



**THE MORAY
SOCIETY**

**ELGIN
MUSEUM**

**Staff,
Moray Society Board members,
Elgin Museum Management
Committee members,
and Volunteers**

HANDBOOK

March 2024

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**WELCOME TO THE MORAY SOCIETY AND ELGIN MUSEUM:
INFORMATION FOR STAFF, BOARD AND ELGIN MUSEUM MANAGEMENT
COMMITTEE MEMBERS AND VOLUNTEERS**

The age and deteriorating condition of our 180-year-old building means that urgent remedial action is necessary to safeguard our wonderful Museum and its collections. This also provides an opportunity for remodelling and modernising where appropriate to secure our future for the next 180 years. Remedial work may affect the functioning of the Museum over this year and next but precautions will be taken to ensure the safety of staff, volunteers, and visitors, with a view to remaining open to the public where this can be done safely. Please continue to make use of and promote the digital content on the Museum's website and social media where you can. Your continued support of the Museum is appreciated.

If you have questions about the content of this handbook, there is additional information in the Volunteer Information File, available at the front desk, or please ask the EMMC Convenor.

Accreditation: The Museums Accreditation Scheme for museums in the UK is administered in Scotland by Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) on behalf of Arts Council England (ACE). The aim of the scheme is 'to identify a minimum level of standards and to encourage improvement through planning'. Accreditation is a requirement for applications to many grant schemes, for example the National Lottery Heritage Fund, MGS and for allocation of Treasure Trove. Elgin Museum's accreditation was renewed in 2018 and next review due 2026. To maintain Accreditation, we must continue to fulfil the standards of Governance and Museum Management, User Services, Visitor Facilities (VisitScotland 4 stars) and Collections Management.

Activities Committee: A Committee of the Moray Society, reporting to Elgin Museum Management Committee (EMMC). Key activities are organising lectures, events for families and children, the public, volunteers, groups and MS members, and hosting promotional events. The remit includes publicity for all events and also marketing and promotion in general of the Moray Society and the Museum. Meetings are held as and when required. The activities organised depend on the input of members. Where possible, activities will also include a biennial conference linked to the collections.

Charity number: The Moray Society is a registered charity, number: SC017546. Quote this in all correspondence and documentation.

Civic Committee: A Committee of the Moray Society, reporting to the EMMC. The remit includes promotion of the care of the built and natural environment of Moray, in line with the Constitution. The committee is in abeyance for lack of a convenor.

Cleaning: Cleaning of the Museum is undertaken by a commercial company. When the Museum is open to the public, cleaning is done between 4 and 5 pm Tuesday through to Sunday. This includes cleaning toilets, emptying bins, hoovering, and cleaning floors. This does not include cleaning the glass cabinets, which should be checked by volunteers (and cleaned where necessary using the specialist cleaner provided: tins at front desk and under kitchen sink) at the end of their shift. The office areas and kitchen are not included in the contract – please keep these areas clean and tidy and use the wet wipes supplied to clean table surfaces after use.

Collections Care: Evidence of the proper care of the Museum's collections is required for Accreditation. The responsibility for this is with a Collections Management Group of the EMMC. Included in their remit are decisions on acquisitions, overview of the documentation and conservation of the objects in the Museum's care, environmental monitoring and control. NB Adherence to 'Location and Movement Control' of objects is key to care of the collections and required by all users of the collections.

Collections Development Policy: This states the Museum's aims and objectives, describes the present collection, and lays out the circumstances in which we will acquire new objects or dispose of objects. Constraints of available space and collection care resource limit what the Museum can accept. The Policy essentially restricts us to collecting objects relating to Moray. We also have informal agreements about our geographical collection area with Moray Council Museums Service (currently closed) and we will consult with members of the NE Concordat before bidding for items of Treasure Trove. Current signatories to the NE Concordat are Aberdeen City and Aberdeenshire Councils and the University of Aberdeen.

Committees: Membership of a Committee or Group is by invitation of its Convenor or Coordinator to whom an expression of interest should be made. Convenership of committees and groups is by invitation of the EMMC Convenor who is appointed by the MSB.

