

Investigation and Conservation of Deteriorated Beer Glasses

Glass is widely valued for its material characteristics of transparency and smoothness, properties that are exploited in the manufacture of a diverse range of products, from windowpanes to domestic drinking vessels.

During a routine inspection of artefacts from the social history collections, conservators noticed the unusual condition of a batch of contemporary beer glasses. Each of the identical drinking vessels had undergone a form of deterioration that had caused a “frosty” appearance to the glass surface. An investigation is currently underway into the material properties of deteriorating glass and the contributory environmental causes for a condition that is often referred to as “Glass Disease”. The Project aims to develop a greater awareness amongst the Centre’s conservators to the process of glass deterioration and to determine whether any practical solutions can be found to slow down or prevent this form of surface disfigurement.

