

Essex Field Club Disposal Policy/Guidelines

This Disposal Policy/Guidelines is based on the Museums Association Code of Ethics Guiding principles

Background

Collections are a tangible link between the past, present and future. The Essex Field Club will balance the interests of different generations by safeguarding collections.

General Principles

- We shall develop and implement a collections development policy to ensure appropriate standards of care and security for all items entrusted to us, either permanently or on loan.
- We shall meet our responsibility to future generations by ensuring that collections are well managed and sustainable. There is a strong presumption in favour of the retention of items within the public domain. Sometimes transfer within the public domain, or another form of disposal, can improve access to, or the use, care or context of, items or collections. Responsible, curatorially motivated disposal will take place as part of our long-term collections development policy, to increase public benefit derived from the Essex Field Club collections.
- Formal title to and guardianship of the collections is vested in the Council of the Essex Field Club. Decisions to dispose will be informed by the highest standards of expertise and consider legal and other attendant circumstances.
- We shall demonstrate clearly how the long-term local and public interest is served in circumstances in which disposal may be appropriate and ensure that public trust in the Essex Field Club is upheld.
- We shall give priority to transferring items, preferably by gift, to other bodies including museums.
- We shall maintain public confidence in the Essex Field Club, wherever possible by not transferring items out of the public domain.
- Our decisions to dispose will be based on clear, published criteria as part of the Essex Field Club's long-term collections development policy, approved by Council. We shall ensure transparency and carry out any disposal openly, according to unambiguous, generally accepted procedures. We shall manage the process with care and sensitivity to public perceptions.
- We shall seek the views of stakeholders (such as donors, researchers, local and source communities and others served by the Essex Field Club) who have a vested interest in a proposed disposal. In some cases, consent from the donor may be a legal requirement.
- Where appropriate we shall seek the views of colleagues and sector bodies.
- We shall refuse to undertake disposal principally for financial reasons, except in exceptional circumstances. We understand that financially motivated disposal risks damaging public confidence in the Essex Field Club and the principle that collections should not normally be regarded as financially-negotiable assets.
- We shall consider financially motivated disposal only in exceptional circumstances and when it can be demonstrated that:
 - it will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection
 - it is not to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)
 - it is 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 the Essex Field Club's established core collection as defined in the collections development policy.
- We shall Ring-fence any money raised by disposal through sale, if this exceptional circumstance arises, solely and directly for the benefit of the Essex Field Club's collection. Money raised must be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection. If in doubt about the proposed use of such restricted funds we shall consult sector bodies.
 - We shall openly communicate and document all disposals and the basis on which decisions to dispose were made.
 - We shall apply any money received in compensation for the loss, damage or destruction of objects in the collection solely and directly for the benefit of the museum's collection.
 - We shall respond to requests for return of human remains, and other culturally sensitive material with understanding and respect for communities of origin.
 - Our collections represent the generosity of past and current donors and the endeavours of collectors. These collections are established for the long term and each generation has responsibility to the next to ensure they do not become unmanageable or a burden and that they remain sustainable.
 - Equally it is imperative that collections are used and developed in response to the needs of today's society. We shall balance the safeguarding and retention of items within our collections with the need to review and develop collections, acquire items and, in some cases, remove them.
 - The Essex Field Club's collections will be developed so that they provide the best care and opportunities for use and engagement.
 - Curatorially motivated disposal is an integral part of our responsible collections management and will ensure that the Essex Field Club collection is fit for future generations.

We understand that disposing of items is not without risk; however, there can be significant benefits if the process is well managed. These can include providing better care and curation for an item or improving its public access and use. Disposal will not be undertaken in isolation, but will be part of ongoing collections development, including continued acquisition

1 INTRODUCTION

1(a) Most items are donated, bequeathed or purchased for museum collections in the expectation that they will be retained for the long term and made accessible within the public domain. It is essential that any disposals take account of this expectation and do not damage public confidence in the Essex Field Club. We are a trusted institution and it is important that this legacy is not damaged. We shall ensure transparency and openness around the disposal of items from collections.

