



## **West Berkshire Museum**

# **Pre-Deposition Selection, Retention and Dispersal of Archaeological Archives**

**2025**



**WEST BERKSHIRE  
MUSEUM**

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## 1. Contact Information

West Berkshire Museum	General Enquiries Notification Forms	01635 519562	<a href="mailto:museum@westberks.gov.uk">museum@westberks.gov.uk</a>
Archaeology	Principal Archaeologist (Planning and Management Advice)	01635 519805	<a href="mailto:archaeology@westberks.gov.uk">archaeology@westberks.gov.uk</a>

## 2. Introduction

An archaeological archive is created during an archaeological investigation; common examples might be from fieldwalking, trial trenching, excavation, an archaeological watching brief or building investigation and recording. There are two main elements:

- The documentary archive comprising all records made during an archaeological project, including those in hard copy and digital form. This includes written records, drawings and photographs (including negatives, prints, transparencies and x-rays), reports, publication drafts, published work, and publication drawings and photographs. Digital material comprises all born-digital material, including text, data, drawings, 3D models, photographs and video, as well as files generated from digitised material, such as data entered from paper pro-forma and scanned images or text.
- The material archive comprising all objects (artefacts, building materials or environmental remains) and associated samples (of contextual materials or objects) (Brown 2011).

The procedures described in this document are intended to guide the selection, retention and dispersal of archaeological finds ahead of the deposition of an archive with the West Berkshire Museum. Whilst this document represents the Museum's policy on the subject, the Museum and the Archaeology team<sup>1</sup> strongly recommend that anyone wishing to transfer an archive first reads the *Procedures for the Transfer of Archaeological Archives 2021* and contacts the Curator in advance of deposition. These guidelines follow those published by the Society for Museum Archaeology in 2020 and a best practice guide for archaeological archives published by the Archaeological Archives Forum in 2011.

The long-term sustainability of archaeological archives generated by developer-funded excavations is currently under discussion following the Mendoza Review (Mendoza 2017) and Historic England's subsequent recommendations (Trow 2018). Further national guidance is likely to be forthcoming (Donnelly-Symes 2019) but the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) and Historic England created a Toolkit for Selecting Archaeological Archives in 2019. This provides a set of useful and flexible resources to assist archaeological practitioners during the creation of project-specific Selection Strategies for the Working Project Archive. It is recommended that the toolkit be used alongside this policy, which is a non-project-specific, generic methodology for Selection.

In order to create a manageable, accessible and cost-effective archive, and to preserve the integrity of the wider Museum collection for future generations, a selection, retention and dispersal policy applies to all archives.

**Selection** is the process of determining which objects are to be retained.

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<sup>1</sup> The West Berkshire Archaeology team maintains the district's Historic Environment Record and provides archaeological expertise for planning and land management. The team's contact details can be found above.

**Retention** is the inclusion of objects in the archive deposited with the Museum.

**Dispersal** is the process of determining the strategy for non-retained objects. This might include deposition into a handling collection or disposal. Dispersal must be a fully documented process.

### **Archive**

- **Working project archive** is the ClfA definition for the records and materials gathered during an archaeological project and retained for analysis.
- **Integrity of the archive** relates to the body of information which the archive represents.

This policy aims to help Depositors to identify those objects in the working project archive which do not significantly contribute value and whose dispersal would not compromise the integrity of the archive. In addition, it suggests various means of dispersal.

### 3. Selection, Retention, and Dispersal Principles and Process

#### 3.1 General Principles

Project planning, including resourcing, must consider finds selection, retention and dispersal.

The selection, retention and dispersal policy for each archive should adhere to the guidelines set out in this document. For large or complex archives, or where further information is sought, the Curator should be contacted as early as possible, but certainly in advance of deposition.

Full records should be kept of the collection, selection and retention or dispersal processes in the field or during post-excavation analysis. Records of dispersed material should include the reason, authority, method, date and location of dispersal.

Selection, retention and dispersal should take into account:

- the intrinsic significance of individual objects
- the significance of the context or associated group, and the need to preserve this intact
- present and future research potential, and the possible need for future re-assessment of the site
- the retention of associated information, records and other objects necessary to achieve this research potential
- the limitations of records as a substitute for the primary artefactual evidence.

