



West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust
Registered Charity No. 265564



Information Sheet for Lenders

Introduction.

- 1) This information sheet is intended for Accredited Museums or recognised Heritage Sites that are considering loaning artifacts to the Gauge Museum or Blue Anchor Museum. The West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust (WSRHT) will issue a description of the museum (or other venue where the object would be display/stored) and specify the responsibilities of the borrower during the loan period. This document does not supersede any terms set out by the lender but would merely demonstrate the borrower's duty in safeguarding the loan.
- 2) The Gauge Museum has been upgraded and reinterpreted thus offering more flexibility for displays and other materials. It would also be worth mentioning that we have an active research and archiving process to which loans would contribute in terms of broadening our information base.

The West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust (WSRHT).

- 1) The WSRHT is concerned with the historical and educational aspects of railway preservation in West Somerset. Since 1984 the Trust has made financial contributions to the restoration of Great Western Railway (GWR) steam locomotives no. 4561 and no. 4160, rescued a unique GWR sleeping car dated 1896, and rescued part of a second GWR sleeping car also dated 1896. The Trust has also agreed to be responsible for developing the established GWR Museum at Bishops Lydeard and is also developing its museum at Blue Anchor, has established a new museum registering system and archive, published information leaflets and advised on historical matters.
- 2) The WSRHT has 3 main objectives, these are:
 - a) Preserving and displaying heritage items relating to railways and the West Somerset Railway (WSR) and interpreting and curating all the heritage assets owned by the Trust.
 - b) Restoring the heritage carriages owned by the Trust for display and operation on the railway.
 - c) Managing the museum(s) at Bishops Lydeard and Blue Anchor – one museum on two sites.
- 3) The WSRHT will take care of all the objects lodged with it whether they are owned by the WSRHT or on temporary loan from Accredited Museums or recognised Heritage Sites. Sound entry procedures are essential to guard against situations where the WSRHT could be held liable for loss of or damage to objects that are on temporary loan to it.

The Museums.

- 1) The museum at Blue Anchor was established in 1985 and has a collection of display material and artefacts. Some artefacts within the collection have been acquired for the museum but the artifact collection remains mostly privately owned by various individuals.
- 2) The Gauge Museum at Bishops Lydeard was established in 1991 by the West Somerset Railway Association (WSRA). The original set of artefacts was mostly loaned to the museum, though some were purchased by the WSRA. Over the following years many additional artefacts were donated to the WSRA or the WSRHT and these now form the bulk of the collection. In 2018, management of the museum was transferred to the WSRHT, although ownership of the artefacts is unchanged. Since around 2010, items donated to 'the railway' or 'to the museum' were assumed to be donated to the WSRHT.

Object Loans.

From 01 August 2022 loans can only be accepted from Accredited Museums or recognised Heritage Sites. Loans from individuals cannot be accepted, only bequeathments or permanent gifts to the museum. Any loans from Accredited Museums or recognised Heritage Sites are accepted for a maximum period of 12 months, this is renewable by written agreement. Long term loans may be accepted subject to prior written agreement – WSRHT museum staff are the only individuals on the railway that can scrutinize artifacts and give agreement for their acceptance.

- 1) There is no such thing as a 'Permanent Loan'. Loans will be of a short term (less than 12 months). They will be reviewed at the end of the period for the loan that is agreed in writing between the Trust museum and the lender.
- 2) Where 'Permanent Loans' are already part of the collection, every effort will be made to trace the owner(s) and to amend the agreement into a donation or gift.
- 3) For 'Loans In' from other Accredited Museums or recognised Heritage Sites, an additional 'Loans In' record must be made and cross-referenced to the Entry Record.

See also the 'Museum Condition Report Form – Acquisitions' and 'Museum Condition Report form – Loans' when artifacts are acquired for the museum or loaned out from the museum to other Accredited Museums or recognised Heritage Sites (see also <https://www.wsrht.co.uk/>).

Artifact Entry and Exit Policies.

- 1) Artifact Entry and Exit policies and forms are available on the WSRHT Web site, <https://www.wsrht.co.uk/>, or from the Museum Curator; donors must not leave objects unattended, anywhere on the railway or its environs with the intention of it being forwarded onto the museum, artefacts left without prior arrangement and/or the exchange of paperwork are NOT the responsibility of WSRHT or the WSR.
- 2) An Artifact Entry form must be completed immediately an object is donated and its provenance verified, in the presence of the depositor. Only authorised members of museum staff can receive items. A record of receipt will be issued immediately the item is accepted and becomes the property of the museum. If a donor is in any doubt please email; info@wsrht.co.uk or telephone: 01823 618180, or write to: The Curator, WSRHT, The Railway Station, Bishops Lydeard, Taunton, TA4 3BX.

- 3) Details outlining the Terms and Procedures for the following:
- a) An Acquisitions Policy to help decide when artefacts should be acquired or disposed of and help to ensure that the collection grows in an appropriate rather than eclectic collection.
 - b) Entry procedures (Artefact Entry Form) when artefacts are acquired. This provides a receipt for the depositor, establish under what conditions the object is being donated or bequeathed to the museum and allow the WSRHT to exercise due diligence in acting responsibly for objects in its care. importantly, the entry procedure will establish legal title of the object.
 - c) Numbering systems for entries and accessioning (cataloguing). Trust is in the process of meeting the requirements of the Museum Accreditation Standard. The Trust is using the 'Spectrum' primary procedures for collections management. It considers any limitations on collecting imposed by such factors as staffing, storage and care of collection arrangements.
 - d) Indexing and cataloguing to ensure that the collection can be searched in a robust fashion and that adequate data is recorded about an object so that it is uniquely identified, and its provenance can be proven.
 - e) Loan procedures (both in and out) to ensure that items loaned to the museum are properly cared for to minimise the Trust's liability for borrowed items.
 - f) Movement control as artefacts are moved around the museum and in/out of storage to ensure that objects can be located at any time.
 - g) Exit procedures and records when artefacts are released back or disposed of (Artefact Exit Form).
 - h) The Trust is currently transferring all artifacts and museum collections onto the MODES Collections Management System. Modes was developed by the Museum Documentation Association (MDA) who released the first version in 1987. The Collections Management software used previously was a Microsoft Access database which is now considered outdated, although still usable under certain conditions.

Unsolicited Items and Artifacts.

- 1) Unsolicited items and artifacts left without prior arrangement and/or the exchange of paperwork are NOT the responsibility of WSRHT Trust or the WSR.
- 2) Where an item has been accepted that is not in accordance with the acquisitions policy, then it may be disposed of in accordance with the Disposals policy. The WSRHT Disposals policy can be found at Appendix 1 of the Artifact Entry form.

DOCUMENT CONTROL

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Version No	Date	Revision
0.1	September 2022	First Issue of Document.
0.2	October 2022	Out for review.
0.3	December 2022	WSRHT Board Approved. Next Revision due December 2025.

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