1(b) This policy/guidelines provides general information and guidance on curatorially motivated disposal of items from the Essex Field Club collections.

1(c) We shall ensure that any disposal being undertaken is ethical and legal and

- is within the framework of a clearly defined collections development policy
- is on the advice of a range of staff (not an individual) and is agreed by EFC Council
- is done with the intention that wherever possible items remain within the public domain
- is unlikely to damage public trust in the Essex Field Club

- is likely to increase the public benefit derived from museum collections.

1(d) Legal context and good governance

- We may encounter legal restrictions that will affect our ability to dispose of items from the Essex Field Club collections. These include charity legislation and any trusts and directions laid down in our governing documents.
- We may also be subject to other legal restrictions arising from conditions attached to donations or bequests. It is vital when considering disposing of any item that we ensure that we are legally able to do so.
- Formal title to and guardianship of our collections is vested in Essex Field Club's Council, which shall ensure that decisions to dispose are informed by the highest standards of expertise and take into account all legal and other attendant circumstances.
- The process of disposal will always reflect principles of good governance.

1(e) Managing the process

Before beginning the process of disposal we shall:

- Timescale: Create a timetable to assist in planning, administering and monitoring the work.
- Budget: Ensure that any necessary resources, including volunteer time, are available to support the work.
- Volunteers and reporting: Identify any volunteers who will be involved in the process. The roles and responsibilities of each person will be clearly articulated before the work commences. A clear structure for reporting, reviewing and approving the work will be established. Essex Field Club Council will be included in the process.
- Outcomes and selection: Before undertaking the disposal of any item, the intended outcomes of the process will be considered and articulated. Outcomes will demonstrate how public benefit will increase.

2 Disposal

2(a) Disposal will be based on achieving as many of the primary outcomes listed below

- improved care for the item
- improved access to the item; increased enjoyment of and engagement with the item by the public
- improved context for the item
- continued retention of the item within the wider public domain
- removal of any hazard posed by an item
- resources freed up to better care for and utilise other parts of the collection
- creating or optimising space (in order to assist the improved care and continued acquisition of collections)
- removal of sub-standard, poor quality items from the collection

Our Decisions will:

- be made within the context of an approved collections development policy
- be based on clearly expressed intended outcomes
- demonstrate long-term benefit to: the Essex Field Club collection and public use of and engagement with collections.

We shall not dispose of an item:

- for financial reasons (unless in exceptional circumstances)
- on an ad hoc basis (i.e. other than as part of an approved collections development policy)
- without considering advice from someone with specialist knowledge of this type of item
- if the disposal would adversely affect our public reputation
- if the disposal would not be in the long-term public interest
- outside the public domain, except in exceptional circumstances.

2(b) Selection:

In order to achieve our primary outcome, we may dispose of items that fall outside the core collection as defined by our collections development policy.

2(b)(i) The Essex Field Club Collections evolve and it may be that certain objects no longer fall within our core collection as defined by our collections development policy. If an item is no longer relevant, not in use or there is no reasonable expectation of it being used, it may be appropriate to dispose of it.

We shall consider:

- why was the item acquired in the first place?
- is the item currently being used? If so, then there is a strong argument for retention
- is the item being selected because it is out of fashion? If so we shall proceed with caution
- would the item fit better and be more widely used and accessible in another collection which may be more geographically or culturally relevant

2(b)(ii) Duplicate items

The fact that an object is an apparent duplicate should not automatically be a justification for disposal; these items may have significant stories or histories attached to them, which need to be assessed.

We shall consider:

- is the duplicate in use? Are there any identifiable uses for the item in the future?
- does the item have a unique history?
- is there cultural value in retaining more than one of the items?

- could a use be found for the item in another part of the collection (e.g. education; demonstrations, loans)?
- is the duplicate item likely to be found in other collections? (If so, it may be difficult to transfer.)

2(b)(iii) Underused items

Some items within our collections may have never been used or are rarely used. If there is little or no likelihood of us finding a use in the future, it may be appropriate to remove it from our collection.

