
DARLINGTON BOROUGH ART COLLECTION

**Responsible Cabinet Member – Councillor Andy Scott, Health and Leisure Portfolio
Responsible Director – Cliff Brown, Director of Community Services**

SUMMARY REPORT

Purpose of the Report

1. The purpose of this report is to agree the Darlington Borough Art Collection Acquisition, Loan and Disposal Policy (**Appendix 1**), which will inform the future management and development of the collection.

Summary

2. A review of the Darlington Borough Art Collection has identified the need for an Acquisition, Loan and Disposal policy to be developed to outline the future management, and development of the collection.
3. A Borough Collection Steering Group has been formed to carry out the management and implementation of the draft policy.
4. The Draft policy has been presented at the Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Recommendations

5. It is recommended that:
 - (a) Members note the content of this report.
 - (b) Members adopt the Acquisition, Loan and Disposal policy for Darlington Borough Arts Collection.

Reasons

6. The recommendations are supported as the adoption of this policy will ensure suitable management procedures are in place for the protection and development of the collection. This may also support applications for grant aid in the future.

**Cliff Brown
Director of Community Services**

Background Papers

Not Applicable

Steve Thompson : Extension 4529
JR

S17 Crime and Disorder	This report has no impact on crime and disorder
Health and Well Being	This report promotes community engagement with the collection and therefore promotes the beneficial effects of culture on the happiness fulfilment and mental well being of individuals.
Sustainability	There are no environmental impacts associated with this report.
Diversity	This report has no direct impact on diversity.
Wards Affected	This report has no direct impact on a specific ward.
Groups Affected	This report may have an impact on individuals and groups who would like to engage with the collection, improving access and community engagement.
Budget and Policy Framework	There may be impact on budget requirements following the valuation and therefore an increase in insurance.
Key Decision	There is no key decision needed.
Urgent Decision	There is no urgent decision needed.
One Darlington: Perfectly Placed	This report links to the Healthy Darlington and Aspiring Darlington theme.

MAIN REPORT

Information and Analysis

Background

7. There are 534 artworks in the Borough Art Collection, excluding artworks currently stored at Darlington Library. The relationship between the collection held and managed at the Arts Centre and the collection held and managed by the Crown Street Library is currently in development. Darlington Borough Council owns all artworks, although the Library's collection is primarily used for local studies and is catalogued using a different method to the Arts Centre collection. The insurance cover held for the Darlington Borough Art Collection also covers the collection of artworks held at the Library.
8. In recent years the Arts Service has commissioned various specialists to undertake specific studies on the Borough Collection as follows:

- (a) Report on the Darlington Borough Collection September 2003¹ by Amy Barker:

This report considers the collection from the perspective of the conservator and curator. The study identifies key works and the condition of three pieces as examples. The report recommends suitable documentation requirements, appropriate storage and the display conditions for the artwork.

- (b) Report on conservation by James Caverhill and Alica Vincientelli 2005²:

This report assesses the condition of a large number of artworks in the Arts Centre's store. The report uses photographs to illustrate each piece with a survey assessing the piece's condition and areas of concern and those pieces in need of urgent conservation. It does not consider the monetary value, but highlights moderate to high quality artwork and those that need conservation.

It is fair today that some of the artworks highlighted as needing conservation are deemed unworthy of conservation as they are considered to be poor quality works by less popular/known artists. Caverhill and Vincientelli submitted an estimate of over £40k to restore the artwork.

Of the 391 works stored at the Arts Centre, it was suggested that there are 40 category A (priority) artworks (estimate £8,590) and 25 Category A oil paintings (estimate £31,390) requiring restoration work.

¹ Amy Barker Keeper of Fine Art, The Bowes Museum, September 2003

² James Caverhill and Alica Vincientelli expert conservators 2005

(c) The Public Catalogue Foundation 2009

Darlington Borough Council's Arts Service was approached by the Public Catalogue Foundation who are currently in the process of compiling a nationwide record of oil and acrylic paintings in public collections, which will be featured in catalogues broken down into different regions.

The Arts Service accepted this proposal and the Public Catalogue Foundation photographed and catalogued all of the oils and acrylics from The Collection, which is included in the County Durham Catalogue. This includes all oils currently stored at the Crown Street Library.

The Public Catalogue Foundation has given Darlington Borough Council the copyright of the photographs with the exemption that they have permission to reproduce photographs from the catalogue. The Council will be given copies of the catalogue free of charge to sell to the general public and the proceeds of these sales are to be used to conserve the collection. The Catalogue is now completed and will be launched in Spring 2009.

