



Administrative Arrangement

**for the loan of the Bayeux Tapestry to the
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland**

and

**the loan of the Sutton Hoo Treasure and
other masterpieces to the French Republic**

Between

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (*"the British Party"*)

and

The Director, on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum (*"the British Museum"*)

and

The Minister of Culture of the French Republic (*"the French Party"*)

hereinafter jointly referred to as the "Parties"



Preamble

Considering the commitments made at the Franco-British Summit held in Sandhurst in 2018, and the administrative arrangement dated 5 July 2018 concerning the monumental wool embroidery on linen known as the "Bayeux Tapestry", dated from the 11th century, listed as a historic monument and inscribed on UNESCO's Memory of the World Register,

Considering the Parties' renewed commitment at the Franco-British Summit of 10 July 2025 to strengthen cultural cooperation, particularly in the field of heritage,

Wishing to promote a major work bearing witness to the shared history of France and the United Kingdom, illustrating the conquest of England by William, Duke of Normandy,

Wishing to frame this loan within the context of the "Millennium 2027, European Year of the Normans" initiative,

Considering that the "Bayeux Tapestry", the property of the French State, is currently held on deposit at the Bayeux municipal museum, which is managing a renovation and extension project for the museum scheduled to reopen in October 2027,

Considering the scientific, technical, legal, financial and preservation requirements related to the temporary relocation of a fragile and degraded thousand-year-old textile, the restoration of which is necessary and anticipated in the near future,

Considering the partnership-based nature of the agreement, and the unprecedented loan of the Sutton Hoo Treasure, an assemblage of gold and other historic objects dating from the 7th century AD, and a selection of Lewis chess pieces and other masterpieces, properties of the Trustees of the British Museum, to museums in France,

Considering the exceptional measures and precautions required to permit the loan and transport of such work as the Bayeux Tapestry and the Sutton Hoo Treasure, and a selection of Lewis chess pieces and other masterpieces,

The Parties, gathered on the occasion of the State Visit of the President of the French Republic to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, as a guest of His Majesty King Charles III in London, on July 9th 2025, have agreed as follows:

Article 1 – Purpose of the Arrangement

The present Arrangement aims to set out the proposed general terms and conditions of the exceptional loan of the Bayeux Tapestry ("the Tapestry"), a textile work nearly seventy metres in length, to the United Kingdom for a temporary exhibition between September 2026 and July 2027, and the exceptional loan of the Sutton Hoo Treasure, a selection of Lewis chess pieces and other masterpieces (collectively referred to as "the Works") to France, subject to the prior fulfilment of all

scientific, technical, administrative, and financial conditions agreed between the Parties. The loans will be subject to additional technicalities to be agreed during further meetings between the French Party and the British Museum, and shall be subject to formal loan agreements between the respective Lending and Borrowing Parties.

Article 2 – Loan of the Bayeux Tapestry ("the Tapestry")

The Parties will set forth the legal, scientific, technical, administrative, financial, and scheduling conditions which shall govern the loan of the Tapestry, property of the French State, to the United Kingdom.



2.1. The loan of the Tapestry is subject to the prior completion by the French Party of the studies, stages, and preliminary interventions for transport, in the following chronological order:

- a) Signature of an addendum to the deposit agreement between the State and the City of Bayeux prior to the transfer of the Tapestry outside the municipal museum;
- b) Execution by a technical team (service providers commissioned and supervised by the competent services of the French State) of a "dry run" journey of the entire route to the hosting institution in autumn 2025, using the crate containing a facsimile of the Tapestry, equipped with a vibration analysis device;
- c) Conducting supplementary technical studies following the "dry run" to identify solutions to reduce vibrations to less than 2 millimetres per second, to adapt, if necessary, the foldable storage support, and to create an international transport crate compliant with isothermal preservation standards and security requirements;
- d) Manufacture and/or adaptation of the current extraction and packing systems (protective screen, crate), which shall be commissioned upon delivery of the aforementioned studies;
- e) Extraction and packing of the Tapestry prior to the commencement of museum works scheduled from 15 October 2025, and transfer of the crate to the designated temporary storage;
- f) Transfer into the international transport crate (summer 2026) prior to handover to the international carrier appointed by the British Museum.

2.2. Subject to Article 4.1, the British Party agrees to provide "nail-to-nail" indemnity cover through the UK Government Indemnity Scheme, based on the value of the Tapestry provided by the French State, such insurance to commence upon departure of the international transport crate containing the Tapestry and to remain in effect until the Tapestry's return to the museum in Bayeux.