We shall consider:

- why is this item unused; what are the potential opportunities for use in the future?
- could it be better used by another collection?
- if specialist knowledge could be obtained, is there a likelihood that the item could be brought into use?
- is the specialist knowledge more likely to be available if the item is transferred?
- what is the cultural significance of the item within the collection?
- is the item unique or is there other similar material in the collection?
- is the item being selected because it is out of fashion? If so we shall proceed with caution
- could we find a use for the item (e.g. object handling, education or set dressing)?

2(b)(iv) Items for which the Essex Field Club is unable to provide adequate care or curation

Where there is little expectation that we will be able to provide suitable care, it may be more appropriate to remove items to a collection where their care can be improved.

We shall consider:

- is the item relevant to the collection?
- would the item fit better in another collection?
- can the resources be obtained to care for the item?
- are the resources more likely to be available in another collection?

2(b)(v) Items damaged or deteriorated beyond our ability to repair may be considered for disposal

We shall consider:

- is the item beyond repair?
- what would it cost to conserve or repair the item?
- is the cost of conserving and repairing the item within our resources?
- is another owner, such as another institution or a specialist or enthusiasts' group, better able to repair and use the item?

2(b)(vi) Items with no documentation

Due to past methods, management and recording of acquisitions, we may possess material that lacks documentation and recorded provenance. In some such cases items may not be of use and as a result we may consider removing them from the collection.

We shall consider:

- has sufficient effort been made to research the item's history?
- can another use be found for the item?
- has a risk assessment relating to disposal of the item been made?
- will future scientific advances unlock information about items lacking documentation?

2(b)(vii) Items that pose a threat to health and safety

We may hold items that are hazardous to the public or the workforce on health and safety grounds. It may be advisable to dispose of these items.

We shall consider:

- the risk to the public and the workforce
- if it is possible to remove the risk and still retain the item
- how the item can be destroyed safely
- any legislation that may affect the item's retention or disposal from the collection

2(b)(viii) 'Trading up'

When considering disposal of an item on the grounds that a better example may be available and would enhance the collection, sometimes known as 'trading up', we shall consider:

- the significance of the selected item within the context of the collection
- the impact the loss of the item might have on the collection
- how this course of action will serve the public interest?

2(b)(ix) Disposal for income generation

The final decision about whether an item is removed from our collection rests with the Essex Field Club Council; however other views will be sought.

2(c) Consultation

2(c)(i) We shall involve a range of people working on the collection in the discussions and selection of items to be removed. This may include people working in other subject disciplines or activities such as interpretation, education, marketing and front-of-house.

- If the subject specialist knowledge to assess items in the collection is not available within the Essex Field Club then advice will be sought from external sources.
- Potential sources of advice include: bodies with similar collections; subject specialist networks; and universities.

2(c)(ii) External funders

If the item was acquired or conserved with external funding then the appropriate funding body will be contacted. Their views and any requirements will be taken into consideration before any disposal decision is made. Repayment of any funds provided may be necessary.

2(c)(iii) Donors

When deciding whether to involve donors in any part of the process, we shall consider how our actions:

- could affect public trust in museums
- could affect future donations
- will meet the need for transparency and openness around disposal

We may not consider it appropriate to involve donors in the decision-making process. However, we shall ensure that donors are informed as a courtesy once a decision has been made. Communication with donors will outline why the decision has been made, what has happened to any item as a result and the potential benefits of this course of action. We shall ensure:

- donors who have donated items in the past 5 years will be contacted
- Communicate with only the last known contact address
- allow donors 28 days to respond to information relating to a proposed disposal
- we will not normally contact descendants of donors

We shall ensure adequate information relating to the possibility of disposal in the future is provided at the time of all new acquisitions.

2(c)(iv) Other stakeholders

We shall consider the views of stakeholders and those who have a vested interest in our collections. We shall be open and transparent.

3 Disposal

3(a) Once we have selected an item for disposal, the current status of the item and the method of its entry into the collection will be investigated.

