

SOUTHEND MUSEUMS SERVICE

Guidance for Researchers

Introduction

The purpose of this document is to provide researchers and potential researchers with information and guidance about Southend Museum's policies regarding arrangements for visits, support and facilities available to researchers wishing to use collections, handling objects, sampling and testing and loans.

How to contact Southend Museum and making arrangements

Initial contact to Southend Museum is normally via e-mail. The Museum's general e-mail address is: museums@southend.gov.uk

For specific e-mail enquiries including local history and archaeology collections:

kencrowe@southend.gov.uk

For natural history enquiries:

rogerpayne@southend.gov.uk

For art collection and costume collection:

clarehunt@southend.gov.uk; clairereed@southend.gov.uk

Telephone enquiries should be made to Central Museum. Tel. 01702 434449 or to the Curatorial Manager, clarehunt@southend.gov.uk

Equipment and Facilities

It is essential that researchers make definite appointments to view collections. The following can be provided by prior request:

Electronic scales

Low and high power stereo microscopes; magnifying glasses

Sink with running water

Internet access

Testing, sampling and analysis of objects

Any testing or sampling of the collections must be agreed in writing before visiting the collections. The Museum will only agree to destructive testing/sampling if this is shown to

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be an essential element in a written research programme (e.g. doctoral/post-doctoral programme) or wider research agenda, a copy of which (or a summary) should be provided to the Museums Service in advance. Graduate/post-graduate researchers should also provide a letter of support from their supervisors. Sampling that may result in the destruction of all or much of any specimen may be refused.

Loan arrangements

The lending of items from the collections for research purposes is not normally permitted. Requests for loans should be made to the Curatorial Manager, together with supporting documents, e.g. a copy (or summary) of research programme, letter from supervisor. If loans are agreed, they would be for a limited (or specified) time period.

Access to related documentation

Southend Museum retains copies of all documents relating to its collections. These include:

Object entry forms

Accession Registers

Related History Files

Archaeological excavation reports (published and unpublished)

Archaeological 'grey' literature

Southend Borough's HER/SMR

Museum's database (MODES)

Biological Records Centre

These can be made available by prior request.

Access to stored collections

Requests to view collections or items from the collections in the stores can normally be met given adequate prior notice. Material will be made available to the researcher by one of the curatorial team.

The majority of Archaeological collections, EKCO radio/television collections and large objects (Social History) are housed in an off-site store, where there are excellent facilities for researchers.

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Information researchers are expected to provide

Copy of Research Agenda or Programme

Letter of Support from e.g. doctoral supervisor

Where known, list of specimens/collections to be viewed (quoting published reports/museum accession numbers)

Where known, list of associated documentation required.

Facilities required (tables, access to sink, microscope, magnifying glasses, internet access, etc.)

Restrictions

Students/researchers will be required to take the normal care of objects/collections, and may be required to wear protective gloves for handling. Researchers should ensure that they adopt safe working practices and follow normal health and safety procedures at all times.