



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

***Icon 2022 Membership Survey  
Final Report***

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## Table of Contents

<b>Table of Figures</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>Executive Summary</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Introduction</b> .....	<b>8</b>
<b>1. WHO ARE ICON MEMBERS?</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Membership type of survey respondents</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Membership length of survey respondents</b> .....	<b>11</b>
<b>Age range of survey respondents</b> .....	<b>12</b>
<b>Residence</b> .....	<b>13</b>
<b>Location of work</b> .....	<b>14</b>
<b>Social media use</b> .....	<b>15</b>
Do you follow Icon on social media?.....	17
<b>2. CONSERVATORS AND THE CONSERVATION PROFESSION</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>Are you a conservation sector professional?</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>How long have you been active in the sector?</b> .....	<b>18</b>
<b>What best describes your role?</b> .....	<b>19</b>
<b>What is your current salary or average annual income if you are self-employed?</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>Are you from a combined income household or a sole earner?</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>What is your specialism?</b> .....	<b>20</b>
<b>What is your primary Icon Group Affiliation?</b> .....	<b>23</b>
<b>What is your secondary Icon Group affiliation?</b> .....	<b>24</b>
<b>Are you presently employed as a conservator (includes self-employed or part time)?</b> .....	<b>25</b>
If not conservation, what is the nature of your current employment? .....	25
<b>What is your current employment status?</b> .....	<b>26</b>
<b>What best describes the nature of your current employment?</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>What best describes your place of employment?</b> .....	<b>27</b>
<b>How many conservators are there in your organisation?</b> .....	<b>28</b>
<b>If not conservation, what is the nature of your current employment?</b> .....	<b>29</b>
<b>3. CONSERVATORS AND ICON</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>Summary</b> .....	<b>31</b>
<b>How did you first hear about Icon?</b> .....	<b>32</b>
<b>Why did you join Icon?</b> .....	<b>33</b>
<b>What were your expectations?</b> .....	<b>37</b>

<b>Have your expectations been met?.....</b>	<b>39</b>
<b>How could Icon better-meet your expectations? .....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Whatever your membership type, in your view what are the barriers to Accreditation? .....</b>	<b>42</b>
<b>How should Icon promote Accreditation? .....</b>	<b>47</b>
<b>How many Icon events have you attended in the last year, either in person or online? .....</b>	<b>49</b>
<b>Have you found it easy to attend Icon events? .....</b>	<b>50</b>
<b>If you have found events to be inaccessible, what have the primary barriers been? .....</b>	<b>51</b>
If Accredited, do you serve as a PACR Assessor, Mentor or Reader? .....	52
Have you served on an Icon Board of Trustees, Group or Committee in the last three years?.....	53
What was your motivation for getting involved? .....	53
Do you feel that your skills and understanding have been enhanced as a result? .....	54
Have the networks and relationships that you established within Icon as a result of your activism been valuable to your career? .....	55
Do you feel that your activism has made your membership of Icon more enjoyable? .....	55
What might make it easier to get involved? .....	56
<b><i>Icon members and CPD.....</i></b>	<b>57</b>
<b>What does CPD mean to you? .....</b>	<b>57</b>
<b>What further support from Icon would help you in your CPD?.....</b>	<b>60</b>
<b><i>Icon’s Strategic Priorities .....</i></b>	<b>61</b>
<b>How far do you agree the following are important priorities for Icon? .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b><i>Icon’s Achievements .....</i></b>	<b>62</b>
<b>In recent years projects Icon has completed the following projects. How far do you agree these projects are valuable? .....</b>	<b>62</b>
<b>Have you read Icon’s Impact Report for 2020-21? .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b><i>Overall member satisfaction with Icon.....</i></b>	<b>64</b>
<b>What does Icon do well? .....</b>	<b>64</b>
<b>What development opportunities are there for Icon? .....</b>	<b>65</b>
<b>Are you satisfied with Icon? .....</b>	<b>68</b>
Why or why not? .....	68