The purpose of selection should be:

- the effective quantification and interrogation of a large dataset
- to remove material of no perceivable information value and/or intrinsic interest<sup>2</sup>
- to create a manageable and cost-effective archive without compromising archive integrity.

#### 3.2 Procedure

##### 1) Project Design / Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI)

The Project Design / Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI) should consider:

- the aims and objectives of the project, in the context of national and regional research frameworks
- the research potential of the archive
- the requirements of the Museum
- dispersal strategies for particular find types – this should be agreed with landowners.

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<sup>2</sup> This refers to the inherent nature and features of an object, as distinct from associated information and context. Unidentified objects may still have intrinsic interest.

This policy must be agreed, along with the wider Project Design/WSI, by the Senior Archaeologist before fieldwork begins.

- 2) Set up a procedure for reviewing and amending the policy as required. This must involve consultation with the Senior Archaeologist.
- 3) Familiarise field staff and monitor the application of the policy throughout the data-gathering phase to ensure compliance and to identify any requirements for amendment as soon as possible.
- 4) Assess the working project archive for selection and retention in accordance with the agreed policy.

This assessment may be carried out both prior to and during analysis by finds specialists.

- 5) Dispersal of non-retained finds in accordance with the agreed policy.
- 6) Deposition of the archive with the Museum.

## 4. West Berkshire Museum's Strategy

### 4.1 Priorities for Retention

The nature of the context may ultimately determine the selection, retention and dispersal strategy.

The following should be retained for deposition within West Berkshire:

- rare and datable finds, even from unstratified deposits
- unusual forms or types from stratified deposits
- good sealed feature groups with no/limited signs of residuality or intrusions
- key stratigraphic dating assemblages crucial to the development of the site
- assemblages of datable finds (including unstratified) from areas poorly represented by collections in West Berkshire
- Neolithic, Bronze Age and Anglo-Saxon finds are all relatively rare within West Berkshire, as are in situ Iron Age sites. Finds from these periods or pertaining to identified Iron Age sites should be retained.
- West Berkshire contains nationally important Mesolithic remains and sites belonging to this period should be discussed with the Curator. A sampling strategy may need to be implemented where large quantities of flints are anticipated
- finds relating to the following themes/areas of local significance:
  - o evidence of early iron manufacturing
  - o the Boxford Roman landscape
  - o prehistoric and early medieval Lambourn
  - o medieval kiln sites
  - o evidence of local post-medieval brick and tile manufacturing
  - o post-medieval cloth making
  - o the English Civil War
  - o Greenham Common, the Cold War and the nuclear deterrent
  - o finds and sites relating to antiquarian collections already held by the Museum, for example those of the former Curators, Peake and Coghlan.

The following should not be retained for deposition:

- unstratified material which is neither closely datable nor rare
- unprovenanced finds
- finds from contexts with evidence of high residuality or intrusions, unless of key stratigraphic importance
- repetitive assemblages that are already well-represented at this or adjacent sites.

All finds should be recorded in the archive prior to dispersal.

### 4.2 General Criteria

All finds illustrated in publications or used in a type-series should be retained.

For some artefact categories retention is determined largely by the feasibility of preserving the material. In the case of finds which are not indefinitely preservable, the policy may need to be reviewed (see 4.2 Procedure, above).

## 4.3 Archive and Artefact Categories

### 4.3.1 Documentary Archive

**Retain:** usually all documents created by the fieldwork.

Especially important are records of finds which have not survived or which have been dispersed, and records of features which have been destroyed during the process of investigation. Draft versions of documents which include annotations not recorded elsewhere should also be retained.

All original drawings and photographs should be retained. Original photographs, negatives and contact prints should always be included where they are the only photographic records.

**Disperse:** records which have been fully transferred into an alternative and more appropriate format. Duplicate records are also not required and only one hard copy of the final report must be deposited.

The Museum will no longer accept digital photographs on CD-R or DVD-R. Physical copies of digital photographs may be accepted in a deposit to accompany the physical archive at the discretion of the Museum Curator.

