

## Site Collections Development Policy

Name of Museum: English Heritage – Chesters Roman Fort and Museum

Name of Governing Body: English Heritage Trust

Date on which this policy was approved by the Acquisitions, Loans and Disposals Committee:  
17/09/2024

Policy review procedure:

The Site Collections Development Policy is owned by the Senior Curator for the geographical area. It will be reviewed at least once every five years as part of a cyclical process managed through Registry.

Date at which this policy is due for review: September 2029

Arts Council England will be notified of any changes to the Site Collections Development Policy, and the implications of any such changes for the future of the collections.

### 1. Management Arrangements and scope

- 1.1. This policy covers all museum artefacts managed by English Heritage from, or associated with the site whether they are held on site, at another English Heritage site or store, or on loan to a third party. This policy does not cover artefacts associated with other English Heritage sites which are stored or displayed at this site.
- 1.2. The site and its collections form part of the National Collection of English Heritage.
- 1.3. Almost the entire collection is owned by the Trustees of the Clayton Collection, who were founded in 1930 by Deed of Trust to safeguard the collection from imminent sale. Since 1983 English Heritage has managed, cared for, and displayed the collection on their behalf (LI\_2010\_0125).

### 2. Relationships to other relevant policies/plans of the organisation

- 2.1. The national *Collections Development Policy* approved by the Board of Trustees on 9 November 2016, (together with any amendments to, or replacements for, the policy approved by Trustees), apply to the site. In the event of any disagreement between this site policy and the national policy the national policy will apply.
- 2.2. Without limitation to the above all the procedures, and ethical and legal considerations set out in the national policy apply to acquisitions, disposals and loans from or to the sites collection.
- 2.2. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.

### 3. History of the collections

- 3.1. The Clayton Collection was mostly formed in the 19<sup>th</sup> century through excavations by John Clayton (1792-1890). It comes from multiple sites along the Central Sector of Hadrian's Wall as John Clayton owned five forts and almost 20 miles of the Wall and excavated over 40 years across his land. Almost all of the material is from Hadrian's

Wall, although there are some pieces from elsewhere either bought by, or gifted to, John.

After John's death the archaeological estate remained intact until 1930, and further small excavations on this land led to some minor additions to the collection.

#### 4. An overview of the collections

4.1. -The Collection database on HOMS currently stands at 23, 022 records, of which all but 14 items are on long term loan. The items owned by English Heritage are a 19<sup>th</sup> century portrait of John Clayton, an 18<sup>th</sup> century bust of Hadrian and 12 photographs of Coventina's Well coins.

-The only art items are the portrait and bust mentioned above.

-There is a small amount of archive, c.3000 records, which along with the stored collection, is held in the store at Corbridge Museum.

-The remainder of the collection is archaeology, including sculpted and inscribed stone, architectural pieces, jewellery, tools, pottery and the usual items expected at a Roman fort on Hadrian's Wall.

-Highlights of the Collections include;

- The large number of sculpted and inscribed religious altars and statues
- The material from Coventina's Well, a temple and votive deposit, including 9344 coins, two rare ceramic incense burners and stone reliefs and altars
- Painted wall plaster from Chesters
- The bronze Modius (grain measure) from Carvoran

#### 5. Themes and priorities for future collecting

5.1. The current collecting policy for the Clayton Collection includes;

- Material which once belonged to the collection but was separated from the main collection, particularly either during the lifetime of John Clayton, or in the House Sale of 1930.
- Material directly related to John Clayton
- Material found on the site at Chesters Roman Fort, within the Scheduled Area

5.2 English Heritage will collect items relating to the history of the site which fall outside of the Clayton Trustees collecting policy. This includes items from the broader Fort environs which are not covered by the Scheduled Area.

#### 6. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

6.1. No review/rationalization/disposal is necessary, or relevant. A PhD was completed in 2017 on the Collection which reviewed the material and so the understanding of the collection is good.

#### 7. Collecting policies of other museums

7.1. English Heritage will take account of the collecting policies of other museums and other organisations collecting in the same or related subject areas or 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.

- 7.2. Specific reference is made to the following museums and organisations:
- 7.2.1 Great North Museum: Hancock, part of Tyne and Wear Archives and Museums
  - 7.2.2 Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle upon Tyne
  - 7.2.3 Tullie House Museum and Art Gallery
  - 7.2.4 The Historic England Archives- with reference to archive material.