- Loan: If the item in question is on loan, we shall contact the lender to discuss its return.
- Purchase: If the item was acquired with the assistance of external funds, we will contact the funding bodies to discuss any planned course of action.
- Donation/bequest: We will establish whether there were any conditions laid down at the time of deposition that may affect any planned disposal. Donations/bequests will normally only be accepted on the understanding of transfer of full ownership to the Essex Field Club.

3(a)(i) Unaccessioned/ method of entry unknown:

- We will go to reasonable lengths to research the history of an item and check we are legally able to dispose
- When planning to dispose of unaccessioned items where formal title cannot be established, a risk assessment of this course of action will be undertaken.

3(b) Making the decision to remove

Decisions to remove an item from our collection must be made by the Essex Field Club Council, acting on the advice of relevant staff. Decisions to remove must not be made by a member of staff acting alone. The final decision relating to the disposal of an item must be approved by the Essex Field Club Council and documented.

We shall not remove items from our collections unethically

4 Once the decision has been made, we shall select the most appropriate method of disposal

4(a) The following will be of key considerations when selecting a method of disposal:

- there is a strong presumption for keeping items within the public domain
- there is a strong preference for free gift or transfer to other public bodies and items should be offered to them in the first instance
- action should be taken that ensure continued public trust

4(b) The following steps will be taken in all cases:

- We shall identify bodies with suitable collections and approach directly
- if no body is identified, we inform the museum sector and other relevant groups of availability of items
- we will ensure transparency and communicate the process beyond the Essex Field Club
- we will ensure transfer of legal title to any recipient and any appropriate transfer of intellectual property rights
- we will document the process.

In order to select the most suitable method of disposal we will keep in mind the desired outcome.

4(c) Free gift or transfer to an accredited body

It is recommended that where possible preference be given to this method of disposal, as it is the most likely to ensure that items remain cared for and accessible to the public.

We shall consider:

- how the transfer of the item to another body would help to achieve the desired outcome
- the potential for increased use of the item through transfer to another body
- is the receiving body able to provide adequate care and opportunities for access?
- any conditions of transfer
- public reaction to transfer.

We will take the following steps:

- ensure we are legally able to remove the item by free gift or transfer
- if possible, identify bodies with suitable collections and approach directly

- if no public body is identified directly, inform the sector and other relevant groups of availability of items
- once a new recipient is identified, agree terms for transfer (cost, responsibility for transport etc.)
- ensure transfer of legal title to receiving institution
- document the item and the process.

If this method is unsuccessful we will:

- revisit the decision to remove the item
- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal.

Informing the sector and relevant organisations:

Unless an item goes directly to another institution or is being returned or repatriated, the public sector and other relevant organisations will be informed and offered the items

4(d) Free gift or transfer to another institution/ organisation within the public domain

It is recommended that this method of disposal is only undertaken once it has been established that no accredited body is able to accept an item.

We shall consider:

- how the transfer of the item to another body within the public domain help to achieve the desired outcome
- the benefits of transferring the item to another body within the public domain
- if the potential recipient is able to provide adequate care and opportunities for access and use?
- should conditions be imposed
- How the public may react to the transfer

We shall take the following steps:

- identify potential recipients and approach directly
- if successful, once a new recipient is identified agree terms and conditions for transfer (such as: cost and responsibility for transport, any potential future contact, any obligations should the new recipient no longer require the item or be able to provide adequate care or access)
- ensure transfer of legal title to recipient
- ensure transparency and communicate the process
- document the item and the process.

If this method is unsuccessful we will:

- revisit the decision to dispose of the item
- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal

4 (e) Return to donor

We may consider returning items to donors, especially if it appears impossible to keep them in the public domain [see also 2(c) (iii) above]. We shall only return to a donor once the item has been offered to other public bodies, unless there are extenuating circumstances such as: conditions laid down on donation; an item having a personal significance to the donor and a low cultural value; or a strong likelihood that the item will be transferred out of the local area.