### 4.3.2 Finds Archive

#### 4.3.2.1 Organic

Organic Artefacts (including wood, leather or other treated hide, textiles)

All worked organic finds should be treated as Small Finds or Registered Finds. A decision should be taken collaboratively with the Museum regarding retention. All retained artefacts should be conserved appropriately. If objects are preserved by record in the form of laser scans, photographs, etc., they should be subject to recording and taxonomic identification by a specialist.

Specialist involvement should take place throughout the process and specialist advice always be sought in matters of retention and discard.

Where organic remains require extensive conservation or are very bulky to store, discussion with the Museum, informed by research agendas, is vital.

**Retain:** all objects of medieval or earlier date.

All post-medieval items from concealed domestic locations (together with any other associated artefacts) and those that can be associated with a specific residence or local industry, particularly the cloth making industry.

Artefacts which can be attributed to known local manufacturers, unless the quantity involved merits an agreed sub-sampling strategy.

All early post-medieval artefacts bearing makers' marks, graffiti, decoration, etc.

All unworked leather bearing tanners' or other stamps.

All modern material relating to events of national importance, such as Greenham Common Peace Camps and the Newbury Bypass protests.

Worked portions of structural timbers to be retained at the discretion of the Curator, on a case by case basis.

**Disperse:** specimens in poor condition which have been recorded and analysed, but cannot be preserved in the long-term, should be dispersed.

Material surplus to analysis and sampling requirements may also be dispersed.

Unidentifiable scraps of leather or textile from poor contexts do not need to be retained.

**Minimum level of recording:**

Worked wood: recording, species identification, photography, interpretation, dating. Consider laser scanning as an alternative to retention to create permanent accessible records of the material.

Leather: objects should be photographed and drawn at an appropriate scale before conservation/discard. Minimum fields of recording should include: species, dimensions, description, manufacturing techniques employed, elements present/absent, wear, decoration, any other pertinent information.

Textiles: should also be drawn and photographed. Record dimensions, description, fibre, manufacturing techniques employed, decoration, wear/ repair.

### Archaeo-botanical samples

**Retain:** good groups of botanical remains arising from processed soil samples with no/limited signs of residuality/intrusiveness and those recognised as significant by specialists.

Unusual botanicals from any deposit.

Where it has been agreed in advance with the Senior Archaeologist and Curator, samples for C14 dating from sealed contexts crucial for the chronological understanding of the site's development should be taken.

**Disperse:** unprocessed material which cannot be preserved or material that has deteriorated beyond retrieval may be dispersed.

Material from contexts considered by environmental specialists to have little or no validity does not need to be retained.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample - quantification by taxa/species with notes on method of preservation, condition and any particular points of interest.

## Soil samples

**Retain:** remains from processed soil samples with no/limited signs of residuality/intrusiveness and those recognised as significant by individual specialists.

**Disperse:** unprocessed soil samples for which a specific future programme of research, purpose or storage method has not been agreed may be dispersed.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample - quantification by taxa/species with notes on method of preservation, condition.

## Animal Bone

**Retain:** assemblages and selected groups of animal remains from stratified contexts which have been identified by specialists as important assemblages with further research potential should be retained in their entirety.

Any selection policy should seek to preserve intact good context groups.

All animal remains from the Upper Palaeolithic or Mesolithic should be retained. Neolithic sites are locally rare, so all animal remains from these periods may also merit retention.

Animal remains which may contribute relevant information to the interpretation of other artefact assemblages retained in the archive should also be kept.

All worked bone should be retained.

Unprocessed animal remains will only be accepted if specialist assessment has demonstrated their future research potential.

Selection and retention should take into account evidence of:

- species utilisation
- population structure
- size range
- butchering or other post-mortem processes
- presence/absence of rare/typical species
- evidence of trauma and pathology.

**Disperse:** animal remains which are unprovenanced, poorly stratified or from contexts with high residuality or contamination, and which have no other intrinsic significance, may be dispersed.

Very small assemblages may also be dispersed where there is no demonstrable reason for retention.

Assemblages in poor condition and for which long-term preservation is impossible or difficult to achieve may be dispersed.

