

A photograph of two young women with long, wavy hair looking intently at a display case filled with silverware. The woman on the left is wearing a black leather jacket and a black and white striped scarf. The woman on the right is wearing a black and white patterned scarf. The display case contains various silver items, including teapots, cups, and saucers. The background is dimly lit with warm, glowing lights.

Security - an introduction to elements within the application

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Royal Albert Memorial Museum, Exeter
Photo: Jim Wileman

Principle

Museums have a duty to acquire, preserve and promote their collections as a contribution to safeguarding the natural, cultural and scientific heritage.....

They have a special position in law and are protected by international legislation.....

Inherent in this public trust is the notion of stewardship that includes **accessibility**

Security of objects

- It is important to know exactly what is in your venue
- Documentation about objects including full identification and descriptions , and their whereabouts
- This information must be held securely
- Avoid disclosing sensitive and confidential information

Safety and security

- people present one of the largest risks
- buildings can be reinforced
- technology supports the buildings' fabric and is legislative in relation to Health and Safety and Fire Regulations
- intelligence is critical



Safety and security

To help us understand what we should be addressing, we should consider

- risk assessment of collection
- risk assessment of venue
- risk assessment of staff and other persons

Risk assessment process

- assess threat or likelihood of actual risk
- recognise the value
- consider measures of removing or reducing risks, examples can include crimes such as theft during public hours, burglary out of hours or deliberate damage or environmental or accidental loss

measures to mitigate risks

- review processes and practices
- review training of all staff
- ensure equipment is present and fit for purpose
- rehearse scenarios with peers from nearby venues
- seek impartial professional guidance

Common issues

It is important to recognise:

1. too much emphasis on artistic interpretation may compromise security and safety of objects
2. venues do not recognise the real risks
3. security is not a bolt on
4. risk increases with familiarity

www.collectionslink.org.uk/security

Governance

Security of collections is the responsibility of all of us

managers, directors and trustees recognise the risks of what is in the collection and why

reviews of risks to ensure people, collections, buildings and information are well cared for and adequately protected

all ingredients of a safer venue



18th century jade bowl Credit: Durham University

Thank you



www.artscouncil.org.uk

Figures depicting Medicine Spirits from the Horniman Museum collection, London. Photo: Heini Schneebeil

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