



POLICY

COLLECTIONS DEVELOPMENT (ACQUISITION AND DISPOSAL)

Name of museum:	Imperial War Museums (IWM): IWM London, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ Churchill War Rooms, King Charles Street, London SW1A 2AQ HMS <i>Belfast</i> , The Queen's Walk, Tooley Street, London SE1 2JH IWM Duxford, Duxford Airfield, Cambridgeshire CB22 4QR IWM North, The Quays, Trafford Wharf Road, Manchester M17 1TZ
Name of governing body:	The Trustees of the Imperial War Museum
Date of approval by governing body:	25 September 2024
Date of next review:	24 September 2029

Policy review procedure

The Collections Development Policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years. 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 IWM's collections.

1. Relationship to other relevant policies/ plans of the organisation

1.1 IWM is a global authority on conflict and its impact on people's lives. We collect objects and stories that give an insight into people's experiences of war, we preserve them for future generations and we bring them to today's audiences in the most powerful way possible at our five branches (IWM London, IWM North, IWM Duxford, Churchill War Rooms and HMS *Belfast*) and across our digital channels. By giving a platform to these stories, we aim to help people understand why we go to war and the effect that conflict has on people's lives.

Using the personal stories and experiences in our unique collections, our objective is to help people, as global citizens, make sense of an increasingly unpredictable world. We do this, in part, by helping people have a deeper understanding of the connections between past conflict and the contemporary world. This is about exploring the way war has shaped the local and the global, about appreciating diverse views and about challenging our audiences to become ready to engage in difficult decisions for themselves, their communities and their world.

Our vision is to be a leader in developing and communicating a deeper understanding of the causes, course and consequences of war.

1.2 The Trustees will ensure that both acquisition and disposal are carried out openly and with transparency.

- 1.3 By definition, IWM has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The Trustees therefore accept the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collections, or the disposal of any items in IWM's collections.
- 1.4 Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5 IWM 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. IWM's Collections Management Policy and procedures govern this area of operation and accountability. IWM will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.6 IWM will undertake due diligence and make every effort not to acquire, whether by purchase, gift, bequest or exchange, any object or specimen unless the Trustees or responsible officer is satisfied that IWM can acquire a valid title to the item in question.
- 1.7 In exceptional cases, disposal may be motivated principally by financial reasons. The method of disposal will therefore be by sale and the procedures outlined below will be followed. In cases where disposal is motivated by financial reasons, the Trustees will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:
- the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collections
 - the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)
 - the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored
 - extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
 - the item under consideration lies outside IWM's established core collections
- Any sale must also be informed by the provisions in section 16 of this Policy.
- 1.8 This statement defines the Acquisition and Disposal Policy of the Trustees of the Imperial War Museum. The Policy applies to all sites and all branches of IWM, and applies equally to analogue and digital items.
- 1.9 Two areas of policy and procedure are directly related, namely Entry and Loans.
- 1.9.1 IWM's Entry Procedure controls the management and documentation of items and groups of items which enter IWM's custody for the first time. Items which are offered to IWM for acquisition will be assessed before they are approved to enter IWM's custody, except in exceptional circumstances. Items may be acquired and held at Entry if they are not suitable for accessioning, per paragraph 4.4.
- 1.9.2 IWM's Loans In Procedure controls the subset of items within IWM's custody for which IWM has taken temporary responsibility for an agreed and fixed duration and no transfer of title has taken place. This policy does not apply to items leaving IWM for Loans Out whether short or long term; that is controlled by the Loans Out Procedure.
- 1.10 The primary purpose of this Policy is to assist the Trustees to fulfil the statutory requirements of the museum. IWM is governed by three specific pieces of legislation. The first of these, the Imperial War Museum Act, 1920, established IWM's Board of Trustees and staffing and enabled the Board to acquire land and objects, dispose of duplicate objects and lend objects. The Imperial War Museum Act, 1955, amended membership of the Board of Trustees and specified IWM's powers of lending. The powers of lending donated items were limited by the requirement

to seek consent from the donor within 15 years of acquisition. The Museums and Galleries Act, 1992, then extended IWM's ability to form companies. The Policy is also intended to meet the requirements of Arts Council England's Accreditation Scheme and to be a public document as required.

