

## PITSTONE AND IVINGHOE MUSEUM SOCIETY

### Documentation Policy Statement

Established      May 2015

Review            May 2020

#### Introduction

Documentation underpins every aspect of the museum's activity. Recording and collection of information is central to our accountability for the collection, its accessibility, management, research, study and use.

Our policy for documentation of the collection is to ensure that the information we hold relating to the collections is accurate, secure, reliable and accessible.

#### Aims and Objectives

The aim of this Policy is to ensure that we fulfill our guardianship, stewardship and access responsibilities. Through implementation of this policy, our objective is to:

- Improve accountability for the collection
- Maintain at least minimum professional standards in documentation procedures and collection information and to attain the very highest standards wherever possible;
- Extend access to collection information
- Strengthen the security of the collections.
- 

#### Accountability

The museum will follow the accountability principles defined by the Museums and Galleries Commission;

*"to enable museums to fulfill their fundamental responsibilities for collections and the information associated with them. The principles are that a museum should know at any time exactly for what it is legally responsible (this includes loans as well as permanent collections), and where each item is located."* (MGC 1993)

## **Levels of Documentation**

The museum is committed to record significant information about the objects in our care so that each object we are legally responsible for (including loans as well as long term collections) can be identified and located.

For the majority of our collection, curatorial staff will document to individual item level. However, for certain collections, for example the Cook Collection and some newspapers we will document items at group level. We therefore aim to have a basic 'inventory' record for all identified items and groups within the collection; whilst some items will be documented to a more detailed 'catalogue' level (using Modes Compact Programme).

We will document our collections as described below:

- Inventory level: This includes sufficient key information to allow any object(s) in our care to be individually identified and verified. All accessioned items, loans inward and outward, and any other un-accessioned objects as appropriate are documented at this level.

## **Computerisation of Records**

Our records are held using Modes Compact, from which we extract working documents to progress with inventories and the like, in the form of spreadsheets. The archivist maintains this record on one of the office computers, the manager keeps a copy at home and our computer record officer also keeps a separate copy.

## **Controlled Access to Sensitive Information**

All requests for information will be considered in terms of compliance with the Freedom of Information Act (2000) and Data Protection Act (1998) and the Environmental Information Regulation (2004). We will review requests for confidential data such as donor information, environmental information, valuations or site details on a case by case basis, and in accordance with the applicable legislation and any legal agreements or conditions of gift.