## Table of Figures

Figure 1. Icon membership survey engagement, 2015-2021 .....	8
Figure 2. Membership Type of Survey Respondents .....	10
Figure 3. Actual Icon membership mix .....	10
Figure 4. Joining year of survey respondents .....	11
Figure 5. Age range of survey respondents .....	12
Figure 6. Location of residence reported by survey respondents.....	14
Figure 7. Location of work reported by survey respondents .....	15
Figure 8. Social media platforms used by survey respondents .....	16
Figure 9. Respondents who follow Icon on social media .....	17
Figure 10. How long have you been active in the sector?.....	19
Figure 11. What best describes your role? .....	19
Figure 12. What is your current salary or average annual income if you are self-employed?.....	20
Figure 13. Are you from a combined income household or a sole earner? .....	20
Figure 14. What is your specialism? .....	22
Figure 15. What is your primary Icon Group affiliation? .....	23
Figure 16. What is your secondary Icon Group affiliation? .....	24
Figure 17. Are you presently employed as a conservator? .....	25
Figure 18. If not conservation, what is the nature of your employment? .....	25
Figure 19. What is your current employment status? .....	26
Figure 20. What best describes the nature of your current employment? .....	27
Figure 21. What best describes your place of employment? .....	28
Figure 22. How many conservators are there in your organisation? .....	29
Figure 23. How did you first hear about Icon? .....	32
Figure 24. Why did you join Icon? .....	34
Figure 25. What were your expectations upon joining Icon?.....	38
Figure 26. Have your expectations been met? .....	39
Figure 27. Whatever your membership type, in your view what are the barriers to Accreditation?.....	43
Figure 28. How many Icon events have you attended in the last year? .....	50
Figure 29. Have you found it easy to attend Icon events? .....	51

Figure 30. If you have found events to be inaccessible, what have the primary barriers been .....	51
Figure 31. Proportion of respondent ACRs who have served as an Assessor, Mentor or Reader .....	52
Figure 32. Proportion of respondents who have served on an Icon Board of Trustees, Group or Committee in the last three year .....	53
Figure 33. What was your motivation for getting involved? .....	54
Figure 34. Do you feel that your skills and understanding have been enhanced as a result? .....	54
Figure 35. Respondents who found the networks and relationships derived from Icon activism had provided career benefit .....	55
Figure 36. Has your activism made your membership of Icon more enjoyable? .....	55
Figure 37. Wordcloud: 'What does CPD mean to you?' .....	58
Figure 38. What further support from Icon would help you in your CPD? .....	60
Figure 39. How far do you agree that the following are important strategic priorities for Icon? Legend on following page. ....	61
Figure 40. How far do you agree these recent projects are valuable? .....	63
Figure 41. Have you read Icon's Impact Report for 2020-21? .....	64
Figure 43. Are you satisfied with Icon? .....	68

## Executive Summary

Icon's third triennial survey since 2016 was launched as work was underway on Icon's next strategic plan, dubbed 'Icon 2030'. The survey was designed to document member views on Icon's strategic priorities, and to chart the organisation's progress in meeting member needs since the previous survey in 2019. The survey was open for two weeks from Monday 17<sup>th</sup> January 2022 and netted 492 responses – a response rate of 21.0%.

As with previous surveys, a higher proportion of survey respondents held Accredited membership than their actual proportion within Icon's actual membership. Members who belonged to one of the vanguard groups remained a substantial contingent among respondents (40%), but in contrast to the previous survey the majority had joined Icon subsequent to convergence and might not have had experience of Icon's predecessor bodies. There was a visible increase in the number of respondents living outside the United Kingdom.

The survey results indicate that higher education institutions were the strongest recruitment ground for new Icon members, while there was also an increased tendency for respondents to report joining Icon based on positive word of mouth from a friend or colleague.

Respondents were asked to elaborate on their reasons for joining in free text responses, and among these responses *Access to knowledge, information and events* and *Because it's the professional body* emerged as the strongest motivations for joining decisions, alongside *Access to community, support and inclusion*. Respondents indicated they expected their membership to provide access to notions of *support*, closely allied to high *standards* of increased *professionalism* derived from *access to information, networking, training events* and *conferences*, and products such as *journals*.