2. History of the collections

IWM was founded on 5 March 1917 when the War Cabinet approved a proposal by Sir Alfred Mond MP for the creation of a national war museum to record the events still taking place during the Great War. The intention was to collect and display material as a record of everyone's experiences during that war - civilian and military - and to commemorate the sacrifices of all sections of society.

The museum's name was changed in November 1917 at the request of the India and Dominions Sub-Committee, who wanted a name that ensured 'India and the Dominions would feel that their part in the War would be permanently commemorated in the centre of the Empire.'

IWM was formally established by Act of Parliament in 1920 and a governing Board of Trustees was appointed. The museum was opened in the Crystal Palace by King George V on 9 June 1920, by which time the collections held over 150,000 items. Despite the distance from Central London, by 1924 four million visitors had visited the galleries.

However, as the lease neared its expiry date in March 1924, it became clear that the museum would have to dramatically downsize. The new venue was the Western Galleries of the Imperial Institute in South Kensington, a space less than a quarter the size of Crystal Palace. A large proportion of the museum's exhibits were disposed of and its entire aircraft collection was loaned to the Science Museum. The new galleries opened on Armistice Day 1924.

On 7 July 1936, the Duke of York reopened the museum in its present home on Lambeth Road, formerly the central portion of Bethlem Royal Hospital.

With the onset of war in 1939 IWM's remit was extended to include the Second World War. While a programme of collecting got underway, vulnerable collections were evacuated to stores outside London, and the museum was closed to the public from September 1940 to November 1946. Almost all the exhibits survived the war, despite more than 40 incendiary hits on the building.

The Korean War led to a further redefinition of IWM's terms of reference to include all conflicts in which British or Commonwealth forces had been involved since 1914. IWM has therefore continued to collect every type of evidence documenting its very broad remit. Its collections are vast and rich, and in addition to its role as a museum, IWM is also a national archive of written and audio-visual material, and a centre for research.

During the 1970s and 1980s IWM underwent a period of unprecedented expansion, with the establishment of three new branches – IWM Duxford in 1976, HMS *Belfast* in 1978 and Churchill War Rooms in 1984. The fifth member of the IWM family, IWM North, opened in Trafford, Greater Manchester, on 5 July 2002. All of these branches contain objects from the collection – indeed, HMS *Belfast* is part of the collection. The vast majority of the museum's objects are stored at IWM Duxford.

3. An overview of current collections

In order to explain the story of modern conflict, its causes, course and consequences, IWM collects from 1900 to the present day. This collection, its potential unlocked and enhanced by the applied expertise of all our collections professionals, is by definition the museum's most precious asset. It is a key part of our national and international heritage, of vital importance to shaping the cultural-identity landscape of our audiences.

These audiences are not, and have never been, static. Meeting their needs now and in the future requires a commitment to agile approaches to collecting and an aspiration to represent and interpret a richly diverse range of stories. Our audiences are diverse, and our collections development work is similarly diverse.

The collection is developed by curators who focus on different periods of the IWM remit, ensuring that acquisition, dispersal and research is targeted strategically. The majority of objects in our collection relate to First World War and early twentieth-century conflict and Second World War and mid twentieth-century conflict. Cold War and late twentieth-century conflict and Contemporary Conflict collections are smaller but growing. In addition to British and Commonwealth material, there are extensive holdings relating to allied and enemy forces.

Specialist collections professionals safeguard the integrity of an extremely diverse range of holdings, including art and object collections, archives of documents, film, photographs and sound recordings. Increasingly, we are collecting 'born digital'.

Art: 94,615 items

This exceptional collection is one of the most important representations of twentieth century British art in the world, and is rooted in the human experience of war. It includes many great works of art from the British government war art schemes of the First and Second World Wars, which employed artists of international standing, soldier artists and emerging modernist voices. These included Paul Nash, C R W Nevinson, John Singer Sargent, Sir William Orpen, Evelyn Dunbar and Dame Laura Knight. In the later twentieth century and today, IWM has continued to collect from and commission artists including Steve McQueen, Roddy Buchanan and Rosalind Nashashibi, and the collection reflects recent and contemporary conflicts including Northern Ireland, the Falklands, Bosnia, Iraq, Afghanistan and Libya. Important works from outside official schemes can also be found in the collection, by artists ranging from Edward Burra to Willie Doherty to Mahwish Chishty, and IWM also collects work by non-professional, unknown and unrecorded artists. An international collection of over 20,000 posters, along with popular prints, ephemera, postcards and other publicity materials, gives insight into the role of images of war in everyday life.

