Appendix C

Collection Review and Rationalisation Plan

1 REVIEWS UNDERTAKEN – ACTIONS PENDING

Aberdeen Art Gallery & Museums value the importance of rationalisation and disposal.

Assessment criteria vary depending on the core purpose of the collection and will be reflected in the description of the collection **(Appendix A)** and priorities for future collecting **(Appendix B)**.

Collection reviews will be focussed and may be related to subject specific exhibitions or engagement projects.

Collection reviews will result in a clearer understanding of the scope of the collection, its documentation, storage and conservation needs, and recommend ways to develop that collection further. This could include focussed public consultation, acquisition, disposal, documentation or storage improvements, curatorial research, exhibition or engagement, and conservation.

A programme of collection reviews began in 2014/2015 including:

1.1 ACC Civic collection

(outwith the scope of this Collection Development Policy but part of the service's curatorial care remit)

OUTCOMES

A numbering system using the prefix ABDCC was set up. Recommendations for disposal were made and carried out with the agreement of the Civic Affairs Manager.

1.2 Toys and games (716 items)

OUTCOMES

In 2016 two members of staff were seconded to the History team to improve documentation, review and create a display with the Toys and Games collection. 291 records were enhanced and approximately 40% of the collection was reviewed. The review identified key strengths and gaps in the collection.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are made for collecting objects from the 2000s onwards in order to at once address the gap in the collections from this time period, as well as the stated aim above for exploring the role of technology in defining the status of toys and games as obsolete. In accordance with the weaknesses explored in the section above, representative examples can include, although not be limited to:

- electronic/digital toys and games
- best-selling toys and games their popularity often being denoted because they represented the latest technological innovations

Consideration should also be given to the number of people who have been in contact since the exhibition opened offering loans/donations. They represent a reservoir of knowledge and accepting some of their donations (where applicable) would allow us to at once address gaps in the collection, while also building new and reciprocal relationships with the wider community.

1.3 Ship models

Consisting of over 330 models, including halfhull models, primarily representing vessels built in Aberdeen or operating out of Aberdeen and North East Scotland in the last 300 years.

OUTCOMES

Fuller understanding of range of collection to allow greater use in public exhibitions and for use by researchers

Models for disposal identified and submitted to Acquisition and Disposal Panel for approval

Gaps in the collection identified to help inform future collecting

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Whilst the collection contains a significant number of models of oil and gas support vessels, the collection needs to continue to reflect the broad range of number of ships involved and ensure that where possible it obtains models of ships currently supporting the industry that will be familiar as visitors to Aberdeen Harbour. In addition, the collection currently has a small number of ROV models, as these are undergoing constant development and improvements, where models of more modern versions are offered they should be considered a priority for acquisition.

Over 3,000 vessels were built in Aberdeen and many, such as the Clippers "Scottish Maid" and "Thermopylae", are of national and international significance. Whilst it would be impossible to store and display examples of all Aberdeen Built Ships, where models of significant vessels are offered then if they are not already represented in the collection they should be considered for acquisition.

Status of loaned-in objects reviewed. Programme of contacting owners to be undertaken, with intention of returning loans (unless required for display) or convert to gifts.

1.4 Office (est. 180 items)

OUTCOMES

In 2016 a member of staff was seconded to the History team to improve documentation, review and create a display with the Office collections. 37 records were improved as part of the review. The review identified some key strengths and weaknesses in the collection but has still to be completed.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

While the review is incomplete some recommendations were made:

- The collection is lacking in office technology post-1980s
- The collection is lacking is mass produced items which are seen as disposable, e.g. ball point pens
- When new objects are collected the history of the use of the object should be recorded. This will allow meaningful displays to be created using the office collections
- The collection is lacking in material relating to coding

1.5 Woodworking tools (est. 700 items)

OUTCOMES

Between February and September 2014 403 woodworking tools across science and industry and maritime collections were physically reviewed and catalogue records improved. Items were scored for provenance, age/rarity and condition, with provenance being most important.

