



# National Galleries Scotland

## Conservation and Care Policy

### Version/Date

Senior Management Team: Collections approved this policy: 12<sup>th</sup> February 2014

### Principles

NGS has a planned programme for the conservation, maintenance and care of all objects and object-parts or groups of objects in our collections.

We assess the condition of objects and produce a formal condition report, including: on pre-entry, loans in and out, during the acquisition process, on de-accession or when damaged, as required during planned programmes of conservation, and to meet Government Indemnity (GIS) requirements. We make a condition assessment whenever required, including when an object is handled or moved, or whenever it enters or leaves NGS or our partner galleries.

We monitor and maintain the objects in our care, and carry out the necessary steps to prevent damage or deterioration, to ensure they are accessible to the widest possible public, and to preserve them for the future.

### Definitions

**Conservation and Care:** The appropriate, active, on-going and sustainable care of all objects and object-parts for which NGS is responsible, to ensure the preservation and accessibility of those objects.

**Condition checking:** Monitoring, documenting and reviewing the condition of objects.

**Environmental management:** The assessment and control of conditions that have the potential to affect or damage objects.

**Treatment:** Preventative or interventive actions that contribute to the safe conservation, repair, restoration or preservation of an object.

### Legislation and ethics

The conservation and care of objects meets our obligations for duty of care, for audit and accountability, for preservation, and for accessibility. We also take into consideration environmental sustainability.

Relevant statutory requirements and codes of ethics include:

- National Heritage Act 1980 Section 16 (as amended by the Museums and Galleries Act 1992)
- British Standards Institute: PAS 197, Code of Practice for Collections Management, 2009
- British Standards Institute: PAS 198, Specification for managing environmental conditions for cultural collections 2012



- British Standards Institute:PD5454, Guide for the storage and exhibition of archival materials 2012
- BS 1153 Recommendations for processing and storage of silver gelatine type microfilm
- BS EN 15757 Conservation of cultural property Specifications for Temperature and RH, 2010
- BS EN 15758 Conservation of cultural property Procedures and instruments for measuring temperatures of the air and surfaces of objects
- BS EN ISO 11844-1 Corrosion of Metals and Alloys
- BS ISO 18934 Imaging materials – Multiple media archives – Storage Environment
- BS ISO 31000 Risk Management principles and guidelines
- BS ISO 80000 Quantities and units – Part 7: Light
- UK H&S Executive: Control of substances hazardous for Health (COSHH)
- Museums Association Code of Ethics for Museums 2008
- ICOM Code of Ethics for Museums 2013
- Code of Practice on Archives for Museums and Galleries, Third Edition 2002

## **Standards**

This policy is part of the Collections Management set of policies that form a requirement of PAS197 and Spectrum as part of the UK Museum Accreditation Scheme.

## **Control measures**

We record all conservation and care details. We hold all information centrally and securely on an industry-standard database (MIMSY). Only authorised persons can maintain conservation and care records.

NGS is committed to carrying out regular collections audits, which include all objects in our care including loans.

### **Conservation and care**

We have a programme of regular care, maintenance and monitoring of the collections. Conservation work must be authorised, and we record details of all work carried out, using international standard terminology.

We also conduct scientific research and develop long-term preventative conservation strategies and methods.

### **Condition checks and reporting**

Only suitably trained persons can make a full, formal condition report.

We assess the condition of objects and produce a condition report, including prior to transit; on pre-entry; during the acquisition process; an assessment whenever an object is handled or moved; if there is a physical change to the object, or its use or to the surrounding environment; whenever it enters or leaves NGS; and to meet due diligence and GIS requirements. We ensure that the condition of each object is fit to move, and carry out a risk assessment where appropriate.

## **Environmental management**

We apply NGS-specified measures to ensure the environmental conditions for storage, display and loan (both for loans in and loans out) maintain optimum ranges of relative humidity, temperature, light and potential pollutants, in order to minimise the risk of damage or deterioration, and to safeguard the authenticity of objects.

We have a strategy and a defined, evidence-based programme for monitoring and maintaining these conditions. We maintain an accurate, up-to-date, standardised (UK Registrars Group) facilities report.

We ensure these conditions are met by methods that are ethical, environmentally sustainable, and consistent.

## **Treatment**

Only suitably qualified persons can carry out conservation treatment.

Where applicable we obtain formal approval from the legal owner of the object, or their designated representative, before carrying out treatment.

When we carry out treatment it is according to knowledge of best conservation practice, an understanding of the science of object materials, and using methods that can be carried out without invalidating analytical techniques or removing potential sources of further information about the object.

## **Related policies**

The following are related NGS policies:

- Object Entry and Pre-Entry Policy
- Loans In and Loans Out Policy
- Acquisition Policy
- Inventory Control Policy
- Location and Movement Control Policy
- Art Handling and Technical Assessment Policy
- Art Transport Policy
- Rights and Reproduction Management Policy
- Risk Management Policy
- Insurance and Indemnity Management Policy
- Valuation Control Policy
- Physical Audit Policy
- Record Audit Policy
- Storage Management Policy
- Object Exit and Despatch Policy
- Damage and Loss Policy
- De-accession and Disposal Policy



- Collections—Environmental Management Policy