

Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust Collections Development Policy

Name of museum: Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust (referred to below as “the Trust”)

Name of governing body: Trustees and Directors of the Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust (referred to below as “the Trustees and Directors”)

Date on which this policy was approved by the governing body: 9.11.19

Policy review procedure: This collection development policy will be published and reviewed from time to time, at least once every five years.

Date at which this policy is due for review: 8.11.24

Once the Trust is an Accredited Museum, 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 collections.

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

1.1. The Trust’s statement of purpose is defined by its principal charitable object::

“To advance the education of the public in the history of public road passenger transport and in particular in the history of those companies and types of vehicles operated through the Thames Valley and Great Western road transport corridors.”

In addition to any other powers it may have, the Trust has the following powers in order to further the Objects (but not for any other purpose):

- (a) to establish and preserve for posterity a representative selection of public service vehicles from the Thames Valley and Great Western road transport corridors;
- (b) to enhance this collection by providing secure long-term accommodation for other historic vehicles, principally those with connections to the Thames Valley & Great Western region;
- (c) to facilitate public access to the collection;
- (d) to provide a focus for retention, development and training for students of all ages in the traditional crafts and specialist skills required for restoration and maintenance of the vehicles and associated relics.

The Trust’s operational area, described as the Thames Valley and Great Western road transport corridors in the objects above, is defined by the following local authority areas: Buckinghamshire, Cornwall, Devon, Reading, Slough, Somerset, West Berkshire, Wiltshire, Windsor & Maidenhead and Wokingham.

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

1.3. By definition, the Trust has a long-term purpose and holds collections in trust for the benefit of the public in relation to its stated objectives. The Trustees and Directors therefore accept the principle that sound curatorial reasons must be established

before consideration is given to any acquisition to the collection, or the disposal of any items in the Trust's collection.

- 1.4. Acquisitions outside the current stated policy will only be made in exceptional circumstances.
- 1.5. The Trust 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. It will take into account limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
- 1.6. The Trust 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 and Directors are satisfied that the Trust 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 governing body will not undertake disposal unless it can be demonstrated that all the following exceptional circumstances are met in full:
 - 1.7.1. the disposal will significantly improve the long-term public benefit derived from the remaining collection
 - 1.7.2. the disposal will not be undertaken to generate short-term revenue (for example to meet a budget deficit)
 - 1.7.3. the disposal will be undertaken as a last resort after other sources of funding have been thoroughly explored
 - 1.7.4. extensive prior consultation with sector bodies has been undertaken
 - 1.7.5. the item under consideration lies outside the Trust's established core collection

2. History of the collections

The Trust was registered in England as a Company Limited by Guarantee (No. 05035702) on 5 February 2004 and as a Charity (No. 1125980) on 22 September 2008. The Trust's collections started to develop from 2009 with the loan of two vehicles from the Trust Chairman for a period of 10 years. From this time onwards the Trust's collections have expanded significantly through a combination of medium to long term loans, typically of the period of 5-10 years, and donations and purchases which have been formally Accessioned.

3. An overview of current collections

- 3.1 The primary focus of the Trust's collections is the network of public road passenger services established in or passing through the Trust's operating area by the Main Line Railways, in particular the Great Western Railway (GWR), the National Omnibus & Transport Company (NOTC), the British Electric Traction Company (BET), Royal Blue Express Coach Services, and their predecessors, subsidiaries and successors. A

secondary focus is the local authority undertakings and other competing establishments and individuals who also have operated in this area. The first listed above, the GWR, established road passenger services (Road Motors) in many parts of its operating area which, in addition to the Trust's operating area, covered most of Wales, the West Midlands, the English border counties of Gloucestershire, Herefordshire, Shropshire and Cheshire and adjoining counties of Worcestershire, Staffordshire and Oxfordshire. Therefore a tertiary focus is the development of the GWR Road Motors network and the transfer of knowledge, experience and operational assets across this wider area.