This review identified a number of key strengths in the collection:

- Cartwright/Wheelwright: A
 comprehensive large collection relating to
 J & J Ingram, of 72 Hutcheon St,
 Aberdeen. The collection includes 12
 handtools, 21 photos and a model cart
 positively identified with further 34 items
 attributed to the firm (although there is
 some reconciliation to be done, it seems
 likely this material sits together). Some
 interesting ephemera provides evidence
 of "works days out" to Aberdeenshire,
 adding a social history element.
- Cooper: A 'complete' set of cooper's tools gifted by George Davidson, of Walker Road, Torry, born in 1890. We have an oral history interview on tape with Mr Davidson (not yet digitised) and 40 hand tools gifted in 1973. These are supplemented by a few handtools from a Mr Warrender (also of Torry) which were not represented in Mr Davidson's set.

- Joiner: A collection of 7 hand tools belonging to Alex Milne who served his time with his father at the workshop at 46 College Bounds carrying out work for the University. Later he moved to work in Duthie's shipyard and then the Corporations Tramway Department, eventually becoming foreman joiner, and who latterly worked for the Northern Coop. He retired at the age of 65, died age 89 circa 1977. Whilst a small collection, there is potential to further research this individual.
- Upholsterer: A set of 64 handtools gifted in 1987 belonging to William Brand, who lived at Tarves (was at one time employed on the Haddo estate). He had been originally a blacksmith to trade but due to head wounds received in World War 1 had to look for alternative employment. He set himself in business in Marywell Street Aberdeen as an upholsterer. Could potentially be used in conjunction with the Applied Art Furniture collections in interpretation and learning; scope for partnerships with NTS at Haddo House.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

- A number of collections were identified for disposal, either as having a provenance from outside Aberdeen, no provenance or due to excessive duplication.
- It is not recommended at this time that further collections are actively sought but rather that resources are committed to enhance collections knowledge around current holdings, with the exception of a few gaps identified in Appendix B: 4.4.6

1.6 North Sea Offshore Energy (1130 items)

OUTCOMES

Between 2016 and 2017 a review of the holdings of AAGM in the area of offshore energy industries took place where an analysis of the strengths and weaknesses of the collection was carried out and where recommendations for future development of this collection in line with the designation of AMM as "Lead Museum for UK Offshore Oil Industries" took place.

As much of the activity of the North Sea takes place out of sight, and often using very large bits of kit, it presents a challenge to represent this coherently and economically to the public in terms of the resources available. However this activity is integral to Aberdeen and beyond and has formed the economic backbone of the area for forty years representing great technological, social and economic change.

The vast number of artefacts in the collection are in very good condition. The collection is very strong on the technical aspects of life offshore and objects and in particular key developments (eg. Newt Suit that was a breakthrough in deep sea diving, radio from the Sea Quest or Murchison platform model giving some idea of the scale of offshore structures) in the history of the industry and personal material relating to the Piper Alpha disaster which provoked a step change in safety procedures.

Obvious weakness in the collection is the lack of much material directly related to decommissioning, renewables, material from the northern sector of the North Sea, and a large amount of material paper based including duplicates which although interesting offer little interpretative opportunity within the displays.

The collection is made up of a variety of materials and types of objects which can be summarised thus:

- Printed Material: books, booklets, workbooks/ work diaries, leaflets and catalogues, includes material from some of the earliest Offshore Europe conferences in the 1970s.
- Photographs: with over 510 photographs, plus some albums these form the majority of the collection

- Oral Histories: a small number of interviews were undertaken for the redevelopment of the Energy Galleries at AMM in 2012. These have not been catalogued, but are held on an external hard drive, and have been transcribed.
- Films: mostly corporate films and professional footage all on VHS Video tape.
- Personal Ephemera: boarding cards, menus, items relating to non-working life onboard such as Christmas parties, clubs and societies
- Souvenirs: paperweights (including commemorative oil samples), presentation and promotional items (whisky bottles, postal first day covers, etc.)
- Models: principally made to commemorate construction, but notably also the original pipe clash models for the Murchison and Brae Alpha platforms – N.B. models have not been included in this review
- Fine Art: principally the collection of artworks created by Sue Jane Taylor, documenting her response to the works offshore over the past thirty years, including maquette for the Piper Alpha memorial, and works by former Gray's School of Art tutor George McKay.
- Tools and Equipment: work/ team clothing, bags, personal protective equipment, drill bits, oil samples, core samples