This opportunity will increase public access to the collections held at Darlington Arts Centre and at Darlington Library. It will also promote the Art Centre and the Borough Art Collection on a national basis, which could lead to increased exhibitions and partnership links with other arts organisations.

Current Management Actions

9. These reports highlight a number of areas that require investment from the Council (or partner agencies) to carry out restoration programmes, conduct studies and plan exhibitions of the artwork; all of which has not been taken forward as there are no resources to commit to an intensive programme.
10. A Borough Collection Steering Group has been formed to agree the development of suitable policies and procedures to manage, develop, protect and conserve the collection. It is proposed that the existing group, along with external partners, investigate funding pressures and opportunities (partnership work, income generation from loan scheme) to ensure that the Borough Collection programme implementation meets the needs of the artwork and complements the Council's policies.
11. All venues holding artworks on loan from Darlington Borough Art Collection have now been contacted and the location of artworks verified. Many of these artworks have now been returned to the Arts Centre so they could be valued and so detailed loan agreements can be created before the work is considered for future loans. If the collection policy is adopted the Arts Service will be able to exchange formal loan contracts/procedures for the future management and protection of the collection out on loan.

12. Thomas Watson Auctioneers and Valuers have now valued all artworks currently at the Arts Centre, Town Hall and Dolphin Centre. The total valuation for artworks held is £741,135. There are still a small number of artworks to be valued, which are currently out on loan, although we would expect the total valuation to be approximately £800,000 excluding artworks stored at the Library.
13. All oils held at Darlington Library have been valued totalling £24,000.
14. The Visual and Public Arts Officer has been liaising with the Risk and Insurance Officer to investigate options to increase the current insurance cover to provide adequate future cover. However there will be an increased revenue cost to the Council, which will create a pressure on the Borough Collection budget. The current insurance cover is also expected to cover all of the artworks held in the local studies collection at Darlington Library, which may significantly increase the insurance premium.
15. The Collection has been re-catalogued so it can be accessed by numerical order, by artist or by location. Following the valuation of many of the artworks in the collection it will also be catalogued into three collections as follows on completion of the full valuation.

Table 2 Breakdown of the Borough Council Collection

Group Reference	Description	Estimated % of the collection	Method of Assessment
Group 1	Moderate to significant national importance High quality and high monetary value Named artist Highly suitable for loan scheme	Small proportion Approx 10% 30 paintings or less	Assessed by experts in this field. University of Northumbria School of conservation and associates
Group 2	Has local interest to local people Low monetary value May be local artists Possibly suitable for loan scheme	40%	Assessed by local experts
Group 3	The remainder of low quality works Little or no monetary value Not of local interest and/or by a named artist Limited use Not suitable for a loan scheme No resale value	50%	Method of assessment as above and continue to monitor changes in trend, which may mean increase in value over time.

16. **Group 1** is considered to be the most desirable in the collection and may have significant national and possibly international importance to both the Council and in the arts world. There are approximately 30 pieces in this group some of which require restoration work.
17. The Council has a responsibility to ensure the safety and quality of this group and it is recommended that this priority group would become a priority for restoration and conservation.
18. **Group 2** is artwork with a local reference featuring local scenes or local well known figures or having been created by a local artist. The Council is considered a preserver of local history and therefore has a responsibility to make this artwork available to the public.

19. **Group 3** is considered as having no particular importance as they are of a low quality, have no local relevance, have little or no resale costs and are not suitable for loan. This said, as fashions change, so does the demand for artwork. The Visual and Public Arts Officer would be responsible for monitoring changing trends assessing if any artwork in this collection increases in interest and value. This being the case, there may be the need to re-evaluate artwork and consider valuations and insurance.
20. The benefit of cataloguing the collections by artist, numerical order, location and by value is that it improves ease of identifying and locating artworks and enabling us to bring together artwork of a similar quality standard and value. The Arts Service will use the catalogue outlined above in Table 2 to prioritise restoration.
21. It would be fair to assume that the completion and distribution of the Durham and Darlington Catalogue by the Public Catalogue Foundation will increase interest in the collection. Therefore, provision should be made to support the increasing interest that the collection would generate over a given time.
22. The final draft of the Acquisition, Loan and Disposal policy Appendix 1, has been completed by the Borough Collection Steering Group. This policy has been presented to the Resources Scrutiny Committee and the Economy and Environment Scrutiny Committee.

Outcome of Consultation

23. Not Applicable