3.2 The scope of the collections includes any objects or data pertaining to these organisations and operations including large objects such as road vehicles and buildings, operating and maintenance equipment, uniforms, books, publications, archives, ephemera, drawings, photographs and films, models and other small objects, which together relate to and describe the transport operations and assets outlined above. Of particular note are the following Accessioned vehicles:

1. A collection of 100 year old chassis and body components which provide the opportunity for the restoration of three vehicles from that era including one which is the oldest surviving vehicle once operated by NOTC.
2. Former Thames Valley Traction Company (TVT) 1927 Tilling Stevens B9 Express bus, M09324, which is the oldest surviving vehicle from the TVT fleet.
3. Former TVT 1946 Bristol K6A double deck bus, DBL154, which is the oldest example of the post war Eastern Coach Works bodied lowbridge K type.
4. Former Southern National 1953 Bristol KSW6B double deck bus which is the only surviving Western or Southern National example of this once prolific type which was the ultimate development of the Bristol K type chassis built from 1936 until 1957.
5. Former Reading Transport 1976 Bristol VRT double deck bus which was one of 50 Bristol VRs all with Northern Counties bodywork and built to the 10 metre long LL3 specification with a total capacity including standees of 91 passengers hence being known as 'Jumbos'

These are complemented by nationally significant vehicles in the long-term loan collection such as:

6. Former GWR 1927 Guy FBB single deck bus, YF714, the only surviving vehicle of its type and the only survivor from the GWR Road Motor (bus) fleet which numbered some 800 vehicles.
7. Former NOTC and Southern National 1927 Leyland Lion PLSC3 bus, VW203, which carries the only surviving bus body built by W. Mumford & Sons of Plymouth, a once prolific constructor of new bodies to extend operational life of earlier chassis in the 1930s.
8. Former Royal Blue 1952 Bristol LS6G coach, MOD973, which is the oldest production example of the revolutionary integral construction Bristol LS and the oldest coach version.

Other notable components of the collections are a near-complete run of TVT and successors bus timetable books and handbills from 1920 onwards and a similarly complete collection for NOTC and successors, and rare Great Western Road Motors tickets and timetables.

- 3.3 The Trust's collections are housed in secure insulated premises in both the Thames Valley and South Devon.

4. Themes and priorities for future collecting

- 4.1 The themes and priorities for future collecting reflect the Trust's statement of purpose in 1.1 and are to develop the existing collections in 3 to give a comprehensive geographical and chronological demonstration of passenger road transport evolution in societal and technological contexts.
- 4.2 The Trust imposes no time span on its collections and will continue to collect representative examples of the widest possible range of objects and data from all periods as operational practices and technology develop and become obsolete and available for acquisition.
- 4.3 From time to time, the Trust is offered significant volumes of printed material such as bus company publicity leaflets, timetables, faretables, photographs, industry and enthusiasts' magazines. The Trust's policy is to collect single copies of the majority of this material but, for more frequently referred to or more valuable material, such as timetables, route maps, operating and maintenance manuals and some magazines, to collect duplicate copies, one set being placed at each of the Trust's museum/archive locations (i.e. in the Thames Valley and South Devon). Additional copies of this type of material in excess of that described above will not be Accessioned into the Trust's collections but may be accepted on the understanding that they may be disposed of in order to generate income to support the work of the Trust.

5. Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal

- 5.1 The Trust does not intend to dispose of collections during the period covered by this policy as a result of rationalisation as the current priority centres on developing the collections and improving their management and usability.
- 5.2 In exceptional cases, such as for legal, safety or care and conservation reasons, disposal may be undertaken.
- 5.3 In general, the Trust 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 collection and will result in a more useable, well managed collection.
- 5.4 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 The Trust recognises its responsibility to work within the parameters of the Museum Association Code of Ethics when considering acquisition and disposal.