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

The review resulted in the identification of areas for development of the collection:

Areas Identified for Future Acquisition:

- Offshore renewables including wave and tidal power
- Decommissioning material
- Social and economic impact of fluctuations in the industry on Aberdeen/UK

It also resulted in the identification of items which could be more appropriately housed elsewhere. The majority of items identified for disposals are printed ephemera, and duplicates. In the first instance it is recommended to offer this material to the University of Aberdeen's Capturing the Energy project.

Of the non-archival material recommended for disposal the majority are identified for reasons of relevance and provenance, mostly generic items not unique to the industry

1.7 Dolls (48 items to date)

OUTCOMES

In 2017, an Aberdeen University placement student reviewed the peg dolls and some of the foreign costume dolls in the collection. 48 records were enhanced, 162 dolls were photographed and a number of items requiring minor repairs were identified. The project also made recommendations for future collecting.

KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are made for collecting objects from the 2000s onwards, focussing on dolls which aim to encourage girls to take interest in science, technology, engineering and maths subjects/careers. Examples could include the American K'nex company line of female action figures that has characters such as *Industry* who can 'repair anything that is broken' or Project Mc2 Dolls come with a scientific project to complete.

2 FUTURE PROGRAMME: ACTION PLAN

PROCESS FOR COLLECTION REVIEWS:

Set up review team to include:

- Curator
- Internal peer (not from same curatorial discipline)
- Peer/expert (e.g. another museum)
- Lay person (volunteer/Friends/student as appropriate)

Introduce team to process of review With team, select and agree assessment criteria and scoring Undertake review:

- Curator
- Peer/expert

Following review, discuss findings with wider review team.

Make recommendations to appropriate Lead Curator/Head of Collections (for work programming) and/or A&D panel (for disposals/acquisition focus).

It is intended that the following collections will be reviewed within the timeframe of this policy:

2.1 Christening costume: robes, shawls, bonnets, petticoats, capes and jacket (est. 67 items)

Expected start date: 2020

Expected end date: 2021

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

- Check provenance of christening costume.
- Ensure transparency in the decisionmaking process and identify duplication (assess if it is unnecessary duplication).
- Identify christening costume in poor condition and assess the feasibility of meeting the conservation costs.
- Identify christening costume that could be better cared for by another museum or public body.

- Consider whether any christening costume would better fit in with the collections of another museum or public body.
- Consider whether another museum or public body could give better access to the christening costume
- Consider whether the christening costume fit in with the current collecting policy.
- Identify christening costume not in use and unlikely to go on display in AAGM.

CONSULTATION

The following may be consulted if required: Expert advice Dr Sally-Anne Huxtable, Principal Curator, Modern and Contemporary Design at National Museums Scotland; Donors; Other stakeholders; Relevant AAGM staff

Appropriate funding bodies if the christening costume was acquired or conserved with external funding

Relevant Subject Specialist Networks e.g. Society of Decorative Art Collections.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

- Increase Curator's knowledge of the christening costume collection.
- Eliminate any unnecessary duplication.
- Improve care of the christening costume.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

 Improve the context of the christening costume by undertaking research and adding information to the TMS records.
 Create a conservation programme for christening costume in poor condition with the costs spread over the longer term.

