



Human Remains Statement

The Royal Pavilion & Museums (RPM) holds over 1500 human remains. Most have been excavated locally by archaeologists, either as a result of research excavations or more frequently nowadays as part of the planning processes associated with new building developments. Human remains removed from such sites have been placed in our care.

Our collections also include human remains from different countries and historical periods. Remains in RPM's collection include skeletal material, cremation material, mummies, artefacts incorporating human remains and slides with human tissues.

Visitor surveys in other museums have shown that most museum visitors are comfortable with, and often expect to see, human remains as an element of museum displays. Indeed, human remains are routinely displayed in the British Museum, Science Museum, Museum of London and similar sized services to RPM such as the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford and the Horniman Museum in Forest Hill.

Human remains have played a key part in the interpretation of previous and current gallery displays. RPM is committed to the usefulness of exhibiting human remains for the purposes of education; for example explaining burial practices, learning about the health and lifestyles of our ancestors, the use of human remains in the manufacture of artefacts, to bring visitors into physical contact with people of the past and to encourage reflection.

We do our best to prepare visitors so that they may view human remains with respect. We explain the context in which they are displayed and warn those who may not wish to view them at all. Wherever possible, consultation takes place to ensure human remains are displayed suitably and acceptably.

We consider the online publication of images and other media depicting human remains in the same way we assess the display of the physical material.

Environmental conditions and security of the displays are taken into account to ensure that the remains are shown respectfully and safely.

Given the wide range of issues and sensitivities surrounding human remains, all questions relating to them (whether regarding display, access, or repatriation) are considered on a case-by-case basis.

If you wish to avoid viewing human remains during your visit, please be aware that currently they can be found in the following museums/galleries:

- Booth Museum of Natural History/Osteology Gallery
- Brighton Museum & Art Gallery/Archaeology Gallery, Egyptology Gallery, Spotlight Gallery
- Hove Museum & Art Gallery/Local History Gallery

RPM's Human Remains Policy may be found in full at brightonmuseums.org.uk/policies