Return of items to the descendants of donors may prove problematic and will be given careful consideration.

We shall consider:

- how the return of the item to the donor will help to achieve the desired outcome
- if we are legally able to return the item
- the length of time since the donation was made and the likelihood of the donor's details being up-to-date
- risk of family disputes over the item
- public reaction to the disposal.

We shall:

- contact the donor to ascertain whether they would like the item back
- ensure transfer of legal title to recipient
- document the item and the process.

If this method is unsuccessful we shall:

- revisit the decision to dispose of the item
- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal

4(f) Sale of item to a museum or other public body

There is a strong preference and tradition of free gift or transfer between public bodies. We will not normally consider a sale in the first instance. Requesting payment from other publicly funded bodies may affect the likelihood of a new location being found and make it less likely that items will be retained within the public domain.

However, we may choose to sell to other public bodies in the first instance if for example we purchased the item with our own funds or we have invested a significant amount of money in

conserving it. Any money raised as a result of disposal through sale will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the Essex Field Club collection.

Money raised will be invested in the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection (e.g. by creating or increasing an endowment, making new acquisitions or making a significant capital investment which will bring long-term benefit).

We will consider:

- how the sale of the item will help to achieve the desired outcome
- the other benefits to the public from this sale
- if the current market price or the original purchase price is being sought for the item
- the likelihood of another museum being able to purchase the item
- the course of action to be taken if no museum is able to purchase the item
- how the proceeds of the sale will be used
- public reaction to the sale

We will take the following steps:

- identify bodies with suitable collections and approach directly
- if no public body is identified, inform the sector and other relevant groups of availability of items
- seek expert independent advice on the item's financial value and recommend any purchaser does the same
- ensure transfer of legal title to recipient
- ensure transparency and communicate the process
- document the item and the process.

If this method is unsuccessful we will:

- revisit the decision to dispose of the item
- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal
- consider an alternative course of action (such as offering the item at a reduced price or as a long-term loan)

4(g) Transfer outside the public domain

This course of action will normally only be undertaken after it has been established that no museum organisation within the wider public domain) is able to take the item.

We will first advertise the availability of the item to museums on the MA's Find an Object web listing service. We will not transfer outside the public domain as an initial course of action.

There may however be circumstances where it is appropriate and the desired outcomes can be met by transferring items to individuals or bodies outside of the public domain, such as enthusiast or specialist groups.

We will consider:

- how will the disposal of the item help to achieve the desired outcome
- if adequate long-term care be provided for the item
- if the public have any access to the item
- if conditions are going to be placed on the transfer. For example, if the recipient no longer requires the item, should it be returned to the Essex Field Club in the first instance?
- public reaction to the transfer

We shall take the following steps:

- identify and inform potential organisations or individuals
- if successful, once a recipient is identified agree terms and conditions for transfer (e.g. cost and responsibility for transport; any potential future contact; requirements should the item no longer be wanted at a future date)
- ensure transfer of legal title to receiving body
- ensure transparency and communicate the process
- document the item and the process

If this method is unsuccessful:

- revisit the decision to dispose of the item
- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal

We will not normally transfer items to public bodies outside the UK

This may be done if it is in the interests of the Essex Field and the wider public benefit, such as disposal on grounds of repatriation. Transfer to a public body outside of the UK should only take place after items have been offered to public bodies in the UK.

4(h) Sale outside the public domain

This course of action will only be undertaken after it has been established that no organisation within the wider public domain is able to take the item. We will first advertise the availability of the item on the MA's Find an Object web listing service.

We will not select items for disposal with the principal aim of generating income.

Any money raised as a result of disposal through sale will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the Essex Field Club's collection. Money raised will be invested in the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection (for example, by creating or increasing an endowment, making new acquisitions or making a significant capital investment which will bring long-term benefit).

