

Collection Review and Rationalisation Policy

**Sandwell Museum and Arts Service
2021 - 2026**



Collection's Review and Rationalisation Policy

1. Overarching Principles

- 1.1 Sandwell Museum Service recognises that the collection in its care should be relevant to and tell the stories of the borough's communities or life in the historic houses they are interpreting. The collection should support the aims and objectives of Sandwell Museum Service in engaging with local communities.
- 1.2 Sandwell Museum Service is fully committed to preserving, developing and enhancing the heritage assets within its care and recognises the importance and significance of local heritage. This includes the built heritage and its historic collections for the use and enjoyment of the local community.
- 1.3 Sandwell Museum Service is working actively towards operating to accreditation standards for its accessioned historic collections.

1.4 This document has been reissued for a 10 year period as it is recognised that this is realistic within the capacity of the museum service and other duties of collections management manager (Museum Services Manager) and Collections Officer.

2. Collections Review and Rationalisation Basic Principles

- 2.1 The collections within the remit of this policy are: Collections owned by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council which are in the care of Sandwell Museum Service. Excluded from this policy are all items on loan and items not in the care of Sandwell Museum Service even if they are owned by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council. For the purpose of this document 'collections' refers to the accessioned collection held by Sandwell Museums.
- 2.2 The scope, quality, importance and significance of Sandwell Museum Service's collections will not be reduced or detrimentally affected by the review and rationalisation process.
- 2.3 The rationalisation process will only take place within defined procedure developed in line with professional standards.
- 2.4 Rationalisation will only take place where Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council has ownership of the items and a legal right to remove them from the collection.

- 2.6 The rationalisation process will be fully documented to ensure a transparent and rigorous process.
- 2.7 The decision to remove an item from the collection will be based on advice from the Museum Service Management team and other professionals where deemed appropriate.
- 2.9 The rationalisation process will be part of a larger collections review, which will ensure the efficient and effective management of the collection and create an effective and active collection which maximise its full potential as historical records and vibrant community resources within the resources and capacity of Sandwell Museum Service and its staffing. Collections review, rationalisation and documentation will take place hand in hand as resources and capacity allows.
- 2.11 When accessioned items are sold all profits resulting from the sale will be used to fund specific activities as per Sandwell Museum Service's Collections Development Policy.
- 2.13 When items are to be sold an independent valuation will be secured prior to a sale price being agreed or a reserve price set.
- 2.14 The desired outcome from any rationalisation process will be carefully considered and clearly articulated as part of the rationalisation process. These considerations will help inform the ultimate method of disposal of items from the collections.
- 2.15 The collections review process may result in items being removed from the accessioned collections for a number of reasons. These include:
- sale for reinvestment of profits in Sandwell Museum Service
 - transfer to more appropriate collection in another cultural institution
 - destruction due to poor physical quality of the item which is deemed to be beyond repair or conservation or is of no historical value

3.0 **General Selection Criteria**

- 3.1 The collection should be methodically reviewed to inform rationalisation and ensure appropriate documentation.
- 3.1 Items removed from the collection will be for the overall benefit of conserving and maintaining the remaining collections and for the benefit of community engagement and lifelong learning activities.
- 3.2 Where duplicate items are removed the best example will always be retained within the museum collections. In this context 'best' means

those in the most complete physical condition or of special historical, local or legal interest.

4.0 Wider Policy Framework

This policy operates within the wider context of Sandwell Museum Service's policies.

It is put into effect by Sandwell Museum Service Collections Rationalisation and Documentation Plan.