2.2 Textiles: Wedding Dresses (est. 150 items)

Expected start date: 2019

Expected end date: 2020

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

The wedding dress collection in its entirety is in need of an in-depth review. A scoring system will be used to assess the wedding dresses against set criteria. The criteria will cover the following areas:

- Provenance/acquisition will be identified
- Condition will be assessed
- Importance, both historically and to the story of fashion will be gauged
- Usage, both previous and potential, will be identified
- Duplicates of wedding dresses from the same era, or with the same style, will be identified
- Assessment against the Collections Development Policy will be made

CONSULTATION

If appropriate, we will consult with other accredited museums, donors, other stakeholders, funding bodies and with subject specialist networks. We will liaise with inhouse teams where relevant. We expect that a Decorative Art curator will work closely with a representative from the history team.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

- Increase Curators' knowledge of the wedding dress collection
- Improve care of the wedding dresses
- Identify relevant collections
- Research wider historical context
- Improve catalogue records and digitise for online access
- Identify priorities for future collections
 development
- Improve storage of the wedding dresses

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

- Discover and highlight strengths in the collections.
- The review will aid future collecting plans.

Expected start date: 2020

Expected end date: 2022

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

The collection of plaster casts is an important part of the history of Aberdeen Art Gallery. Further research is required to fully understand their place within the wider collection as well as their potential for future display and public engagement.

The condition of the casts requires assessment. It is likely that issues will have arisen as a result of storage environment, object age and movement. It is suspected questions relating to the retention of damaged casts and selection criteria for conservation will need to be explored.

CONSULTATION

If appropriate, we will consult with other accredited museums that hold similar collections. We will also liaise with the AAGM History team in relation to the archaeological components of the collections. Specialist advice and skills will be sought from recognised conservators.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

- Increase Curators' knowledge and understanding of the plaster casts
- Develop a rationale for either retaining or disposing of plaster casts
- Improve condition and storage of the remaining plaster cast collection
- Create a fully costed and priority driven conservation programme

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

A full review of the plaster casts will highlight collection strengths, duplications, gaps in documentation and pieces in irreversibly poor condition. The increased knowledge derived from the review will be used to guide future exhibition and engagement programming, areas in which the plaster casts are currently under represented.

2.4 Reproductions (est. 900 items)

Expected start date: 2020

Expected end date: 2022

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

Reproductions within the art collection could be classified as currently being underused. Some of the objects in this area of the collection may fall outside the Collection Development Policy. For instance, not all the objects have the background history of how they were acquired. There are approximately 900 reproductions in this collection and this project will be the first opportunity to review its significance or relevance within the fine art collection. This review will allow us to examine the questions of how long these objects have been in store, potential for future display, research and interpretation.

- Provenance/acquisition will be identified
- Condition will be assessed
- Importance, both historically and to the cultural and educational value
- Usage, both previous and potential will be identified
- Duplicates will be identified
- Assessment against the Collections Development Policy will be made

CONSULTATION

If appropriate, we will consult with other accredited museums, donors, other stakeholders, funding bodies and with subject specialist networks.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

- Increase Curator's knowledge of the Prints and Drawings collections
- Eliminate any unnecessary duplication
- Identify priorities for future collections development
- Improve storage of the works on paper
- Improve catalogue records and digitise for online access

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

These reviews are being undertaken to discover and highlight strengths in the collections, aid future collecting plans,

improve storage, enhance records and help rationalise the collections. This area of the collection contains items which are underused, duplicated, un-contextualised, poorly provenanced and/or have deteriorated beyond our ability to repair or provide adequate care. All reviews will produce recommendations that will then be acted upon.

2.5 Beach wear (est. 100 items) Expected start date: 2019

Expected end date: 2020

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

- Search the database and make an initial list of decorative art objects on the theme of 'A Day at the Beach' e.g. shorts, t-shirts, swimsuits, swimming hats, sunglasses, sun hats, sandals etc..
- Do a visual check of the drawers and hanging rails in the Costume Store to search for other relevant objects.
- Assess the significance of the design and designers of these objects.
- Try to date any objects that do not already have dates on TMS.
- Research the stories behind the objects.
- Condition check the objects and identify any in poor condition that would require conservation to make them fit for display.
- Produce a cohesive list of objects and stories for consideration for a subject specific exhibition on the theme of 'A Day at the Beach'.