2.3. The British Museum agrees to:

- a) Conduct, at the earliest opportunity, a feasibility study, the scope of which shall be agreed between the parties, for the completion of the entire premises-display-table-installation for the Tapestry at the venue intended for the exhibition of the Tapestry, in coordination with the services of the French Ministry of Culture;
- b) Comply with the agreed technical conditions for preservation, presentation, security, safety, and transport of the Tapestry throughout the loan period as agreed between the Parties; and arising from this, conduct any studies as the Parties collectively agree necessary to fulfil the requirements of this agreement, the scope and cost of which are to be agreed between the Parties;
- c) Assume responsibility for the transport of the presentation table of the Tapestry intended for the Bayeux museum or commission a specific one, according to requirements agreed by the Parties;
- d) At its own expense, undertake the studies, adaptations, and works necessary to ensure the conformity of the preservation and exhibition premises;
- e) At its own expense, carry out condition reports upon arrival and departure of the Tapestry at the hosting institution, under the scientific and technical supervision of the Ministry of Culture's services;



- f) At its own expense, carry out the condition report upon the return of the Tapestry to Bayeux, which shall be conducted by the services of the French State;
- g) Rely on the team trained by the French State and the City of Bayeux to ensure the arrival of the Tapestry and its installation on the designated table within the preservation and exhibition premises;
- h) Use, in a way subject to technical specifications to be agreed between the Parties, the spatialised documentary information system to document the state and knowledge of the Tapestry, as well as to promote its value.

2.4. The Parties will agree on appropriate measures to facilitate access by specific groups of French visitors to the exhibition at the British Museum, in particular to maximise the educational benefits of this exceptional loan.

Article 3 – Loan of the Sutton Hoo Treasure, a selection of Lewis chess pieces and other masterpieces (collectively referred to as “the Works”)

In consideration of the temporary loan of the Tapestry to the United Kingdom, the British Museum agrees to temporarily loan the Works to Museums in Normandy designated by the French Party. The Works will be exhibited in two venues in Normandy, to be specified and agreed between the Parties after the signing of this Arrangement, for a combined period equivalent to that of the loan of the Tapestry, at a schedule to be agreed among the parties.

3.1. Given the importance to the UK public of the Works and their international renown, and in consideration of the fragile nature of items within the Sutton Hoo Treasure, this loan shall be the subject to the French Party agreeing to:

- a) Comply with the technical conditions for preservation, presentation, security, safety, and transport of the Works throughout the loan period as agreed between the parties, and arising from this, conduct any studies as the Parties collectively agreed necessary to fulfil the requirements of this agreement, the scope and cost of which are to be agreed between the Parties.
- b) Take out and bear the cost of a “nail-to-nail” insurance policy, or provide cover through a recognised State Indemnity Scheme, based on the value of the Works provided by the British Museum, such insurance to commence upon departure of the international transport crate containing the Works and to remain in effect until the Works’ return to the British Museum;
- c) Assume responsibility for the commissioning of display cases, according to requirements agreed between the Parties;
- d) At its own expense, carry out condition reports upon arrival and departure of the Works at each of the hosting institutions, with the scientific and technical cooperation of the British Museum in cooperation with the French team;
- e) At its own expense carry out the condition report upon the return of the Works to the British Museum;
- f) Coordinate with the team from the British Museum to ensure the arrival of the Works and their installation in the exhibition premises.



Article 4 - Loans conditional on obtaining necessary authorisations

4.1. The loans of the Tapestry to the British Museum and the loan of the Works to the French Party shall be conditional upon obtaining all necessary administrative, indemnity-related, technical, and heritage-related authorisations in both the United Kingdom and France, and upon a guarantee of the return of the works to their respective countries of origin at the end of the loan period, certified by an official declaration from both the French and British States and the British Museum.

4.2. The Parties agree that the loans of the Tapestry to the United Kingdom and the loan of the Works to the French Party, shall be undertaken in the spirit of a balanced partnership and mutual scholarly interest.

Article 5 – Prior Approval of Host Institutions

5.1. The British Museum, expressly designated by the British Party, will be responsible for the preservation, installation, and exhibition of the Tapestry. As host institution for the Tapestry and owner of the Works, the British Museum is signatory to this arrangement and to the loan agreements.

5.2. Such designation is conditional upon:

- a. The conformity of the exhibition and storage premises with the conditions agreed by the Parties;
- b. The technical, scientific, security, and logistical capacities of the institution to ensure the preservation, installation, and display of the Tapestry in accordance with the requirements stipulated in this Arrangement and as agreed by the Parties;
- c. The submission of a detailed Facilities Report and related documentation, including environmental conditions for the Tapestry, display fittings, as well as security and safety measures, to be agreed between the Parties after the signing of this Arrangement.

5.3. The French Museums designated by the French Party will be responsible for the transportation, installation, and exhibition of the Works. Such designation shall be subject to the prior written agreement of the British Museum, subject to the same criteria as that given in Article 5.2 above.