Curator: The Moray Society is currently without a curator but this post remains under review by the MSB. The Curator at The Museum on the Mound, Edinburgh acts as the Accreditation Mentor.

Disclosure: www.mygov.scot/disclosure-types Staff who work directly with children and vulnerable adults are required to be disclosed. Unaccompanied children are not permitted in the Museum, so volunteers are not currently required to be disclosed. Any disclosures required will be handled by the EMMC. However, all should be aware of appropriate behaviour and in particular, should not pay close attention to individual children unless the child is in the presence of a parent, teacher or guardian.

Documentation Procedural Manual: It is a requirement for Accreditation that museums adhere to the SPECTRUM minimum standard for documentation for the primary procedures: Object Entry, Acquisition, Location and Movement Control, Cataloguing, Object Exit, Loans in, Loans out. Anyone working with the Museum's collection must be aware of and follow the procedures in the Manual. Chaos ensues if objects are in the Museum without appropriate identification, correct and updated location and 'paper trail'. The Manual is under review (begun 2020) including update to SPECTRUM 5 and compilation of Inventory.

Documentation Subgroup: A subgroup of the EMMC set up to oversee the timeous revision of the Museum's policies and forms and the creation of new policies and forms as directed by the EMMC. The coordinator of this subgroup is a member of the EMMC.

Elgin Museum Management Committee (EMMC): A Committee of the Moray Society reporting to the Board which devolves day to day management of the Museum to the EMMC. The EMMC meets six times a year and the Minutes are available on request. Minutes are also posted on the notice board in the Outer Office and filed on shelf E4.

Emergency Plan: It is the responsibility of those with designated roles to keep themselves familiar with the emergency plan. All staff, volunteers, EMMC and Board members need to be aware of current Health and Safety arrangements, which show the actions to be taken in the event of an emergency, for their own safety, and that of visitors, and for the care of the buildings and Museum collection. A summary of actions in emergencies is displayed near the office phone and in the Volunteers' Information files. ('Emergency Plan' master copy is kept in the safe).

Finance Committee: A Committee of the Moray Society. The key activity is advising the Board and EMMC on spending and other financial matters. It also advises on funding opportunities available to the Moray Society, oversees grant applications and supports fund raising events. The Convenor is the Company Secretary and Treasurer. Members are, ex officio, the Moray Society President, Vice-President, another Board member and the EMMC Convenor.

Fire: The fire alarm is monitored and linked to the Fire Service through an external monitoring company (EMCS). Multi-sense detectors (heat and smoke) have been fitted to ensure a timeous response by the Fire Service if the alarm is activated. It is the responsibility of all staff, volunteers, EMMC and Board members to be aware of fire preventative measures, the fire procedures, fire alarms and extinguishers (plan in office doorway) and to attend an annual fire drill. This will normally be held at volunteer training sessions or as arranged. If in doubt about procedures, speak with the EMMC Convenor in the first instance.

Health and Safety: It is the responsibility of all staff and volunteers to keep themselves familiar with the Health and Safety Policy and to use their common sense to safeguard themselves and visitors. If in doubt, speak with the EMMC Convenor to whom all incidents must be reported. Please also adhere to any Health and Safety addenda.

Keyholders: There is a Keyholder Policy and agreement; all keyholders must be approved for Lone Working by EMMC and keys will only be issued by the Convenor. When the Museum is open to the public, the Duty Keyholder will normally be the keyholder who opened or will be closing. **They must ensure the Duty Volunteers can contact them at all times; the volunteers on duty must ensure they know how to call the Duty Keyholder in an emergency, who will be <15 mins away.**

Kitchen area: A fridge, kettle, and microwave are provided for use by staff and volunteers. If you are using these facilities, please ensure that you keep them clean and tidy. Take all perishable food left-overs home with you. Store biscuits for shared use only in lidded containers. Food and drink left in fridge past its sell-by date will be disposed of. If you are eating in the office, please wipe down tables when you have finished and clean up any crumbs.