CONSULTATION

The following may be consulted if required: Expert advice: Dr Sally-Anne Huxtable, Principal Curator, Modern and Contemporary Design; Donors; Other stakeholders; Relevant AAGM staff

Relevant Subject Specialist Networks e.g. Society of Decorative Art Collections, Dress and Textile Specialists etc.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

 1 Increase Curator's knowledge of these objects

- Produce a list of objects for a subject specific exhibition on the theme of 'A Day at the Beach'.
- Improve the context of these objects by undertaking research and adding information to the TMS records.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

• Create a conservation programme for objects in poor condition with the costs spread over the longer term.

2.6 Decorative Art East Asian Collection

(China and Japan) (est. 414 items) Expected start date: 2020 Expected end date: 2023 BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

- Search the database and make a list of decorative art objects from China and Japan.
- Check the provenance of these objects.
- Assess the significance of these objects.
- Try to date any objects that do not already have dates on TMS.
- Research the stories behind the objects.
- Identify duplication and assess if it is unnecessary duplication.
- Condition check the objects and identify those that would require conservation to make them fit for display.

CONSULTATION

The following may be consulted if required: Expert advice: Dr Rosina Buckland, NMS Senior Curator, East and Central Asia; Dr Qin Cao, NMS Curator, Chinese Collections; Nicola Garside, NMS Assistant Curator, East and Central Asia; Dr Louise Boyd, Assistant Curator, Japan; Donors; Other stakeholders; Relevant AAGM staff;

Relevant Subject Specialist Networks e.g. Scottish East Asia Collections Network etc.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

1 Increase Curator's knowledge of these objects

2 Improve the context of these objects by undertaking research and adding information to the TMS records.

3 Improve care of the Decorative Art East Asia collection.

4 Eliminate any unnecessary duplication.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

1 Create a conservation programme for any objects in poor condition with the costs spread over the longer term.

2 Identify opportunities to increase public access to the Decorative Art East Asia collection through exhibitions, tours, talks etc.

2.7 DISAGSCS review (est. 534 items) Expected start date: 2020

Expected end date: 2023

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

Following on from a preliminary review carried out a few years ago, we will fully identify and review textile and costume items which have been allocated the prefix of DISAGSCS. A methodological and considered approach will be adopted.

A scoring system will be used to assess the DISAGSCS costume and textiles against set criteria. The criteria will cover the following areas:

- Provenance/acquisition will be identified
- Condition will be assessed
- Importance, both historically and to the story of fashion will be gauged
- Usage, both previous and potential will be identified
- Duplicates will be identified
- Assessment against the Collections Development Policy will be made

CONSULTATION

If appropriate, we will consult with other accredited museums, donors, other stakeholders, funding bodies and with subject specialist networks.

SHORT TERM OBJECTIVES

- Increase Curator's knowledge of the collection
- Improve care of the costume and textiles
- Identify relevant collections.
- Identify priorities for future collections development
- Improve storage of the costume and textiles
- Sound reasoning behind any decision to dispose of collections will be made

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

- Discover and highlight strengths in the collections
- The review will aid future collecting plans

2.8 Archaeology archive

Expected start date: 2018

Expected end date: 2023

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

The archaeology collection is in need of indepth cataloguing, resolving of issues over uncatalogued material and objects brought in for identification and never reclaimed, reconciling of finds to site excavation reports, identify any material appropriate for rationalisation, and identifying material that may be better suited to being cared for by other institutions, encourage greater research use of collection

CONSULTATION: to liaise with local planning archaeologist and other relevant collectionholding institutions to identify material that can be transferred to other institutions

2018-2023 OBJECTIVES:

- Produce inventory of site excavation archives
- Resolve issues over objects brought in for identification and never reclaimed
- Identify priorities for cataloguing in terms of site specific collections
- Develop documentation and cataloguing procedures to ensure going-forward that all new accessions catalogued appropriately

LONGER TERM OBJECTIVES

- Identify and transfer material more suitable in other institutions
- Undertake programme to catalogue backlog with general approach:
- Resolve issues over cataloguing backlog of historic material
- Link site excavation archives to catalogued object records
- Rationalise identified material
- Promote collection to potential researchers

2.8 Office items (est. 180 items)

Expected start date: 2020 Expected end date: 2022

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

Following on the from the Office collections secondment in 2015 the collection needs to be fully identified and reviewed. The collection needs improved documentation to allow for the collection to be used effectively. This review will also inform future disposals and future collecting aims.