Unprocessed remains should not be disposed of before specialist assessment of their research potential.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample - species, element and side, using size classes where in doubt, quantification of bones present, maximum length of fragment, plus any other measurement which can be taken, any age data, any determination of sex, any evidence of post-mortem practices, any evidence of trauma or pathology.

## Shell

**Retain:** all analysed and identified terrestrial molluscs, and a representative sample of marine molluscs, as identified by specialists, should be retained.

Marine molluscs must be sampled from the following context types:

- deposits containing a significant proportion of unusual species
- discrete shell-rich scatters
- homogeneous shell-rich masses
- shell-middens
- shell-rich deposits from prehistory (before the 1st century AD) and near-history (5th to 9th century AD)
- shell-rich deposits from historic periods (Roman, medieval and post-medieval), where sampled
- ritual or votive offerings (burial, foundation deposit or “structured” deposit).

Any shell that has been worked or has been utilised as a tool, regardless of type of deposit, should be retained.

Selection and retention of marine molluscs should take into account:

- size and nature of deposit
- environmental evidence
- diet
- utilisation, farming or seasonal collection
- trade with coastal production centres or markets.

**Disperse:** uninformative assemblages or items in excess of sampling requirements, as determined by a specialist, should be dispersed after recording.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample - species, number, weight, minimum number of individuals.

#### 4.3.2.3 Human Remains

Special consideration is required in the treatment of human remains and should take into account the following:

- **Public opinion**, including the views of present-day religious and community groups with a legitimate interest.
- **Proper costing**, the funding required to secure proper storage or re-burial of human remains should be determined at the outset of the excavation. Costs associated with specialist storage required by large deposits of human remains (more than five individuals) or re-burial requirements should be included in any deposition charges. Museum storage providing access for future research is preferred.
- **Legal requirements**, all remains should be acquired and retained or dispersed in accordance with relevant legal requirements, such as the 1857 Burials Act, 1884 Disused Burial Grounds Act (and 1981 Amendment), 2004 Human Tissue Act, Ministry of Justice regulations and the 2011 Care of Cathedrals Measure.
- **Health and Safety**, where necessary, and in consultation with a relevant specialist, steps should be taken to ensure that disease does not survive in remains or associated finds.

**Retain:** all stratified remains capable of being phased, dated, scientifically analysed or containing other useful information, as determined by an osteoarchaeologist, must be retained.

Remains should be in a sufficiently good state of preservation for long-term storage.

Redeposited, disarticulated and fragmentary remains should be retained for their potential contribution to understanding of the site.

Where very large numbers of medieval or post-medieval skeletons are recovered, priority may be given to retaining a representative series of sample groups. However, the preference is to retain whole assemblages.

Remains which may hold potential for future research in the event of new technologies should also be retained.

A copy of the exhumation licence should be deposited with the paper archive.

**Disperse:** skeletal material recovered with insufficient contextual or dating evidence for valid research or analysis, as determined by an osteoarchaeologist, and bones in too poor a state of preservation for long-term retention may be dispersed once they have been fully recorded.

In a few instances it may be preferable to re-inter remains which are not to be analysed further in the foreseeable future. This should only be considered if cost-efficient storage is not viable (or if required under Ecclesiastical Law). Reburial must be undertaken in controlled conditions agreed by the Museum and a qualified osteoarchaeologist (and Faculty, where appropriate). Please consult the Society for

Museum Archaeology's *Standards and Guidance in the Care of Archaeological Collections* (2020) for more information on re-burial and the Advisory Panel on the Archaeology of Burials in England (Mays 2017)

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample - element and side, using size classes where in doubt, quantification of bones present, maximum length of fragment, plus any other measurement which can be taken, any age data, any determination of sex, any evidence of pre- or post-mortem practices, any evidence of trauma or pathology.

#### 4.3.2.4 Metal (including metallurgical waste)

Bulk metalwork is generally confined to iron structural and horseshoe nails, and unidentifiable strip, rod and plate fragments. All other metalwork should fall under the category of Small Finds or Registered Finds (see 4.3.2.13 Smalls Finds/Registered Finds, below).

**Retain:** one example of every nail type recorded should be retained, as should unusual nail forms which do not appear in the literature or have known parallels.