Article 6 - Costs and Expenses

6.1. All costs and expenses related to the loan and the exhibition of the Tapestry shall be borne in full by the British Museum, with the exception of indemnified costs associated with the Government Indemnity Scheme which is the responsibility of the British Party, and all costs and expenses related to the loan and the exhibition of the Works shall be borne in full by the French Party, including but not limited to:

- Feasibility studies and preparatory studies required for transport, display and other considerations, as agreed between the Parties. This will include travel and subsistence expenses of personnel involved in such studies, agreed in advance between the Parties;
- Preparation of the venues and display cases within the host institutions;
- Design, manufacture, transport and storage of the international transport crate(s);
- Where the display table or other exhibition materials designed and produced by the Lending Party is used, its round-trip transport, as well as any related assembly, disassembly, and possible repair operations;
- Packaging, transport of the loans, escort, insurance and/or indemnity, customs clearance, and any related formalities;



- Condition reports undertaken in a manner agreed between the Parties (upon arrival at the host institutions, prior to departure, and upon return to the lending Party);
- Security, safety, logistics, exhibition design, curatorship, communication and outreach;
- Temporary storage of all equipment and materials associated with the loan;
- Translation of technical documentation to be undertaken by the borrowing Party.

Article 7 - Timetable Provisions

7.1. In view of the fact that the restoration of the Tapestry is scheduled by the French State to commence upon its reinstallation in its permanent location in October 2027, the loan of the Bayeux Tapestry shall adhere to the following timetable:

7.2. The loan period shall extend from July 2026 to 1 September 2027, with the public exhibition to take place between September 2026 and July 2027;

7.3. The departure of the Tapestry shall occur no earlier than July 2026, for transport to the host institution and the conduct of the initial condition report, with a duration to be agreed between the Parties;

7.4. The return of the Tapestry to Bayeux shall take place no later than 1 September 2027, to allow for its horizontal reinstallation in its permanent setting and the conduct of the return condition report, with a duration to be agreed between the Parties.

These timetable provisions shall be formally recorded in the amendment to the deposit agreement concluded between the French State and the City of Bayeux.

7.5. The timetable for the loan of the Works to the host museums in France to be agreed between the Parties, subject to the approval of the Trustees of the British Museum.

Article 8 - Provisions Relating to Oversight, Coordination of the Loans, and Cooperation

8.1. The Binational Steering Committee, established pursuant to Article 4 of the Administrative Arrangement dated 5 July 2018 and annexed to the present Arrangement, shall be responsible for overseeing the operational implementation, ensuring compliance with preservation and security standards, evaluating relevant conditions, and providing technical coordination for the execution of this Arrangement.

8.2. In accordance with the terms of this Agreement, membership of the Binational Steering Committee shall be extended to include the Envoy appointed by the French Party and the Envoy appointed by the British Party, and a representative of the British Museum, with the relevant French Museums, and local authorities, supporting the Committee in its work as required.

8.3. The Steering Committee shall convene at least twice per calendar year and may be called upon at the request of either Party.

8.4. The Steering Committee shall also have the authority to adjust the loans timeline, should circumstances so require, in mutual agreement between the Parties.

8.5. The role of the Steering Committee shall apply to the loan of the Tapestry and the loan of the Works.



Article 9 - Administrative Conditions

9.1. The Bayeux Tapestry, as a listed historic monument, is subject to the specific legal regime governing the protection of national treasures.

9.2. The Parties agree that the temporary export of the Tapestry from French national territory, within the framework of the proposed loan, shall be subject to the prior issuance by the French Party of the following two administrative authorisations:

- A temporary export authorisation for a cultural property, issued by the Ministry of Culture in accordance with Articles L. 111-7, R. 111-20 and R. 111-21 of the French Heritage Code;
- A temporary export licence in compliance with European regulations on the export of cultural goods, in particular Regulation (EC) No 116/2009.

9.3. The granting of these authorisations falls exclusively within the competence of the French Party.

9.4. Similarly, the loan of the Works from the British Museum will be subject to the governance procedures of the British Museum.

9.5. The Works will be exported in accordance with the UK export licensing regime. The granting of licences for the temporary export of the objects falls exclusively within the competence of the British Party.

9.6. Failure to obtain, or refusal to issue, either of these authorisations for any reason shall automatically result in the suspension or cancellation of the loan, without any liability being incurred by the Lending Party in this respect.

Article 10 - Settlement of Disputes

10.1. Any dispute arising from the interpretation or implementation of the present Arrangement shall be resolved, in the first instance, through consultations and negotiations between the Parties within the framework of the Steering Committee.

10.2. Should such efforts fail to produce a resolution, the Parties shall endeavour to settle the dispute exclusively through diplomatic channels, without recourse to any international tribunal or third-party adjudication, unless mutually agreed otherwise in writing.

Article 11 - Final Provisions

11.1. This Arrangement shall enter into force on the date of its signature.

11.2. It shall remain in force for the duration of the loan, until the return of the Tapestry to Bayeux, and the return of the Works to the British Museum.

11.3. It may be extended or amended by means of a written addendum signed by the Parties.



Department
for Culture,
Media & Sport

The British
Museum



MINISTÈRE
DE LA CULTURE

*Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité*

Signed in London, on July 9th, 2025, in three original copies, each in French and English, both texts being equally authentic.

The Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

The Director on behalf of the Trustees of the British Museum

The Minister of Culture of The French Republic