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## Biology Curators Group Newsletter

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**ROTHERHAM METROPOLITAN BOROUGH COUNCIL**



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The Editor,  
Biology Curators' Group,  
Sheffield City Museum,  
Weston Park,  
SHEFFIELD.    S10 2TP

14th July, 1983.

Dear Steve,

Collecting Policies

I should like to endorse Mike Taylor's comments (BCG Newsletter 3, 6) on the need for collecting policies for all museums. We are employed as professionals not as dilettante collectors and we must be prepared to work in a disciplined manner. On a wider front, most of us are paid by the public and we, therefore, have a duty to work in co-operation with our colleagues in other museums and not in competition with them.

I accept that it is easier for a small museum like Rotherham, with limited resources in staff, space and finance, to decide that our aims must be limited by these constraints and to develop a collecting policy (and other policies) accordingly. We have, therefore, decided not to compete with our larger, better staffed and better funded neighbours and we now concentrate our resources on being a local museum. Other institutions may feel that they have the resources to be regional, national or international museums, but that is still a conscious decision and the implications and priorities still need to be thought through. The alternative is, as Mike pointed out, a museum which sways from one theme to another at the whim of each curator.

It is also worth bearing in mind that a collecting policy is not a display policy. I still display specimens from other parts of Britain and from the rest of the world, but I rarely collect such specimens.

Yours sincerely,

Bill Ely,  
Keeper of Natural History,  
Clifton Park Museum.