



VWML Acquisition and Disposal Policy

v2.0

Document history

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1. Introduction

The Vaughan Williams Memorial Library (VWML) is the library and archive of the English Folk Dance and Song Society (EFDSS). It is a unique multi-media library, archive and information resource focusing primarily on traditional and revived forms of folk music, dances, songs, storytelling and customs (hereafter referred to as the folk arts) found in England and its related cultures.

This Policy outlines the approach of VWML to acquiring and disposing of its collections.

2. Collection aims and scope

Since its inception in 1930, the main function of VWML has been to support the aims and objectives of the EFDSS (including educational initiatives) and to meet all user needs at all levels. It seeks to achieve this by acquiring, organising, preserving and making available relevant materials (including copies of originals) in various formats, published and unpublished.

VWML will acquire items for its core collections which are relevant to the folk arts of England and its related cultures. Materials from and about other cultures, in languages other than English, will also be included where they support and reinforce core collected materials.

VWML's value lies in the combination of its depth of information and breadth of media, reflected in over a century of collecting activity. The need to acquire materials of historical as well as current and future interest is recognised.

Formats currently collected include manuscript material, typescript and printed information, photographic material (negatives, slides and prints), electronic records (born digital and digitised copies of analogue records), audio-visual materials (film, video and digital files), and digital and analogue sound recordings (reel-to-reels, cassettes, vinyl, shellac, CD, digital). VWML also has small collection of artworks (sculpture, painting, drawing, prints and objects) and items of clothing, which is not a current collecting priority (see 3.6).

Details of acquisitions and disposals are recorded electronically and physically (via Agreements, correspondence, accessions registers and cataloguing systems).

3. Acquisitions

3.1 VWML will acquire:

- a. Printed books, journals and pamphlets relating to folk dance, song, storytelling and customs

- b. Sound recordings in analogue and digital media relating to folk dance, song, storytelling and customs
- c. Photographic images in all analogue and digital media depicting folk dance, song, storytelling and customs
- d. Audio-visual materials, including film, video, DVD, and electronic image files, documenting folk dance, song, storytelling and customs
- e. Manuscripts, such as correspondence, diaries and notebooks (to include electronic archives) relating to folk dance, song, storytelling and customs
- f. Records of the EFDSS and other folk-related bodies, such as minutes and publicity material
- g. Published information in digital formats relating to folk dance, song, storytelling and customs
- h. Ephemera, such as street literature (broadsides, chapbooks, etc.), flyers, programmes and other publicity and promotional materials documenting folk dance, song, storytelling and customs
- i. Artwork, art objects and clothing relating to folk dance and customs (these items are not the collecting priority of VWML, however will be acquired in specific circumstances. See 3.6)

3.2 VWML will acquire documents by transfer, exchange, gift and purchase (see elsewhere for conditions of deposit). The Library Team will discuss the terms of donation of materials with potential donors and will determine, if possible, issues such as access, processing, copyright, storage, conservation, disposal and administration before, and at the point of, acquiring items. These terms will be documented in the VWML Gift Agreement and/or cataloguing systems.

3.3 Limitations on acquisition are imposed by both intellectual and practical considerations. There is a variety of definitions of the terms 'folk' and 'traditional' which are core to the focus of the Library. The Librarian will exercise discretion in judging which materials are relevant to this focus and the users of the Library.

Collections care is a key priority of VWML. As such, VWML will not acquire any material which demands preservation or conservation care beyond the realistic financial and practical capabilities of the Library. VWML will also not acquire formats which it cannot responsibly process and preserve.

Further, budgetary and accommodation restrictions limit the amount of materials that can be acquired.

3.4 Every effort will be made to catalogue documents acquired with a view to allowing public access, subject to any requirements of confidentiality and/or the wishes of the owner or depositors.

3.5 Operating strictly within current copyright legislation, use of VWML holdings will be encouraged by production of materials by the EFDSS in all media, including its website.

3.6 Museum artefacts will be considered for collection on an individual basis. Circumstances for acquiring such items depend on relevance to the VWML collecting remit, the ability of a more relevant institution to acquire material, and prospective storage needs. In the first instance, they will not be considered as part of the acquisitions policy.

3.7 The Trustees will review the Acquisition and Disposal policy every 5 years. Acquisitions and disposal outside the current stated policy should only be made in exceptional circumstances, and then only after proper consideration by the Library Advisory Committee of the EFDSS and having regard to the interests of other repositories.

4. Deaccessioning and Disposals

VWML endeavours to assess any new acquisitions prior to accessioning to avoid acceptance of duplicates or items which do not fall within its collecting scope. However, on occasions, some items are accessioned which VWML will wish to deaccession (i.e. remove from its collections). Similarly, it is the responsibility of any collecting organisation to periodically evaluate its collections in-line with its collecting remit, and to deaccession items out of scope in order to continue to operate sustainably.

Depending on the terms stipulated by Donors or Depositors in the Gift Agreement or other documented terms, VWML shall have authority to transfer deaccessioned materials to a more suitable repository if it is felt that the materials would benefit from their re-location, or to evaluate and select for disposal or sale those materials not deemed to be worthy of permanent preservation within its collections. In such cases, decisions will be documented and, depending on Donor/ Depositor requests set out in the Gift Agreement or other records, every effort will be made to contact Donors or Depositors to return items (contact attempts will be recorded as due diligence). Where items have been donated with no additional information or provenance, VWML has the authority to transfer, dispose or sell materials that do not fit within its collecting scope as it sees fit.