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify relevant collections
- Improve catalogue records and photograph for online access
- Identify priorities for future collections development

2.9 Safety offshore

Start date:	2018
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Expected end date: 2022

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

Alongside plans to address the long term display of the Piper Alpha banner and loan items associated with the disaster in partnership with key stakeholders; collections relating to safety offshore will be reviewed. CONSULTATION: the Energy Panel and stakeholders/partners identified for the Piper Alpha anniversary in 2018.

2018-2022 OBJECTIVES:

- Identify relevant collections
- Improve catalogue records and photograph for online access
- Identify priorities for future collecting

2.10 North Boats and Ferries

Expected start date: 2017

Expected end date: 2019

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

This collection is being reviewed to explore its potential to support learning at local further education institutions, for example for visual communication, tourism and art and design students. There may be longer term outcomes for the redisplay of relevant material at Aberdeen Maritime Museum.

CONSULTATION: North East Scotland College

2017-2019 OBJECTIVES:

- Identify relevant collections
- Improve catalogue records and digitise for online access
- Identify priorities for future collections development

2.11 Smoking technology

Start date:	2018
Expected end date:	2019

BROAD ASSESSMENT CRITERIA / APPROACH

As part of plans to proactively collect around vaping, existing collections around smoking will be reviewed. These include material from the archaeology collections (clay pipes), social history (smoking paraphernalia) and medical collections. It is anticipated this will be offered as a discrete project for a student, or if external funding can be identified, as a project post.

OBJECTIVES:

- Identify relevant collections
- Research wider historical context
- Improve catalogue records and digitise for online access
- Identify priorities for future collections development

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

These reviews are being undertaken to discover and highlight strengths in the collections, aid future collecting plans, improve storage, enhance records and help rationalise the collections. The above groups contain items which are under-used, duplicated, un-contextualised, poorly provenanced and/or have deteriorated beyond our ability to repair or provide adequate care. All reviews will produce recommendations that will then be acted upon. Disposals and Collection Review Plan summary:

Lead officer	Description	Est. No. items	Planned dates	Notes
M Annandale	Beach wear	100	2019-2020	
J Rose	Wedding Dresses	c. 150	2019-2020	
M Ward	Plaster casts	100	2020 - 2022	(50% Crombie and 50% KB)
G Coe	Fine art: Reproductions	900	2020-2022	
M Annandale	Christening costume	67	2020-2021	Including: robes, shawls, bonnets, petticoats, capes and jackets
M Annandale	East Asian Collection	414	2020-2023	Decorative Art East Asian Collection (China and Japan)
J Rose	DISAGSCS collection	c. 534	2020-2023	
J Pape-Carlisle	Archaeology archive	unknown	2018-2023	
J Pape-Carlisle	Office items	180	2020-2022	
J Inglis	North Boats and Ferries	c. 1500	2017-2019	
J Inglis	Safety Offshore		2018-2022	
J Pape-Carlisle	Smoking technology	c. 812	2018-2019	To be reviewed by Kirstin Angus, MGS Trainee
J Brown	Radios and radio valves	1000	Ongoing. Complete by 2020.	To be reviewed for potential disposal. 30% were reviewed in the financial year 2014-2015. A number are in process of disposal. Remaining 70% to be reviewed by 2020.
J Inglis	Maritime paintings	390	2023-2025	Future planning based on progress of earlier reviews listed here
J Pape-Carlisle	Post Office material	200	2023-2024	Future planning based on progress of earlier reviews listed here
J Inglis	Railway ephemera	100	2022-2023	Future planning based on progress of earlier reviews listed here
J Inglis	Engineering plans and ephemera	4450	2023-2026	Archival material: Future planning based on progress of earlier reviews listed here
J Pape-Carlisle	1980s Tenement colln	200	2023-2025	Future planning based on progress of earlier reviews listed here
M Annandale/ J Rose	Furniture collection	c.250	2023-2024	Future planning based on progress of earlier reviews listed here