

22 August 2001

WORKING GROUP ON HUMAN REMAINS

WORKING GROUP INVITES SUBMISSION OF EVIDENCE FROM INTERESTED GROUPS AND INDIVIDUALS

Working Group on Human Remains calls for submissions

The Working Group on Human Remains, which was established by the Minister for the Arts in May 2001 under the Chairmanship of Professor Norman Palmer (please refer to DCMS News release 165/01, 8 May 2001) has today issued an invitation for the submission of evidence, either oral or written, from interested parties.

The Group was formed with the following Terms of Reference:

1. To examine the current legal status of human remains within the collections of publicly funded Museums and Galleries in the United Kingdom.
2. To examine the powers of museums and galleries governed by statute to deaccession, or to otherwise release from their possession, human remains within their collections and to consider the desirability and possible forms of legislative change in this area.
3. To consider the circumstances in which material other than, but associated with, human remains might properly be included within any proposed legislative change in respect of human remains.



4. To take advice from interested parties.
5. Consider the desirability of a Statement of Principles (and supporting guidance) relating to the care and safe keeping of human remains and to the handling of requests for return. If the Panel considers appropriate, to draw up the terms of such a Statement and guidance.
(The Group interprets "care and safe keeping of human remains" as including all forms of treatment, including use and presentation.)
6. To prepare a report to the Minister for the Arts and make recommendations as to proposals which might form the basis for a consultation document (to be used for consultation under the Regulatory Reform Act 2001).

The Group wishes to hear from any interested party, either within or beyond the United Kingdom who would like to make a contribution to the issues included within the Terms of Reference. Written contributions are requested in the first instance but the Group reserves the power to supplement these by inviting oral submissions.

Written contributions, of which at least one copy should be in English should be received by the 30 November 2001 and sent to:

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