Objects: 152,856 items

The range of three-dimensional material is diverse, covering the full spectrum of objects associated with modern warfare. IWM's internationally renowned collection of vehicles, aircraft, vessels and aero engines illustrates the impact of technology on the conduct of modern conflicts. There is an important international collection of flags and uniforms with their associated badges and insignia, representing the armed services and institutions of Great Britain and the Commonwealth, and also Allies and former enemies. The collections include objects of personal significance relating to escape, prisoners of war and civilian internees. IWM holds trench art, battlefield souvenirs, commemorative objects, currency, toys and games, Kindertransport and Holocaust related items, home-front and peace-time items, orders, medals and decorations issued to service personnel and civilians, as well as an extensive collection of field and personal equipment used in twentieth and twenty-first-century warfare, including radios, cipher machines, radars, cameras and medical equipment. IWM holds major collections of modern firearms, edged weapons, trench clubs, concussive weapons, ordnance and munitions. HMS *Belfast* is an accessioned object in its own right and is subject to ongoing conservation assessment and treatment.

Sound recordings: 38,861 items

The sound collection is the largest oral history archive of its type in the world, with contributions from service personnel and non-combatants as well as significant holdings of speeches, sound effects, broadcasts, poetry and music. The range of material collected is vast with the bulk of the collection comprising oral history recordings with veterans of the First and Second World Wars. There is also substantial material relating to Britain and the Empire in the interwar period 1919-1939, conflicts since 1945 and the Holocaust. Interviewees are largely drawn from Great Britain, the former Empire and the Commonwealth, but there are in addition a good number of recordings with Europeans and Americans. Broadcast material includes all surviving BBC recordings from the Second World War, notable speeches, and unedited sound from the ground-breaking television series 'The Great War' (1964) and 'The World at War' (1973).

Film: 54,059 titles

IWM is the oldest established national film archive, created in 1917 to preserve the films shot by British official combat cameramen. IWM's film collection now covers all aspects of conflicts in which British, Commonwealth or former Empire countries have been involved since the start of the twentieth century and is the official repository for relevant film under the terms of the Public Records Act 1958. Our constantly growing collection now extends to over 23,000 hours of moving images, representing a wide and diverse range of material from public and service information films, documentaries and unedited combat film, through to official newsreels and amateur films. Highlights of the collection include *The Battle of the Somme* (1916, granted UNESCO Memory of the World status), the Academy Award-winning documentaries *Desert Victory* (1943) and *The True Glory* (1945), the former film library of NATO, the United Nations TV Collection from Former Yugoslavia (1992-1995), and most recently, born digital material of operations in Afghanistan. There is also a significant collection of amateur film covering wide areas of the former British Empire, the Second World War, India and Partition, and beyond.

Documents: Estimated 22 million items, managed under 27,045 collections

Our documents cover a wealth of personal experience and testimony, both British and foreign, as well as official records. IWM holds over 21,000 individual collections of important private papers, principally comprising unpublished diaries, letters and memoirs written mainly by British and Commonwealth servicemen since 1914 and by civilians during the two world wars. We also hold documents from victims and survivors of the Holocaust. The extensive series of foreign records that we hold originating from Germany, Japan and Italy during the Second World War, together with the official British records of the major war crimes trials conducted at Nuremberg and Tokyo and related documents from the Second World War which mainly concern the German and Japanese war efforts, were deposited in IWM as captured enemy documents under the Public Records Act 1958.

Photographs: Estimated 11 million images, managed under 19,739 collections

The collection primarily covers the activities of British and Commonwealth forces in times of conflict from official, press and private perspectives. It reveals and represents a range of human encounters in war from military and civilian perspectives, including international viewpoints and work by amateur and professional photographers. The IWM collection is a vital visual record of war and conflict, photographic development, as well as the history of the era. The archive includes a range of photographic formats including glass plate negatives, film negatives and print formats, and an expanding collection of born digital photography. Photographers present in the archive include Olive Edis, Lee Miller, Cecil Beaton, Ed Clark, Wim Wenders and Tim

Hetherington. The collection is supported by contemporaneous materials such as original photographer's notes. IWM is the official repository for selected photographs under the terms of the Public Records Act 1958.