7 Collecting policies of other museums

- 7.1 The Trust will take account of the collecting policies of other museums, other organisations and individuals collecting in the same or related areas or subject fields. It will consult with these organisations and individuals 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:

Aldershot & District Bus Interest Group
Bristol Vintage Bus Group
The Bus Archive
Cornwall Bus Preservation Society
Devon General Omnibus Trust
Devon General Society
Great Western Society
London Transport Museum
National Association of Road Transport Museums
Oxford Bus Museum
South Devon Railway Museum
Trolleybus Museum, Sandtoft
West Country Historic Omnibus and Transport Trust

8 Archival holdings

- 8.1 In addition to printed material such as bus company publicity leaflets, timetables, faretables, photographs, industry and enthusiasts' magazines described in 4.3, the Trust collects original company and personal archive material relating to the Trust's Objects and areas of interest. This information includes:

- i. Drawings of company premises (e.g. bus stations and garages)
- ii. Photographs, slides and negatives
- iii. Vehicle information and maintenance records
- iv. Route information, time and fare table proposals and changes
- v. Training and operations manuals
- vi. Vehicle and staff duties
- vii. Historical research studies

- 8.2 The policies described in relation to other Trust collections described in this Collections Development Policy also apply to the Trust's archive collections and the Directors and Trustees will be further guided by the Code of Practice on Archives for Museums & Galleries in the UK.

9 Acquisition

- 9.1 The policy for agreeing acquisitions in line with the themes and priorities set out in 4, whether by donation, purchase, or loan and whether for Accessioning into the collections, use by the Trust or sale in support of Trust funds will be the responsibility

of the Trustees and Directors and not of any individual Trustee, Director or Trust Supporter.

9.2 The museum 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, the museum will reject any items that have been illicitly traded. The governing body 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.

10 Human remains

10.1 The Trust does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

11 Biological and geological material

11.1 The Trust will not acquire any biological or geological material.

12 Archaeological material

12.1 The Trust will not acquire any archaeological material.

13 Exceptions

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

14 Spoliation

14.1 The Trust will use the statement of principles 'Spoliation of Works of Art during the Nazi, Holocaust and World War II period', issued for non-national museums in 1999 by the Museums and Galleries Commission.

15 The Repatriation and Restitution of objects and human remains

15.1 As stated in 10.1 above, the Trust does not hold or intend to acquire any human remains.

16 Disposal procedures

16.1 All disposals will be undertaken with reference to the SPECTRUM Primary Procedures on disposal. see <https://collectionstrust.org.uk/spectrum>

- 16.2 The Trustees and Directors will confirm that the Trust 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 an Accessioned object belonging to the Trust is being considered, the Trust 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, exchange, or as a last resort - destruction.
- 16.5 The decision to dispose of material from the collections will be taken by the Trustees and Directors only after full consideration of the reasons for disposal. Other factors including public benefit, the implications for the Trust'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 the Trust will also be sought.
- 16.6 A decision to dispose of a specimen or object, whether by gift, sale, exchange 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 and Directors acting as a group, and not of an individual Trustee or Director or Trust Supporter acting alone.
- 16.7 Once a decision to dispose of material in the collection 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 any 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 Museum Association's Find an Object web listing service, an announcement in the Museums Association's Museums Journal or in other specialist preservation publications and websites.
- 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 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, the Trust may consider disposing of the material to other interested individuals and organisations giving priority to organisations intending to keep the material in the public domain.
- 16.10 Any monies received by the Trust 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 Arts Council England.

16.11 The proceeds of a sale will be allocated so it can be demonstrated that 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 collection.

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 the Trust will not necessarily be in a position to exchange the material with an Accredited museum or member of NARTM. The Trustees and Directors 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 governing body 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, the museum 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 the museum's collection 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 governing body 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 and Directors may decide to destroy it.

16.15 It is acceptable to destroy material of low intrinsic significance (duplicate mass-produced articles (such as timetables, leaflets or printed books) 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 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 persons where required.

16.18 The destruction of objects should be witnessed by an appropriate Trustee, Director or their nominated Trust Supporter. In circumstances where this is not possible, e.g. the destruction of controlled substances, a police certificate should be obtained and kept in the relevant object history file.