Nearly 70% of respondents reported their expectations had been met or mostly met, while less than 30% reported they were only satisfied somewhat; a mere 5% reported their expectations had not been met. Respondents suggested Icon could better-meet expectations by resolving concerns around the affordability of Icon versus a perceived lack of benefits, by better-managing international relationships and forging new and closer partnerships with allied bodies in the heritage sector.

Member perception of barriers to Accreditation revolved around the process, regarded as unwieldy and bureaucratic by some, the time required, the cost and a perceived lack of real benefits for those ultimately Accredited. 'It is an expensive process that only increases your annual commitments to Icon,' wrote one respondent. Strong engagement with students and training institutions were suggested by most as the means to promote the standard and encourage wider take-up.

The majority of respondents were moderately engaged with the organisation, and had attended between one and three events in the previous year. There was a marked decline in the number of respondents who reported having attended no events at all, compared to the 2019 survey. The majority of those who were active on an Icon Group or Committee reported a desire to support or contribute to the profession as their primary motivation for

getting involved, followed by a desire to foster interpersonal and professional networks. A clear majority of respondents indicated they would find it easier to get involved if they had more time.

Respondent views on areas of activity where Icon did well emphasised the position of the organisations as an umbrella body connecting conservation specialisms and providing a single voice for the sector, alongside Icon's events and CPD programme. Asked to consider development opportunities for the organisation, respondents called for Icon to increase member benefits and attain greater recognition for the profession.

Overall, 80% of respondents reported they were *Satisfied* or *Mostly Satisfied* with Icon.

## Introduction

In mid-January 2022, Icon launched its third triennial membership survey.

At the time of this survey, work was also underway on Icon's next strategic plan, dubbed 'Icon 2030'. This work involved a broad range of consultation exercises, and the opportunity to document member views on Icon's strategic priorities – and the perception with which they valued previous projects – would convey greater purchase to the work.

Icon had also set up a Membership Working Group comprised of several Trustees and staff to devote greater attention to marketing and recruitment activities. The provision of fresh data on member perception of the benefits available to them, the reasons they joined, and the propensity for the membership to engage with the organisation provided clear scope to illuminate fresh directions for outreach both inside and outside the organisation.

The 2022 survey built on the framework and comparative foundations of previous surveys in 2015 and 2019, and its starting point was the same set of questions with minor amendments – such as the provision of a free-text box instead of a prescriptive list, in order to obtain member views in their own words.

The survey was open between Monday 17<sup>th</sup> and Monday 31<sup>st</sup> January. It launched with an Iconnect to 2,338 members, followed by two reminders.

By the advertised closing date for the survey, 492 members had submitted a response – a response rate of 21.0%. This is consistent with Icon's previous survey experience, in which surveys in 2019 and 2015 netted response rates of 20.4% and 24% respectively.

However, the Completion Rate was much lower than previous surveys – amounting to 47%, whereas surveys in 2019 and 2015 had achieved completion rates above 80%. There was an increased tendency in the 2022 for survey respondents to skip through questions not graded as compulsory.

### ***Icon survey engagement, 2015-2021***

<b>Survey</b>	<b>Members invited</b>	<b>Responses</b>	<b>Response Rate</b>	<b>Completion Rate</b>
2022	2,338	492	21.0%	47%
2019	2,420	495	20.4%	83%
2015	2,362	604	25.5%	84%

*Figure 1. Icon membership survey engagement, 2015-2021*



## 1. WHO ARE ICON MEMBERS?

### Summary

As with previous surveys, a higher proportion of survey respondents held Accredited membership than their actual proportion within Icon's actual membership. In a contrast to previous surveys, in 2022 most survey respondents had joined Icon after convergence, rather than as part of convergence itself. However, respondents who reported they had belonged to one of the vanguard groups and joined Icon at its inception still represented a substantial minority (40%).

