (see section 9). These objects will be offered to other institutions with more relevant collecting aims.

8. Acquisition

8.1 The Board will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

8.2 The Board 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.

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

8.4 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. Space and resources will be taken into consideration to ensure the Museum can provide the best possible care to all accessioned items.

8.5 The Museum will endeavour to secure a transfer of title for every item it acquires. Where this is not possible, objects may still be accepted, as long as the details of ownership and copyright are listed clearly on the object entry form, and in the catalogue entry. Any restrictions imposed by the donor should also be recorded.

8.6 The Museum will not acquire any object unless it is satisfied that the object 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. 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, and the Dealing in Cultural Objects (Offences) Act 2003, the Museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The Board 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.

8.7 Objects are only accepted as a loan in exceptional circumstances, for example as key items for display in an exhibition.

9. Disposal

9.1 The written approval of the Board will be secured before any objects are deaccessioned.

9.2 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.

9.3 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.

9.4 The Museum recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal. The Museum will not undertake disposal motivated principally by financial reasons.

9.5 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal.

9.6 The Board will confirm that it is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be considered.

9.7 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.

9.8 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.

9.9 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the Board 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.

9.10 A decision to dispose of an 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 Board 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.

9.11 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.

9.12 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).

9.13 The announcement relating to gift or sale will indicate the number and nature of objects involved, and the basis on which the material will be transferred to another institution. Preference will be given to expressions of interest from 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.

9.14 Any monies received by the Museum Board 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 Arts Council England. 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.

9.15 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.

Disposal by exchange

9.16 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 Board will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.

9.17 In cases where the Board 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 9.5 to 9.9 will apply.

9.18 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.

9.19 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.

9.20 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the 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 Board must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

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

9.22 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.

9.23 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.

9.24 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.

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

10. Access to Archive Material

Please refer to the CET Collections Access Policy for further details. The following access implications will be considered during acquisition, and any access restrictions will be recorded on the object entry form, and the catalogue entry:

- **Donor Wishes** – restrictions agreed at the time of acquisition, e.g. whether an item can be exhibited.
- **Data Protection** – sensitive personal information, such as medical records, will be closed until 100 years after the date of birth of the data subject. The 2018 Data Protection Act will be complied with.
- **Copyright** – restrictions outlined in the 1988 Copyright, Designs and Patents Act will be complied with.

11. Spoilation

The Museum will follow 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.

12. Exceptions

Exceptions to the above clauses will only be made 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.

13. Approval

This policy was written in January 2021 by Alexandra Dolan, and was approved during the Crossness Engines Trust Board meeting on 19/01/2021.

Name of Trustee Board Representative:	
Signature:	
Date:	

14. Review

This policy will be reviewed every five years, and the revised version will be submitted to the Crossness Engines Trust Board for approval.

This policy is due for review in January 2026.

15. Bibliography

Arts Council England, 'Collections Development Policy Template', December 2015, <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/document/collections-development-policy-template>.

Bexley Heritage Trust, 'Archive Centre Policies', <https://www.bexley.gov.uk/discover-bexley/archives-and-local-history/archive-policies/bexley-local-studies-and-archive-centre-policies>.

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The National Archives, 'Collections Development Frameworks and Guidance, Understanding Collections Development', March 2018, <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/archives/understanding-collections-development.pdf>.

The National Archives, 'Deaccessioning and Disposal, Guidance for Archive Services', 2015, <https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/documents/Deaccessioning-and-disposal-guide.pdf>.

Appendix – Collecting Aims Summary

Copies of this summary sheet will be displayed in the archive room and museum store, for reference by staff to facilitate appraisal decisions.

We want to collect:

- ✓ Crossness Engines Trust Records.
- ✓ Archive material and artefacts about living and working at Crossness, especially:
 - The women and children who lived at Crossness.
 - How World War One affected Crossness and its staff.
 - Social events held at Crossness for staff and their families (e.g. dances and cricket matches).
- ✓ Artefacts which fill the following gaps in the current collection:
 - High-end, ornate toilet bowls.
 - Modern examples of toilets (e.g. a 'Portaloo').
- ✓ Archive material and artefacts related to relevant notable people, such as Sir Joseph Bazalgette.
- ✓ Records about the London sewage system.
- ✓ Archive material and artefacts related to public health (especially water borne nineteenth century diseases such as cholera).
- ✓ Archive material and artefacts about Victorian London.
- ✓ Archive material and artefacts about engines and pumps.
- ✓ Archive material and artefacts related to Sanitation, drainage, and plumbing.

We DON'T want to collect:

- ✗ Items suspected to have been obtained illegally.
- ✗ Duplicates of existing items in the collection (which may be acquired for the handling collection, if appropriate).
- ✗ Records which don't fit with our collecting policy.
- ✗ Natural history artefacts.
- ✗ Human remains.
- ✗ Biological or geological material.
- ✗ Any further archaeological material, unless it is found on site.
- ✗ Further items of furniture or natural history, unless they are of express relevance to the Crossness site.
- ✗ Moving image film.
- ✗ Historical sound formats (wax cylinders, open reel tapes and shellac records).
- ✗ Floppy disks.
- ✗ Cellulose Nitrate film.
- ✗ Copies of archive material held at another archive, or available online.
- ✗ Items in poor condition, or which pose a risk to the health of staff and researchers, such as:
 - Active mould.
 - Insect damage.
 - Water damage.