We shall consider:

- how the disposal of the item will help to achieve the desired outcome
- if adequate care be provided for the item
- if the public have any access to the item
- if conditions going to be placed on any sale. For example, if the recipient no longer requires the item, should it be offered back to the Essex Field Club in the first instance
- how the proceeds be spent
- public reaction and consequences of negative publicity

We shall take the following steps:

- identify and inform potential organisations or individuals
- select a method of sale
- if appropriate, once a new recipient is identified agree terms and conditions of sale (such as any potential future contact or access to the item, any requirements should the buyer no longer require the item)
- ensure transfer of legal title to new recipient
- ensure transparency and communicate the process
- document the item and the process

If this method is unsuccessful we will:

- revisit the decision to dispose of the item
- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal

4(j) Recycling of item

If a new location cannot be found and other methods are not appropriate, we may consider, for example, recycling an item through sale as scrap or as a gift to a charity.

We will consider:

- how this course of action will achieve any desired outcome?
- if any potential financial value is being realised?
- public reaction to the decision

We shall:

- select the method of recycling and if necessary seek expert advice
- ensure the method of recycling does not pose a risk
- ensure transfer of legal title to receiving body

- ensure transparency and communicate the process
- document the item and the process

4(k) Destruction of item

The destruction of items will only take place if an item poses a risk to the health and safety of individuals or the collection or the item is of such low quality that there is no other way of disposal.

We shall consider:

- how the destruction of the item help will help to achieve the desired outcome?
- do we have the health and safety expertise to destroy the item safely or if another agency better able to undertake this course of action?
- the public reaction to the decision

We shall:

- select the method of destruction and if necessary seek expert advice
- ensure method of destruction does not pose a risk
- ensure that destruction takes place
- document the item and the process

4(l)(a) Methods of sale

When identifying a method of sale we shall consider the requirement for openness and transparency and the need to avoid any conflicts of interest. We will, where appropriate, sell items at public auction. Volunteers and members of the Essex Field Club Council will not be allowed to purchase items being disposed of by the Essex Field Club. It is also best practice that volunteers do not acquire material from other museums.

4(l)(b) Direct sale to museum/public institution

We shall seek a specialist independent valuation and recommended that the purchasers also obtain their own independent valuation. We may decide to sell at below the market value to ensure acquisition by another reputable body.

4(l)(c) Sale on the open market

If items are not being sold directly to a body within the public domain we shall sell at public auction to ensure openness and transparency. Consideration will be given to the timing of the sale, its location and choice of auctioneer.

4(l)(d) Sale online

We may consider selling items through an online auction.

4(l)(e) Sale to a private individual

We will consider the need for transparency and openness; sale to a private individual (in the first instance) may therefore not be appropriate. However, there may be circumstances, for example when a private individual is willing to accept conditions of sale such as providing public access and

agreeing to loan to museums, when sale to an individual may be appropriate. Careful consideration will be given to this course of action.

4(l)(f) Use of proceeds from disposal:

If money is generated through the disposal of an item, it will be applied solely and directly for the benefit of the Essex Field's collection. Any money raised will be restricted to the long-term sustainability, use and development of the collection. Funds will not be used as a source of revenue.

We shall consider the need for transparency and openness.

5 All aspects of the disposal process will be documented;

5(a) Documentation will include:

- reasons for disposal
- desired outcome
- opinions and advice considered
- method of disposal
- conclusion of process: retention, transfer, sale etc.
- any conditions attached
- information relating to the item and photographs
- documentation relating to transfer of title
- note of any new location.

6 Dealing with problems

6(a) Lack of documentation relating to an item

A lack of comprehensive documentation will not automatically prompt an item's disposal, but neither should it discount an item from being considered. In such cases, we shall make reasonable attempts to research an item's history and then weigh up the risk of removing the item from the collection with any potential benefit that may result from this course of action. Articulating the desired outcome will assist in doing this.

We shall consider the possibility that the Essex Field Club does not have legal title to the item in question. If this is the case and we proceed with the disposal, any new recipient must be informed.