Groups of nails from complete objects should be kept in their entirety.

Assemblages of unidentified metal fragments with a degree of uniformity or groups of unidentified objects with uniform characteristics suggestive of a consistency of use should be retained.

Objects which form part of or are associated with a hoard should be retained.

All stratified objects or fragments retaining organic artefacts within the corrosion product should be retained.

Representative samples of objects associated with manufacture should be made.

All metallurgical remains securely dated to the Bronze Age, Early/Middle Iron Age and Early Medieval period should be retained.

A representative sample of Late Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval iron slag associated with a production site should be retained. Samples should be large enough (200-500g each) to provide enough material for destructive analysis without compromising the curated collection.

A representative sample of iron-working waste of the Late Iron Age, Roman, medieval and post-medieval periods that can be linked to specific processes.

All pre-19th century stratified non-ferrous slag, waste, mould and crucible fragments.

Representative pieces and waste that shed light on the construction of furnaces and kilns.

Representative sample of wasters should be retained.

**Disperse:** unidentifiable fragments with no uniformity and objects too unstable or corroded to be meaningfully conserved may be dispersed.

Common and repetitive finds from an assemblage may also be dispersed once a representative sample has been made as per the retention strategy.

**Minimum level of recording:** x-radiography of all stratified metalwork (not including metallurgical waste) whose form/decoration is not clear due to the presence of

corrosion products. If in doubt the Historic England (formerly English Heritage) guidelines on x-radiography should be consulted (English Heritage 2006).

In addition, record by context and sample number: small find number, type of material, dimensions (with annotated diagrams, if needed), object function, object class/type (including published parallel if needed), condition, completeness, date.

#### 4.3.2.5 Building Material

##### Stone

**Retain:** A sample of each type identified should be taken.

All architectural fragments with diagnostic working.

All tile from significant 'sets' that are part of a complete/reconstructable roof should be retained.

All highly decorated or inscribed pieces should be retained.

All other stratified pieces with significant working, including spindle whorls and stone axes, along with objects of uncertain function should be retained.

Representative samples of waste associated with the manufacture of stone building materials or tools, including unfinished pieces.

**Disperse:** fragmentary, un-diagnostic or repetitive fragments surplus to retention requirements may be dispersed, subject to quantification and recording.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample number - stone type, number/weight, notes on signs of natural wear or any human modifications, dimensions (of worked pieces), signs of re-use.

## Ceramic Building Material (including mortar)

Where quantities of ceramic building material (CBM) from a site are large, on-site recording or sampling may be unavoidable. Any such recording or sampling strategy should be formulated only after consultation with the Curator.

**Retain:** Samples should be taken of all fabrics identified and should be at least 50-100mm across.

Representative samples of complete/near complete forms.

Closely dated complete key groups should be retained. These should be discussed with the Curator if they are likely to cause logistical problems.

Complete examples of Roman and medieval CBM which provide good samples for OSL (optically stimulated luminescence) dating or other scientific analysis.

All tile (roof/floor/tesserae) from significant 'sets' that are part of a complete/reconstructable roof/flooring/mosaic should be retained.

All stratified stamped or roller-stamped box flue tiles, unstratified examples of those not present within the stratified assemblage and representative samples of combing/keying patterns.

All Roman, medieval and early post-medieval roof furniture.

Samples of all discernible medieval/early post-medieval patterns on decorated floor, wall or hearth tiles.

Samples of stratified/diagnostic crested ridge tiles.

All fragments bearing paw prints, fingerprints, etc., should be retained.

All decorated (i.e. not monochrome) wall plaster and moulded plasterwork, representative samples of undecorated/unpainted plaster and representative samples of monochrome painted wall plaster.

Representative samples of all types of stratified mortar.

Earlier material reused in a later context.

**Disperse:** fragmentary, un-diagnostic or repetitive fragments surplus to retention requirements may be dispersed, subject to quantification and recording.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample number - fabric, form, period, any complete dimensions (including thickness), fixing type, decoration type and pattern, makers' marks, number of pieces (by fabric/form), weight (by fabric/form), comments on anything of particular interest (e.g. post-firing modification, notable abrasion, signs of heating or re-use, etc.).

