

# Designing a collection management plan

## Learning Objective

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To consider to design and implementation of a strategic plan for collecting objects from a spontaneous memorial site

To assess your organisation's individual capacity to manage the collection process

## Scenario Summary

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### ***LOCATION: AT THE MEMORIAL SITE***

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You have been tasked with the collection of a large spontaneous memorial that has formed in the centre of your town following an unexpected tragedy. This memorial consists of over 10,000 object, including organic material (i.e. floral tributes); paper-based material (i.e. condolence cards, posters, handwritten letters); and non-organic materials (i.e. candles, balloons, and soft toys).

To begin, you decide to visit the memorial site with a small team, to assess the size and scope of the task and to gather information. What information do you need to gather during this visit in order to start drafting a collection management plan for the sensitive removal of the memorial?

# Key Considerations

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- You will need to think and work around your organisation's capacity, staffing, and expertise. Is this work you can undertake singlehandedly, or do you need support from external stakeholders?
- Will you collect everything or are you looking to collect a representative sample?
- Do you have capacity to collect all groups of objects (i.e. both organic and non-organic)?
- Where will you store the memorial collection? Do you need to secure temporary storage?
- How important is conservation? Do you need to send some/all items away for restoration?
- How will you document the collection process? Filmmaking methods? Photography?
- How will you communicate your plans with members of the public and bereaved family members?

## Further training, support, and key readings

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[Contemporary Collecting Addendum](#), Orange County Regional History Center (following the Pulse nightclub shooting, 2016)

Maynor, A. R. (2016). "[Response to the unthinkable: Collecting and archiving condolence and temporary memorial materials following public tragedies](#)". In E. M. Decker & J. A. Townes (Eds.), *Handbook of research on disaster management and contingency planning in modern libraries* (pp. 582–624). Hershey, PA: Information Science Reference.

Miles, E., Corder, S. and Kavanagh, J. (eds) (2020) [Contemporary collecting: an ethical toolkit for museum practitioners](#)

The National Archive, [Rapid Response Collecting](#)

Society of American Archivists, [Documenting in Times of Crisis: A Resource Kit](#)