Maps: 63,205 items

IWM holds trench maps and other maps relating to the conflicts we cover, particularly the First World War.

Proclamations: 31,993 items

These notices, decrees and posters cover the First World War and later conflicts, from the Home Front and global theatres of war.

Library: 253,100 items

The reference collection includes over 150,000 books as well as significant collections of printed ephemera, pamphlets and periodicals. The collection covers all nations involved in war and conflict from 1914 to the present with a particular focus on social, economic, political, literary, artistic, and military history.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

4.1 Future collecting is governed by four Curatorial Collections Development Strategies, one for each of the four time periods represented in the collections:

First World War and Early 20th Century, covering 1900-1929

Second World War and Mid 20th Century, covering 1929–1949

Cold War and Late Twentieth-Century, covering 1949-2000

Contemporary Conflict, covering 2001 to the present day

These strategies define IWM's vision and aspirations, outline the most vital issues to be tackled and define a roadmap for achieving these aims. Each strategy is different, as the needs of each collection is different. But they share common values: each is intentionally ambitious, and those ambitions are entirely in line with the museum's brand, vision and values.

4.2 The aims of the acquisitions programme outlined in the curatorial Collections Development Strategies are:

- ensure the continuing selective development of the collections to provide well-balanced and up-to-date coverage of IWM's remit
- drive the delivery of the creative display and transformation visions at all branches with a carefully-honed collection
- support our public programme.
- meet audience needs not just now but in the future, through agile approaches to collecting and an aspiration to represent and interpret a richly diverse range of stories
- provide access to primary evidence and key secondary sources for research, publishing, broadcasting and public needs.

4.3 The collections are defined as the total body of culturally significant items, or part thereof, held by IWM.

- 4.4 Acquisition is the process of obtaining responsibility for an item, associated due diligence, rights management and transfer of title. Items may be held at Acquisition (Entry) to deliver IWM's interpretive and research roles for as long as they fulfil these aims. Items held at Acquisition will, for example, include modern books and periodicals, and surrogates of content held by IWM. Items may be acquired to support IWM's learning activities (handling items), displays (props and facsimiles) and collections care and maintenance (spares). These items are not accessioned.
- 4.5 Accession is a status afforded to those items (art and objects, archives of documents, film, photographs and sound records) that IWM deems to be of such significance that they merit permanent retention and preservation on behalf of the Nation. Accessioned items may be disposed of at a later date, and if so will be subject to the procedures described in this Policy.
- 4.6 Collecting may result from proactive projects or in response to the offer of material by members of the public or other institutions. In both instances collecting will be a focused outcome of the formal review of the existing collection. Collection Reviews may be undertaken in consultation with staff of all branches to support priority exhibitions and learning programmes having particular regard to the remits of the branches. The result will be targeted areas for acquisition and disposal.
- 4.7 Acquisitions are limited to those items that are of exceptional quality, significance, provenance, and afford sufficient public access rights to support IWM's mission. The Collections Development Committee reviews potential acquisitions that have substantial resource requirements or require broad assessment and all disposals.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 IWM 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 collections and will result in more useable, well managed collections.
- 5.2 The priorities for IWM's disposal activity are informed by the same curatorial Collections Development Strategies as above. In summary, IWM prioritises for retention those objects that provide the best opportunities for meaningful storytelling and engagement. Those objects with direct or meaningful connections to conflict, and the people whose lives were affected by it.
- 5.3 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.

6. Legal and ethical framework for acquisition and disposal of items

- 6.1 IWM recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museums Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7. Collecting policies of other museums

- 7.1 IWM 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, to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources.

7.2 Specific reference is made to the following, which are to be consulted when making significant acquisition, accession and disposal decisions, or where conflicts of interest may arise or to define areas of specialism, in order to avoid unnecessary duplication and waste of resources:

- Local museums/ heritage organisations/ galleries working with collections related to IWM's remit and collections (eg. museums local to any IWM branch)
- Regional museums/ heritage organisations/ galleries working with collections related to IWM's remit and collections (eg. regimental/ unit museums and galleries)
- National museums/ heritage organisations/ galleries working with collections related to IWM's remit and collections (eg. DCMS and MOD sponsored UK institutions)
- International museums/ heritage organisations/ galleries working with collections related to IWM's remit and collections (eg. Australian War Memorial, Canadian War Museum)

7.3 In exceptional circumstances, IWM may enter into joint acquisition agreements with other institutions. These will be developed with careful consideration of practical and resource impacts, covered by formal agreements, and where necessary, approved by the relevant funding bodies.