Compared with previous surveys, the age breakdown of survey respondents was largely the same. It was nonetheless noteworthy that 66% of respondents aged 18-25 reported living outside the United Kingdom, compared with just 10% of respondents aged 65 and above. Places of residence reported by respondents were also consistent with the UK regional mix seen in previous surveys, although compared to the 2019 survey there was a visible drop in the number of respondents who reported living in London (-4%).

There was a similar visible increase in the number of respondents living outside the United Kingdom across all age groups. In the 2022 Survey Results, those living outside the UK amount to 19% of all respondents, which matches their proportion in Icons actual membership mix. That this should coincide with a decline by a full 10% in the number of respondents reporting locations of work outside the UK might be more symptomatic of the restrictions on travel imposed by the pandemic, rather than an unwillingness to accept commissions abroad.

### Membership type of survey respondents

Most were Accredited, amounting to 43% of respondents. This is broadly consistent with the results of the 2019 survey and reflects the stronger presence of Accredited members compared to their actual proportion within the membership mix (34%).

The 2022 survey results also reflect changes to the Icon membership structure introduced in 2020. That year, the Pathway membership category was introduced to provide more structured, specialist mentoring and support for working towards Icon Accreditation. Previously, the Pathway was a free service available to those holding Associate membership, and so upon its introduction as a dedicated category in its own right, the number of 'Associate' members declined as the new Pathway category absorbed them. Taken together, survey respondents holding either as Associate or Pathway membership amounted to 53% of all respondents. Within this however, Associate members are underrepresented among respondents (32%) compared their actual proportion within the membership mix (39%).

Alongside this, survey participation from Students and Supporters was broadly consistent with their actual proportion within the Icon membership mix, at 8% and 10% respectively.

