

# Export of Objects of Cultural Interest 2022-23

Presented to Parliament pursuant to Section 10 (1) (a) of the Export Control Act  
2002

July 2023



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# Export of Objects of Cultural Interest 2022-23

1 May 2022 to 30 April 2023

Report of the Secretary of State

# Annual report to Parliament

By the Secretary of State for Culture, Media & Sport

## **The Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art and Objects of Cultural Interest**

Section 10 of the Export Control Act 2002 requires the Secretary of State to lay before Parliament (a) a report on the operation during the year of the Export of Objects of Cultural Interest (Control) Order 2003 relating to the export of objects of cultural interest; and (b) a report on other matters relating to the operation of the Act.

### **Cases referred to me by the Reviewing Committee on the Export of Works of Art (“the Committee”)**

The Committee advises me in all cases where a refusal of an export licence for an object of cultural interest is suggested on the grounds of national importance. The Committee will designate an object as a ‘national treasure’ if it considers that its departure from the UK would be a misfortune on one or more of the following three grounds:

#### **History**

Is it closely connected with our history and national life?

Waverley 1

#### **Aesthetics**

Is it of outstanding aesthetic importance?

Waverley 2

#### **Scholarship**

Is it of outstanding significance for the study of some particular branch of art, learning or history?

Waverley 3

These are known as the Waverley criteria (named after the 1950 committee chaired by Viscount Waverley which was appointed to consider and advise on an export policy). They are used to measure an object’s importance and are not, nor ever have been, mutually exclusive, nor is any one criterion more important than the others. An object need only meet one criterion to be considered a national treasure.

The Committee met 11 times during the 2022-23 reporting period and considered 18 objects referred to it at 8 of those meetings. The Committee is reporting on 16 objects. For all but three of these the Committee recommended that their export licences should be deferred. I accepted the Committee’s recommendation that 13 objects were national treasures, and they were deferred. Their aggregate value came to £15,593,430.

To date 7 of them have been saved for the nation:

**Case 1** *Algernon Marsden* by James Joseph Jacques Tissot

**Case 4** Nine conjoined roundels, presentation manuscript for Queen Elizabeth I

**Case 5** Arctic Expedition 1852, sledge flag of Captain Henry Kellett, C.B. commanding H.M.S Resolute

**Case 7** Victoria Cross posthumously awarded to Squadron Leader A.S.K. Scarf, Royal Air Force, and four of his other medals

**Case 8** *A Young Teacher* by Rebecca Solomon

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**Case 13** An Egyptian limestone relief, Amarna Period

**Case 14** Autograph verses in Greek by Samuel Taylor Coleridge

Two are still under deferral and the other 4 were or can be exported.

The 68th annual report (2022-23) of the Committee is available in a digital format on the Arts Council website.

<https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/supporting-collections-and-cultural-property/rcewa-annual-reports>

# Operation of the Control

The following figures cover the period of this report (1 May 2022 to 30 April 2023).

		1 May 2021 – 30 April 2022	1 May 2022 – 30 April 2023
(a)	Number of applications for individual export licences <sup>1</sup>	4,477	5,398
(b)	Number of above applications which were for manuscripts, documents or archives	1,308	1,397
(c)	Number of items licensed after reference to expert advisers on the question of national importance	18,414	28,483
(d)	Total value of items in (c)	£1,146,641,097	£1,284,853,265
(e)	Number of Open Individual Export Licences (OIEL) in operation having been issued in previous years to regular exporters for the export of (i) manuscripts, documents, archives and photographic positives and negatives; (ii) objects imported into the UK in the past 50 years; (iii) UK origin coins; (iv) the temporary export of objects owned or under the control of national institutions or institutions holding designated collections.	64	65
(f)	Number of items licensed after the Export Licensing Unit was satisfied of import into the UK within the past 50 years	3,371	4,115
(g)	Total value of items in (f)	£4,137,786,788	£9,481,196,897
(h)	Number of items in (f) which were manuscripts, documents or archives	619	893
(i)	Total value of items in (h)	£61,498,028	£70,646,790
(j)	Number of items given an EU licence without reference to the question of national importance because they were either: valued at below the appropriate UK monetary limit;; manuscripts valued at £1,500 or less or coins valued at £500 or less and the exporter held a valid OIEL; musical instruments exported for less than six months for use in the course of work by a professional musician; a motor vehicle exported for less than six months for social, domestic or pleasure purposes; a foreign registered motor vehicle exported following importation for less than six months for pleasure purposes; imported into the UK in the last 50 years or owned by a museum or gallery that had an OIEL and were being exported on a temporary basis <sup>2</sup>	0	1
(k)	Total value of items in (j)	£0	£250,000

1 One application may cover several items.

2 Following the end of the EU Exit transition period on 31 December 2020, the UK ceased issuing EU licences for cultural goods with the exception of goods being exported from Northern Ireland directly to non-EU countries. One EU licence was issued in the reporting period 1 May 2022 – 30 April 2023.