



Collections Care

About us



Collections Care is provided by specialists within the Conservation Teams of Birmingham Museums. With 800,000 objects, in nine venues, most are designated as being of national importance and many are world class. Hence its reputation as a centre of excellence across a wide spectrum of objects, and materials.

So, with this range of experience and expertise we can provide the help that you need for an individual Object, an Exhibition, a Collection, or a whole Museum project.

Environmental Analysis, Health and Safety

Are you safe? Are you meeting legal requirements?

We offer advice on setting up monitoring programmes, collecting and interpreting data relating to your environment, with recommendations in line with current best practice.

The team can also assist you in identifying and mitigating potential hazards (such as arsenic, asbestos, radioactive materials and mould).

Collection Surveys and Health Checks

Are you fit for purpose? Or are you seeking accreditation?

We offer surveys of your collection and health checks with

- recommendations for object treatment
- housekeeping regimes
- suggested environmental conditions
- storage recommendations, and
- steps to achieve Accredited Museum Status



Integrated Pest management (IPM)

Are your collections safe?

We can help you set up a monitoring programme, to include:

- the identification of insects
- recording and reviewing data
- treatment of infested objects
- advice on prevention and pest proofing

Equipment and Analysis

Birmingham Museums has leading edge facilities and equipment, rarely available elsewhere in the UK.

The equipment includes:

- X-ray Fluorescence (XRF) – portable and table top to identify metal alloys and heavy metal hazards
- Fourier Transform Infrared spectroscopy (FTIR) - to identify plastics
- X-radiography – digital with high resolution for the analysis of archaeological and museum objects
- 3-D Digital Microscopy, including surface mapping for detailed imaging and measurement
- Polarised Light Microscopy using light penetration - e.g. for gem identification
- Freezer – most freezers have one “dry” setting. At Birmingham there is a second setting for treating “wet” materials, so flood damaged objects can be treated
- Phoenix Nd YAG laser – for cleaning

This equipment is used by the Conservation Team as part of projects for clients. However, it can also be hired by qualified users.

Studio Hire

Do you need space, or better space and facilities? Then our cutting edge Conservation Studios may be the solution: available for short or long term professional hire.

Training and Advice

We run a range of standard courses, covering all aspects of Conservation, IPM and Collections Care.

We can also create Bespoke courses to fit your exact requirements, as well as CPD. Courses can be run at your site or at Birmingham Museums.

Courses include:

- Basic Conservation – An Introduction
- Modern Materials
- Conservation Ethics
- Emergency Planning and Recovery
- Collections Storage
- Loans
- Packing & Handling
- The Museum Environment
- Benchmarks in Collections Care
- Risk Assessment and Hazards
- Integrated Pest Management (IPM)
- Stop the Rot – An Introduction to Collections Care

A Centre of
Excellence