#### 4.3.2.7 Worked Flint

**Retain:** assemblages from secure prehistoric contexts that contribute significantly to our understanding of the site warrant full retention. These will include in situ spreads/working floors as well as those from cut features.

All Palaeolithic flint, whether stratified or not.

Unstratified, but adequately located assemblages of Mesolithic, Neolithic or Early Bronze Age material found during archaeological investigation or fieldwalking should be retained if they are the only evidence of activity from these periods. Mesolithic material is of particular regional significance.

Any tools of particular interest or rarity and any imported flint should be retained.

Assemblages should be retained in their entirety unless it poses logistical difficulties for either the Depositors or the Museum. Under such circumstances a sampling strategy should be formulated in consultation with the Curator.

**Disperse:** undiagnostic, fragmentary or pieces surplus to the retention criteria may be dispersed. Unprovenanced flint (excluding Palaeolithic material) can also be dispersed.

**Minimum level of recording:** There is no standard recording methodology for lithics. Reliance on the specialist's experience to create an intelligible archive is essential. This should, at a minimum, include quantifications by waste/tool type and annotated sketches of key retouched pieces.

#### 4.3.2.8 Pottery

**Retain:** all complete vessels or fragments comprising a reconstructable profile, fragments with makers' stamps and sherds with residues or with impressions should be retained.

All or a representative sample of rim and base fragments, and fragments diagnostic of form should be retained.

A representative sample of fabrics, decorative treatments, evidence of secondary uses and wear-patterns should be kept.

All sherds of particular significance for the dating or interpretation of the context or site should be retained.

Sufficient samples should be taken for local or other type-series and for destructive analyses.

Assemblages from fieldwalking should be retained if the level of recording is adequate for analysis of distribution and site formation or aids study of site and pottery distributions over the wider geographical area.

**Disperse:** sherds from poorly recorded or significantly disturbed contexts may be dispersed.

Repetitive and undiagnostic sherds may be dispersed providing that they have been fully quantified and recorded, and a fully representative sample has been retained.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample number - sherd count and weight by fabric, vessel type, rim form, finish, decoration and firing, and one other method of quantification (e.g. ENV [minimum number of vessels] or EVE [estimated vessel equivalent]) is recommended.

## Prehistoric

**Retain:** on account of its relative scarcity and, particularly, the need for further research in light of new technologies, selection is not usually considered appropriate for prehistoric pottery. All prehistoric pottery should be retained.

Large assemblages which may pose logistical difficulties, or where there is substantial duplication, should be discussed with the Curator to assess the possibility of sampling.

## Historic

**Retain:** all feature/decorated sherds from kiln assemblages (of all periods) unless duplication of forms is severe. In the latter instance feature sherds can be discarded as long as they have been fully recorded against a site form series, for which examples of all form variations are retained.

Roman assemblages from the Boxford and Thatcham areas, and the Newbury Railway goods yard site are of particular importance, and sampling strategies should be discussed with the Curator.

All Early Medieval pottery should be retained.

Medieval assemblages associated with pottery manufacture are of local significance and sampling strategies should be discussed with the Curator.

Stratified late post-medieval assemblages which can be confidently linked to known individuals or specific households should be discussed with the Curator. If the assemblage is large a sampling strategy may need to be implemented, otherwise the preference is for retention.

**Disperse:** see 4.3.2.8 Pottery, above.

#### 4.3.2.9 Clay Pipe

**Retain:** all pipes of unusual form or decoration, or with legible makers' names or initials should be retained, as should all non-local pipes.

Uncontaminated stratified groups which contain bowls, decorated pieces, makers' marks, etc., should be retained in their entirety.

Assemblages from key stratigraphic dating contexts on site should be sampled.

Wasters or other artefacts associated with the manufacture of pipes should be retained.

**Disperse:** plain fragments from poorly recorded or disturbed contexts should be dispersed once they have been recorded.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample number.

For stem fragments – number and weight of stems by period (based on the morphology of the stem fragments). The type and number of any mouthpieces should also be noted.