8. Archival holdings

8.1 As IWM holds archival collections (primarily our Documents and Photographs collections) the Trustees will be guided by the *Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom* (3rd ed., 2002).

8.2 Under the terms of this policy and in the furtherance of its mission and acquisitions programme, IWM will acquire analogue and digital archival material both in its role as the official repository for relevant film and photographs under the Public Records Act 1958, and from other sources.

8.3 IWM will ensure that where material is acquired from government departments and agencies, there is a clear distinction between public records selected for permanent preservation under the Act, and material 'presented' to IWM, which is not covered by the Act.

8.4 As a Place of Deposit IWM has successfully secured and will maintain Archive Service Accreditation, as administered by The National Archives.

8.5 IWM's archival collections are developed according to the principles and priorities in this Policy.

9. Acquisition

9.1 Authority to approve the acquisition of items is delegated by the Trustees according to value. The authorisation levels for agreeing acquisitions by any method are:

Value of item	Authoriser
Up to £2,000	Principal Curator, Narrative <i>or</i> Principal Curator, Collections <i>or</i> Head of Collections Management
Up to £100,000	Director of Narrative and Content <i>or</i> Director of Collections Management
Up to £250,000	Executive Director of Collections & Curatorial
Up to £500,000	Director-General
over £500,000	The Board of Trustees

9.2 IWM 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).

- 9.3 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, IWM will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The Trustees 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.
- 9.4 IWM will make every effort not to acquire material with conditions attached. Where this cannot be avoided, IWM will consider whether the conditions can be accepted and if so ensure the conditions are documented in the collections management system so that they are fulfilled.
- 9.5 When IWM acquires works from contemporary creators it will seek information from them on any specific display and installation requirements and work with them collaboratively to be able to use, interpret and display the work as intended. This information will be recorded in the collections management system to support future display planning.

10. Human remains

- 10.1 As IWM holds and intends to acquire human remains under 100 years old, it will maintain the necessary licence under the Human Tissue Act 2004 and any subordinate legislation from time to time in force.
- 10.2 As IWM holds and 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.

11. Biological and geological material

- 11.1 So far as biological and geological material is concerned, IWM 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.

12. Archaeological material

- 12.1 IWM will not acquire archaeological material (including excavated ceramics) in any case where the Trustees or responsible officer has any suspicion that the circumstances of their recovery involved a failure to follow the appropriate legal procedures.
- 12.2 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).
- 12.3 In Scotland, under the laws of bona vacantia including Treasure Trove, the Crown has title to all ownerless objects including antiquities, although such material as human remains and environmental samples are not covered by the law of bona vacantia. Scottish material of chance finds and excavation assemblages are offered to museums through the treasure trove process and cannot therefore be legally acquired by means other than by allocation to IWM by the Crown. However where the Crown has chosen to forego its title to a portable antiquity or excavation assemblage, a curator or other responsible person acting on behalf of the IWM

Trustees, can establish that valid title to the item in question has been acquired by ensuring that a certificate of 'No Claim' has been issued on behalf of the Crown.

13. Exceptions

13.1 Any exceptions to the above clauses will only be because IWM 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, IWM will be open and transparent in the way it makes decisions and will act only with the express consent of an appropriate outside authority. IWM will document when these exceptions occur.

14. Spoliation

14.1 IWM will use *Spoliation of Works of Art during the Holocaust and World War II period: Statement of Principles and Proposed Actions*, issued by the National Museum Directors' Conference in 1998, and report on them in accordance with the guidelines.

15. The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

15.1 IWM's Trustees, acting on the advice of IWM's professional staff, may take a decision to return human remains (unless covered by the *Guidance for the care of human remains in museums* issued by DCMS in 2005), objects or specimens to a country or people of origin. IWM will take such decisions on a case-by-case basis; within its legal position and taking into account all ethical implications and available guidance. This will mean that the procedures described in 16.1-5 will be followed but the remaining procedures are not appropriate.

15.2 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*.

16. Disposal procedures

16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the Spectrum primary procedure on disposal.

16.2 The Trustees will confirm that IWM is legally free to dispose of an item. Agreements on disposal made with donors will also be taken into account.

