



The Scottish Parliament  
Pàrlamaid na h-Alba

# Art collection development policy – 5 yearly review

29 October 2020

Reference: SPCB(2020)Paper 058

## Executive summary

1. This Paper seeks the SPCB's approval of the updated Art Collection Development Policy for the Scottish Parliament Art Collection. The SPCB is the governing body of the Collection.
2. The original policy was introduced in 2005 and reviewed in 2010 and 2015, in line with the policy's five-year review period.

## Background

3. The policy has been reviewed in the context of the Scottish Parliamentary Service's values and to bring it up-to-date with the latest UK industry standards for the management of museum and gallery collections and the template for collections development policies in Scotland, administered by Museums Galleries Scotland.
4. The key changes to the policy are summarised in the following paragraphs.

## Section 1 (Introduction)

5. In section 1.2, it is now stated as an aim of the Collection that it will represent the diversity of artists practising in Scotland. It is important for artists and for the Parliament's audiences and visitors that the Collection represents the diversity of Scotland's artists and creates opportunities for artists of different backgrounds and experiences to have their work collected and shown in the Parliament. In particular, the Collection would benefit from acquiring more work by younger artists.
6. In Section 1.2, there is now a stated commitment in the policy to providing the public with accessible information about the Collection. As a publicly-funded and parliamentary collection it is important that the public can find out about the art and artists represented in the Collection. Information about the Parliament's art and artists features on the Scottish Parliament and Art UK websites and on occasion on the Parliament's Instagram account. Free art tours are available when the building is open to the public. Events and Exhibitions are working with Visitor Services and other colleagues to increase access to the Collection for online and younger audiences.
7. In Section 1.9, the policy states that we will not acquire gifts of artworks with restrictive conditions attached, for example around display location, display frequency or our ability to loan artworks to other appropriate organisations. This is recommended so that onerous restrictions are not placed on the future decision-

making, resources and priorities of the SPCB and its responsible officers. The policy notes that any exception to this will need the approval of the SPCB.

## Section 2 (History of the Scottish Parliament Art Collection)

8. Section 2.3 on the history of the Collection has been updated to document how temporary exhibitions have on occasion created relevant opportunities to develop the Collection through the donation of selected or specially commissioned and gifted artworks. For example, the textile panel gifted by the Great Tapestry of Scotland Trust and signed, limited edition photographs selected from the Harry Benson: Seeing America exhibition and donated by the photographer.

## Section 3 (An overview of current Collections)

9. This section now includes more details of the current Collection including Section 3.9 which highlights a number of individual artworks to help describe the overall composition and themes of the Collection.
10. Section 3.8 notes that while they are not part of the Collection, there are a number of significant design and craft works that are part of the Scottish Parliament building fabric and furnishings that are cared for and managed by Facilities Management, with advice from the original maker(s), the Curator or external conservators where required.

## Section 5 (Themes and priorities for rationalisation and disposal)

11. In line with the latest guidance for collections development policies, Section 5 makes the Collection's approach to disposal clear. The Collection is not considering disposal or rationalisation and disposal would only be considered for care, conservation, legal or safety reasons and in exceptional circumstances.

## Section 7 (Collecting policies of other museums)

12. At 7.2, the list of collections with overlapping collecting areas now includes the Scottish Maritime Museum as well as the institutions listed in the previous policy.

## Section 9 (Acquisitions, loans and stewardship)

13. Sections 9.5 to 9.9 now include information about the governance and stewardship of the Collection such as the Heritage Emergency Plan and the laws and corresponding SPCB policies that the management of the Collection is subject to in addition to this policy. In addition to supporting the Parliament's Business Continuity planning, it is part of the UK industry standard for the management of museum and gallery collections to have a workable emergency plan. It is important that records about the Collection are managed and preserved effectively and that there is a process in place for setting up copyright licences between the contemporary artists represented in the Collection and the SPCB.

14. The revised policy is attached at Annex A.

## Approval and Review of Policy

15. The policy will next need reviewed and updated by 31 October 2025.

## Resource Implications

16. Costs of conserving and managing the Scottish Parliament Art Collection, and supporting a limited number of loans to the Collection, are met from the annual Art Collection Care budget.
17. There is no annual budget for acquisitions, rather from time to time the SPCB and Leadership Group may decide to make funding available.

## Governance

18. The SPCB is the legal owner and governing body of the Scottish Parliament Art Collection on behalf of the Scottish Parliament.
19. The Art Collection Development Policy is regularly reviewed and updated to ensure the SPCB fulfils its obligations and stewardship of a publicly funded Collection held in trust for future generations of the people of Scotland and its elected representatives.

## Publication Scheme

20. The Paper and the Art Collection Development Policy should be published.

## Next steps

21. If the SPCB is content to agree the updated Art Collection Development Policy, it will be considered effective from the date of this meeting.
22. If any changes are to be made, the policy will be brought back to a future meeting of the SPCB for approval.

## Decision

23. The SPCB is asked to consider this Paper and approve the updated Art Collection Development Policy for publication.

Events and exhibitions team

October 2020