For bowls – number and weight by type (using Atkinson & Oswald's 1969 typology [www.pipearchive.co.uk/pdfs/howto/Typologies/Atkinson%20and%20Oswald%201969%20-%20London%20Typology.pdf](http://www.pipearchive.co.uk/pdfs/howto/Typologies/Atkinson%20and%20Oswald%201969%20-%20London%20Typology.pdf)).

For all – decoration, makers' marks and initials, degree of abrasion.

#### 4.3.2.10 Fired Clay (including daub and briquetage)

**Retain:** all objects, or parts thereof, made of fired clay should be retained, regardless of whether the object can be clearly identified.

A representative sample of all fabrics, forms or types should be made.

All decorated material should be retained.

All daub with wattle imprints should be retained.

All stratified briquetage should be retained, given its rarity in the region.

Representative pieces and waste that shed light on the construction of furnaces and kilns.

Representative samples of wasters should be retained.

**Disperse:** fragmentary, poorly preserved or undiagnostic pieces, those from disturbed contexts and fragments surplus to retention requirements should be dispersed once they have been recorded.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample number - fabric, form, wattle imprints, makers' marks, rim type (briquetage), number of pieces (by fabric/form), weight (by fabric/form), comments on anything of particular interest (e.g. decoration, post-firing modification, notable abrasion, imprints from fingers or seeds, etc.).

#### 4.3.2.11 Glass

**Retain:** all stratified late prehistoric, Roman, Saxon, medieval and early post-medieval glass should be retained.

Diagnostic pieces of unstratified/residual Roman, Saxon and medieval glass, if considered to be of particular intrinsic interest or associated with a particular structure.

Representative samples of well-dated stratified late post-medieval glass that can be associated with a particular property, individual or industrial site.

Any late post-medieval glass of specific intrinsic interest.

All imported glass of intrinsic significance.

All pre-19th century stratified slag, waste and raw materials associated with glass-working. If quantities are large, representative samples of all types should be retained, with an emphasis on dated stratified deposits.

**Disperse:** only late post-medieval stratified fragments should be considered for dispersal. Unstratified, repetitive and undiagnostic sherds from other periods may also be dispersed subject to recording.

**Minimum level of recording:** by context and sample number - colour, form, number of fragments, weight, minimum number of vessels per type/form, measurable dimensions, decoration, stopper type (bottles), all markings/embossing, suggested date range per type/form.

#### 4.3.2.13 Small/ Registered Finds

**Retain:** all Small Finds should be retained.

In the case of large, repetitive assemblages of Small Finds, the Depositor may discuss dispersal with the Curator.

**Minimum level of recording:** x-radiography of all stratified metalwork whose form/decoration is not clear due to the presence of corrosion products. If in doubt the Historic England guide on x-radiography should be consulted (English Heritage 2006).

In addition, record by context and sample number: Small Find number, type of material, dimensions (with annotated diagrams, if needed), object function, object class/type (including published parallel, if needed), condition, completeness, date.

## 4.4 Dispersal

Any dispersal of material prior to deposition with the Museum should be fully documented in the archive.

The following must be recorded for any dispersed material:

- material
- weight
- count
- context
- spatial reference for disposal site, if applicable. Use this where material is disposed at a specific location on site or where human remains have been re-interred.

Retention of type series samples should occur only in consultation with the Museum and should be obtained from material that might otherwise have been dispersed from the archive according to the above selection guidelines.

Any finds retained by the Depositor which should have been deposited under these guidelines, but have been kept with the agreement of the Museum will be considered loans.

### 4.4.1 Handling Collection

Archaeological contractors may offer, for no additional charge, undeposited material for educational use. Any such material will only be accepted in consultation with the Curator and must be made as a permanent donation to the collection (loan material will not be accepted). The Curator will act as the liaison between contractors and the Learning and Participation Officer in these circumstances.

Any material offered must meet the following requirements:

- have low research potential
- be suitable for handling by people of all ages – sharp, toxic, very small/very large or fragile material will not be accepted
- objects must not require complex conservation.

In general, the following would potentially be of interest to the Museum:

- material from all chronological periods
- material of local interest, e.g. objects with local makers' marks
- material with fingerprints/marks or animal prints
- material which can be measured or drawn
- unstratified objects may be of interest.

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