



**West Somerset Railway Heritage Trust**



**Registered Charity No. 265564**

## **Museum Collection Care and Conservation Policy**

### **Including the Monitoring Timetable.**

#### **Introduction.**

- 1) The WSRHT is committed to delivering and maintaining a high level of care to its collections. For this reason, a consistent and regular monitoring programme is essential as a means of identifying and reporting potential threats to the collection, so that swift action can be taken in order to mitigate these.

#### **Buildings Checks.**

- 1) The Gauge Museum is housed in a goods shed, which is itself a listed building. While responsibility for the external maintenance of the building lies with the West Somerset Railway PLC, the Trust is nonetheless committed to carrying out its own buildings check three times a year in order to swiftly identify and report any structural weaknesses which may place the collection under threat. Buildings checks are carried out in:
  - a) November (Prior to the Museum closing for the season)
  - b) July (Mid-Season)
  - c) March (Prior to the Museum opening for the season)
- 2) Information gathered during buildings checks is recorded on the museum's building check list. Concerns are reported to the Curator and copies of the list are filed in the Collections Care Folder in the Museum Office.

#### **Environmental Monitoring.**

- 1) Maintaining consistent levels in temperature and relative humidity (RH) is essential to the health of a collection. The Gauge Museum uses tiny tag data loggers to record trends in temperature and RH over a period. The results of these are monitored every two months, unless a specific threat is identified, necessitating more frequent checks.
- 2) Information from dataloggers is downloaded and analysed. Any concerns are reported to the Curator, and actions are taken to equalise the environment e.g., through the use of heaters and/or dehumidifiers. The Silica Gel sachets in the archive storage are checked every three months and replaced as needed. Dataloggers are checked in:
  - a) February
  - b) April
  - c) June
  - d) August
  - e) October
  - f) December

- 3) Information collected from the dataloggers is stored in the Collections Care Folder in the Museum Office.

### **Light Monitoring.**

- 1) The Gauge Museum is fortunate that it has very few windows in the main building and none at all in the storage rooms. There are no opportunities for direct light to fall on any part of the collection. Nonetheless, light levels are measured monthly throughout the brighter months (March-September) and bi-monthly during the winter.
- 2) Information collected from light monitors is stored in the Collections Care Folder in the Museum Office and any concerns are reported to the Curator.

### **Insect Pests.**

- 1) Insect pests can represent a significant threat to a collection. The Gauge Museum uses standard sticky blunder traps to collect samples of potential pests. The traps are checked monthly between February and June and then every two months for the rest of the year.
- 2) Contents of the traps are analysed and recorded on our pest monitoring form and any concerns are reported to the Curator. Completed forms are stored in the Collections Care Folder in the Museum Office.

### **Collections Checks.**

- 1) In addition to monitoring the general environment of the museum, it is also important to regularly monitor the health of specific items in the museum collection. Some objects have been identified as 'vulnerable' due to their age, the materials they are composed of and/or their rarity. These items should be monitored quarterly using the forms provided, which explain what to look out for. Any concerns should be reported to the curator.
- 2) In addition to the key 'vulnerable' objects, a small sample of other objects in the collection should also be examined regularly, to ensure the general health of the entire collection. Once again, a form is provided for this.

### **Collections Care Monitoring Timetable.**

<b>Month</b>	<b>Infrastructure</b>	<b>Temp/RH</b>	<b>Pests</b>	<b>Light</b>	<b>Key Objects Check</b>	<b>General Collections Check</b>
<b>January</b>				Check light levels	Check objects on list	Take random selection and check
<b>February</b>		Check dataloggers. Check silica gel levels in archive	Check insect traps			
<b>March</b>	Buildings Check		Check insect traps	Check light levels		
<b>April</b>		Check dataloggers	Check insect traps	Check light levels	Check objects on list	Random selection and check.

<b>May</b>			Check insect traps	Check light levels		
<b>June</b>		Check dataloggers Check silica gel levels in archive	Check insect traps	Check light levels		
<b>July</b>	Buildings Check			Check light levels	Check objects on list	Take random selection and check
<b>August</b>		Check dataloggers	Check insect traps	Check light levels		
<b>September</b>				Check light levels		
<b>October</b>		Check dataloggers Check silica gel levels in archive	Check insect traps		Check objects on list	Take random selection and check
<b>November</b>	Buildings Check			Check light levels		
<b>December</b>		Check dataloggers	Check insect traps			

**DOCUMENT CONTROL**

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<b>Version No</b>	<b>Date Approved</b>	<b>Revision</b>
0.1	February 2021	First Draft.
0.2	November 2022	Policy Reviewed and Amended. Draft for Approval
0.3	January 2023	With WSRHT Trustees for Approval. Next Revision January 2026.

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