6(b) We may be unable to find any suitable new location for the item

There is a strong possibility we may not be able to find another museum or body in the wider public domain able to take material we wish to dispose of. This may be particularly true of duplicate items or items that are common to numerous collections. If this is the case we shall consider the following courses of action:

- reconsider the decision to dispose of the item
- depending on the significance of the item, consider retaining it and reconsider possible alternative uses

- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal
- consider alternative options (bearing in mind the proposed outcome) including long-term loans; sale (at auction); recycling; destruction; retention of item

6(c) Conflicts of interest

There is potential for conflicts of interest and it is important that they are avoided to protect the reputation of the Essex Field Club and volunteers. We shall ensure transparency and document the process.

To avoid conflicts we shall:

1. ensure volunteers, members of Essex Field Club Council and close associates are invited to express any conflict of interest
2. ensure volunteers, members of Essex Field Club Council and closes associates do not receive direct benefit, financial or other, from a decision to dispose
3. ensure volunteers, members of Essex Field Club Council and closes associates are not given, or allowed to purchase, items being disposed of

7 Communicating the process

We shall ensure transparency and openness with the public, colleagues and stakeholders.

7(a) We shall keep the public informed of plans relating to the disposal of items through press and media.

7(b) We shall adopt an open and honest approach that explains the context and potential benefit of the planned course of action. We shall set out publicly our overall policy on disposal against which individual cases can be explained.

7(c)The level, approach and timing of any communication will depend on the nature of the items being disposed of. We shall provide information, engage people in consultation and seek views as appropriate. The whole of the Essex Field Club, including those not directly involved in the disposal process, will be informed about potential disposals, the reasons behind any decisions and any proposed course of action.

7(d) We shall also consider ways of communicating information to key stakeholders including briefings posted on our website and in newsletters.

7(e) We shall engage in good proactive communication to increase the public's understanding and awareness of this area of the Essex Field Club's practice.

Checklist for all disposals

Initial steps:

- determine the desirability of undertaking a full review of the collection
- develop a project plan and allocate resources to manage the process
- create an assessment framework to assist in evaluating items within the collection and their subsequent suitability for disposal
- secure the Essex Field Club Council's agreement to the potential disposal of items
- ensure collection documentation is as complete as possible

Making the decision to dispose:

- make decisions to dispose as part of an overall collections management strategy and in light of a collections development policy, preferably as part of a review of the collection
- articulate the desired outcome of the disposal
- articulate the curatorial reasons behind the proposed disposal with reference to our collections development policy
- seek specialist advice if necessary
- consider the views of donors and stakeholders
- consider the public reaction, and develop a communications strategy
- establish whether the item was purchased or conserved with the aid of external funding bodies; if so, seek views from appropriate bodies
- ensure the museum is legally able to remove the item
- recommend a method of disposal that is likely to achieve the desired outcome

Things to consider:

- what is the desired outcome?
- if successful, how will the method of disposal help to achieve the desired outcome?
- what are the benefits of this course of action: to the care, use and context of the item; to the Essex Field Club and its collection; to the broader museum community; and to people's use and enjoyment of collections?
- what is the potential for increased use of the item through the proposed course of action? (There may be none in the case of items being recycled or destroyed)
- is the proposed recipient able to provide adequate care and opportunities for access?
- what might the public reaction be to the proposed course of action?
- what are the potential risks in the proposed course of action?

Once the decision has been made:

- identify potential recipients, approach directly
- place a notice on the MA's Find an Object web listing service, in Museums Journal and other specialist publications and websites. Allow at least two months for a response
- if appropriate, inform the donor
- if a new location can be found, agree terms and conditions of transfer (or sale)
- ensure transparency and communicate the disposal to the public
- ensure transfer of legal title to the recipient
- document the process

What to do if attempt to dispose is unsuccessful:

- reconsider the decision to dispose
- consider possible alternative uses within the Essex Field for the object(s)
- consider whether the desired outcome could be achieved through another method of disposal (transfer to wider public domain/outside public domain)
- consider alternative options (bearing in mind proposed outcome): including long-term loan; sale (at public auction); recycling; destruction; retention of item

Last updated 14th December 2016