Learning and Outreach Officer: The Moray Society is currently without a Learning and Outreach Officer but this post remains under review by the MSB. The Young Marvels Club for junior members of the Society is in abeyance until this post is filled.

Learning and Outreach Subgroup: A Subgroup of the Activities Committee tasked with delivering a programme of activities and events to meet the Learning & Outreach remit of this Committee. The Coordinator will be a member of the Activities Committee and report to them accordingly. The Subgroup will support the activities of the (paid) Learning and Outreach Officer if in post and/or carry out additional tasks as delegated by the Activities Committee.

Loans in: The policy on loans to the Museum lays down the reasons for which they are permitted; the documentation procedure requires a signed agreement with the lender. In brief, loans must be for a finite period, and other than in exceptional circumstances, the loan will be for a specific temporary display and will be agreed by the Collections Management Group before the item is accepted. The reason for caution is that the Museum is bound to give the same standard of care to a borrowed object as to any object in its collection; this might involve the Museum in expenditure of money or resource, and yet the Museum is not the owner. Loans out of the Museum require similar procedures to be followed.

Lone working: Volunteers are not to work on their own in the Museum unless they are keyholders with prior EMMC approval for lone working. This is for their safety and to comply with the Museum's Health & Safety Policy. A keyholder does not need to be on site if there are two or more volunteers present but they should be immediately contactable – see Keyholders above.

Meet and Greet volunteers: Arrangements continue to be subject to review. There will be a one-way route from the Main Entrance exiting via the Museum Side Hall where the shop is relocated. Please ask visitors to leave by the shop (unless they need to take advantage of the ramped access at the Main Entrance) and draw their attention to the one-way arrows. A one-way system is also in operation on the stairs to improve flow around the Mezzanine. Advice relating to the role is available at induction sessions and the Volunteer Files at the Front Desk, Main Gallery and in the Shop. The line manager for the volunteers is the EMMC Convenor but the shift lead will be the Visitor Experience Steward if they are on duty. Please check the diary, communications book, and noticeboards on arrival as things may have changed since your last shift.

Moray Heritage Connections (MHC): An umbrella group for museums and heritage groups in Moray and currently inactive. Elgin Museum is a member and Bill Dalgarno is currently Treasurer. Its future remains under review in association with Visit Moray Speyside and the Moray Council.

Moray Society (MS): The body that owns Elgin Museum; a company limited by guarantee and not having share capital. Company number 106529. Some of the Society's other aims and objectives are fulfilled through committees. Membership is by subscription and open to anyone supporting the aims and objectives. All members are encouraged to volunteer both in the Museum and on the Committees and all volunteers are encouraged to join the Moray Society – which is essentially our 'Friends of Elgin Museum' equivalent. A Newsletter is published quarterly.

Moray Society Board (MSB): The Society's governing body. Membership is by election at the AGM and anyone interested in standing should contact the Vice-President while the post of President is vacant. The Office Bearers are the President, Vice-President, Treasurer/Company Secretary who are elected by the Trustees after the AGM, and, ex officio, the EMMC Convenor. The President of the Moray Society is also Chairman of the Board. The Board meets quarterly and additionally as required. Minutes are available on request.

Moray Society Membership: Members of the Moray Society have free entry to lectures and access to the (non-lending) library and other archive resources of the Museum and Society for research and pay a member's reduced rate for events and photocopying. Membership is open to all who support the aims of the Society and pay an annual subscription – see current application form on the website. There is a special 'deal' available to new members who sign a standing order payable from the following January. Members' support of the Museum, through involvement in the life of the Society and their subscriptions, is fundamental to the Museum's continued existence.

Museum Assistant: This is a part-time post with hours all day on Mondays and Tuesdays and on Wednesday mornings. The main work is with cataloguing of the collections. The line-manager is a named member of the Board.

Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS): MGS is a membership organisation offering support, including training and advice, to museums and galleries throughout Scotland. It is the main conduit for Scottish Government funding to the sector and administers Museum Accreditation in Scotland on behalf of Arts Council England. Membership no. AN33.