16.3 When disposal of a museum object is being considered, IWM 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.

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

16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the Trustees only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for IWM'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 IWM will also be sought.

- 16.6 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 Trustees acting on the advice of the Collections Development Committee, and not of any archivist, collections manager, curator, or librarian acting alone. The authority to dispose of duplicate items is delegated as per paragraph 17.3.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collections 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.
- 16.8 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).
- 16.9 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, IWM may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations in the public domain. Sale of objects is also informed by the provisions of paragraph 1.7, and by the provisions below relating to use of the monies received.
- 16.10 Any monies received by the Trustees 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.
- 16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be so allocated that it can be demonstrated 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 collections.
- 16.12 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.

Disposal by exchange

- 16.13 The nature of disposal by exchange means that IWM will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with another Accredited museum. The Trustees will therefore ensure that issues relating to accountability and impartiality are carefully considered to avoid undue influence on its decision-making process.
- 16.13.1 In cases where the Trustees 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.
- 16.13.2 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.

- 16.13.3 If the exchange is proposed with a non-Accredited museum, with another type of organisation or with an individual, IWM 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).
- 16.13.4 Both the notification and announcement must provide information on the number and nature of the specimens or objects involved both in IWM's collections 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 Trustees must consider the comments before a final decision on the exchange is made.

Disposal by destruction

- 16.14 If it is not possible to dispose of an object through transfer or sale, the Trustees may decide to destroy it.
- 16.15 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.
- 16.16 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, where acquisition conditions demand it (eg. Amnesty weapons) or is part of an approved destructive testing request identified in an organisation's research policy.
- 16.17 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.
- 16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate member of the IWM workforce. In circumstances where this is not possible, eg the destruction of controlled substances, evidence such as a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.

Disposal by sale

- 16.19 IWM may consider disposal by sale in the following circumstances:
- Where it has not been possible to identify an appropriate public domain recipient after following IWM's disposal procedure and it is considered in the public interest to realise the market value of the object
 - If an object being considered for disposal was purchased with restricted funds from one of IWM's Trust Funds; trust law requires fair market value be realised. Any proposal to disposal of an object by sale will be given full and careful consideration by the Trustees and requires approval from the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport.

Disposal definitions

- 16.20 Disposal is the permanent removal of an item accessioned into the collections from the ownership of IWM's Trustees by the process of gift, sale, exchange or planned destruction (in the case of an item too badly damaged or deteriorated to be of any use or on the grounds of health and safety). Accessioned items must be deaccessioned before they can be disposed of.
- 16.21 The collections contain a number of items that are considered to be duplicates. The rigour applied to the disposal of duplicate material is lower than that applied to other items as the

disposal of duplicates will be approved by the Trustees without reference to the Secretary of State.

17. Authorisation of disposal

- 17.1 The Trustees, being responsible on the advice of the Director-General for IWM's disposal policy, have determined that all acquisitions and disposals will be reported formally to them and that authorisation of disposals shall be delegated as below.
- 17.2 The Trustees are empowered to dispose of duplicate items without the consent of the Secretary of State.
- 17.3 Authority to approve the disposal of duplicate items is delegated by the Trustees according to value. The authorisation levels for agreeing disposals (by any method) are:

Value of item	Authoriser
Up to £2,000	Principal Curator, Narrative <i>or</i> Principal Curator, Collections <i>or</i> Head of Collections Management
Up to £100,000	Director of Narrative and Content <i>or</i> Director of Collections Management
Up to £250,000	Executive Director of Collections & Curatorial
Up to £500,000	Director-General
over £500,000	The Board of Trustees

- 17.4 Disposals of accessioned material (other than duplicate items) require the consent of the Secretary of State, Department for Culture, Media and Sport or their designated authorities. Such consent will be sought by the Director-General with the approval of the Trustees, on the recommendation of the Collections Development Committee and the relevant authorisers listed above.
- 17.5 The Trustees will be notified of all disposals through the usual reporting procedures.

18. Complaints with respect to Acquisition and Disposal

- 18.1 Members of the public wishing to register a complaint with regard to an acquisition or disposal decision should do so in writing by letter or email. It should be addressed to the Complaints Officer, Imperial War Museums, Lambeth Road, London SE1 6HZ. The Complaints Officer will investigate the matter in line with IWM's Complaints Procedure.