Museum Side Hall: It is primarily being used as the Shop and Exit route for visitors but can also be used by the Museum for lectures, family events and school groups, but not at the moment for regular use by community and other groups. All enquiries via curator@elginmuseum.org.uk

North East Scotland Heritage Network (NESHN): an MGS supported geographically-based museum and heritage forum offering voluntary peer-support for organisations of all sizes. NESHN provides online Q&A topic days, training opportunities, and has a conference planned for 2024. Elgin Museum is a member of the forum but interested individuals can subscribe to the mailing list. Please speak to the EMMC Convenor if you would like to know more about the network.

Number 3 High Street: The Moray Society owns the building next door to the Museum. The building currently requires refurbishment and is the focus of an ambitious building plan to provide commercial space on the ground floor, and new Museum storage and office space on the upper floors. The Museum currently uses the cellar under the shop as a store and the shop window to promote the Museum.

Object Entry: Anyone offering any object to the Museum for any purpose, including identification, must be treated with due consideration but objects must only enter the Museum in accordance with the Museum's procedures. The appropriate documentation must be completed. If you have not had training in this and there is no-one from the Collections Management Group available to help you, ask the enquirer to contact us via email with a photo, dimensions and the object's background story. The Collections Management Group will agree which items are to be accessioned; items not suitable for accessioning will be returned to the owner, offered to another organisation if possible, or disposed of.

Policies and Procedures: Please see paper copies in files on outer office shelves, and electronic copies of key policies and the Moray Society Constitution on the website, under 'The Museum': <https://elginmuseum.org.uk/policies/>

Recognition: The Museum's collection of local fossils and associated archive has been Recognised as of special significance by the Scottish Government. This helps promote the collection and makes us eligible to apply to MGS for grants for the collection's care and promotion. There is a Museum Geology Group, open to all volunteers.

Seasonal Visitor Experience Steward: This is a paid role for the weeks that the Museum is open to the public; the person appointed will act as Keyholder and Meet & Greet lead on the days that they are working, assisted by the volunteer Meet & Greet team. The line manager for this post is the EMMC Convenor.

Security: The Moray Society has a responsibility for the safety of staff, volunteers and visitors, and for the buildings and the objects in its care. The building, stores and some individual display cases are alarmed; there are some stand-alone alarms, including a personnel alarm. Visitors are not admitted unless there are at least two members of staff or volunteers on duty. There is a CCTV system. In case of accidental triggering of the alarm, and there being no keyholder on site, contact one of the keyholders (starting with the Duty Keyholder) who will instruct you how to cancel the alarm. See also Health and Safety Policy.

Venue: Elgin Museum is licensed for the celebration of weddings and civil partnerships, and is available, subject to conditions, for hire for private and corporate events. All enquiries via curator@elginmuseum.org.uk

Volunteers: Volunteers are the backbone of the Moray Society and the Museum. They are encouraged to take part in whatever aspect of work they feel would best suit them, and to be active in giving feedback to the EMMC. There are three Volunteers' notice boards in the Outer Office where forthcoming events, minutes of meetings and other news are posted. The Volunteer Coordinator (Mentor) is the volunteers' first port of call, or failing their availability, the EMMC Convenor. There are policies relating to volunteer agreements and grievance procedures. ('Volunteer Information File' at front desk).

Volunteers are needed and welcomed both for front of house duties in the open season and for more backroom work all year round: curatorial (cataloguing, checking boxes from store), secretarial, preparation for Accreditation, exhibition projects, assisting with outreach and school visits etc. Please do ask!

Museum Volunteer induction sessions are held annually and individually on signing up to be a volunteer. Training in museum-related skills is available in-house and externally e.g. through MGS, National Museums Scotland, Association of Independent Museums, Museums Association.

Most volunteers are Moray Society members, but we realise that non-members may well want to try out volunteering before committing to membership.

Volunteer Forum: An informal meeting for volunteers to meet socially and to discuss items of interest or concern. To be held quarterly, or as required.

The 100 Club - new 'shareholders', who must be members of the Moray Society, are always welcome. Shares are £10 per annum and there are four draws per year. Contact Mary Shand via curator@elginmuseum.org.uk



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