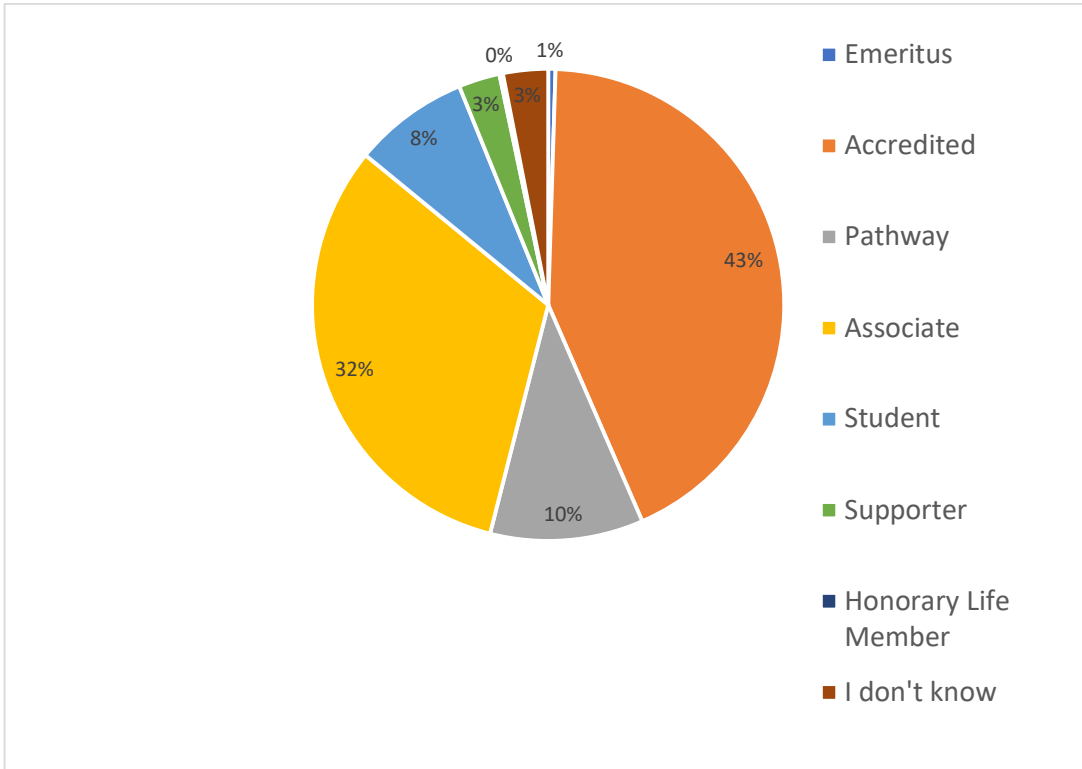


Figure 2. Membership Type of Survey Respondents

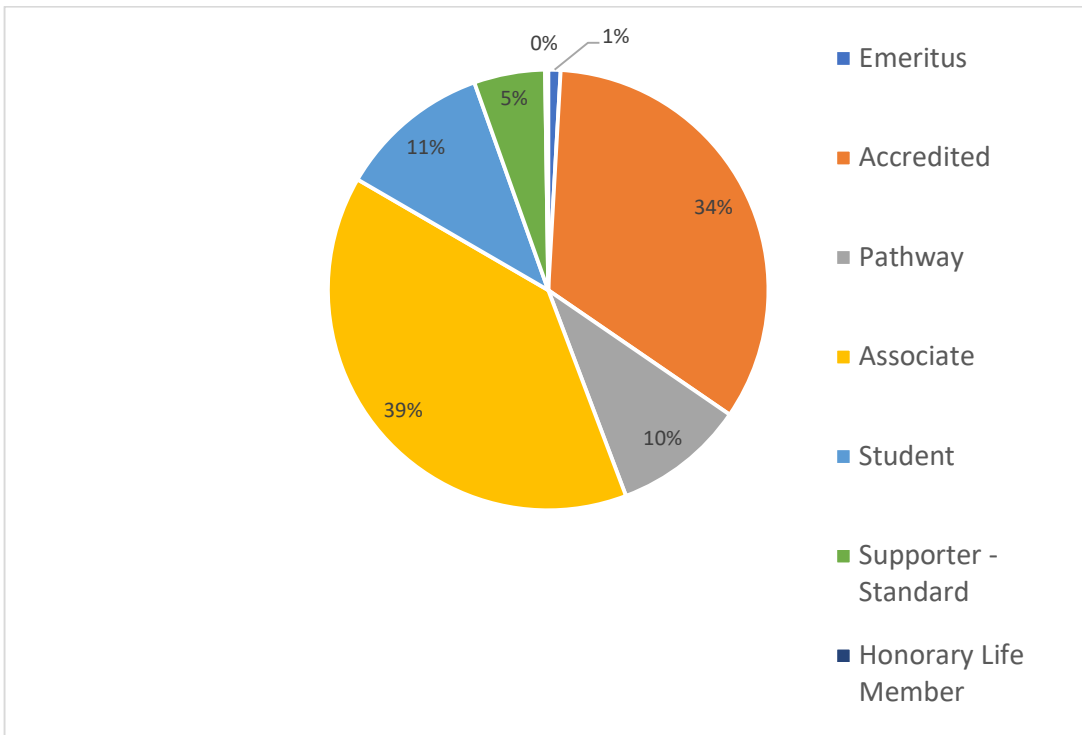


Figure 3. Actual Icon membership mix

## Membership length of survey respondents

Most survey respondents (40%) had joined Icon after convergence, and thus carried with them many years of experience as Icon members. While Icon underwent significant organisational development during this period, this contingent of Icon's longest serving members will carry with them the strongest recollection of the high expectations placed upon Icon at its launch, and this will in turn influence their perception of organisational performance since then. However, participation from vanguard joiners as a proportion of the total respondents declined by 7% compared to the 2019 survey.

The majority of these longstanding Icon members were Accredited (69%), and thus represent a substantial contingent of those with long histories of engagement with the organisation through various formal processes such as CPD recalls. Among all these longest-serving respondents, a secondary minority held Associate membership (21%); only 6% of respondents who had joined at convergence were on the Pathway.

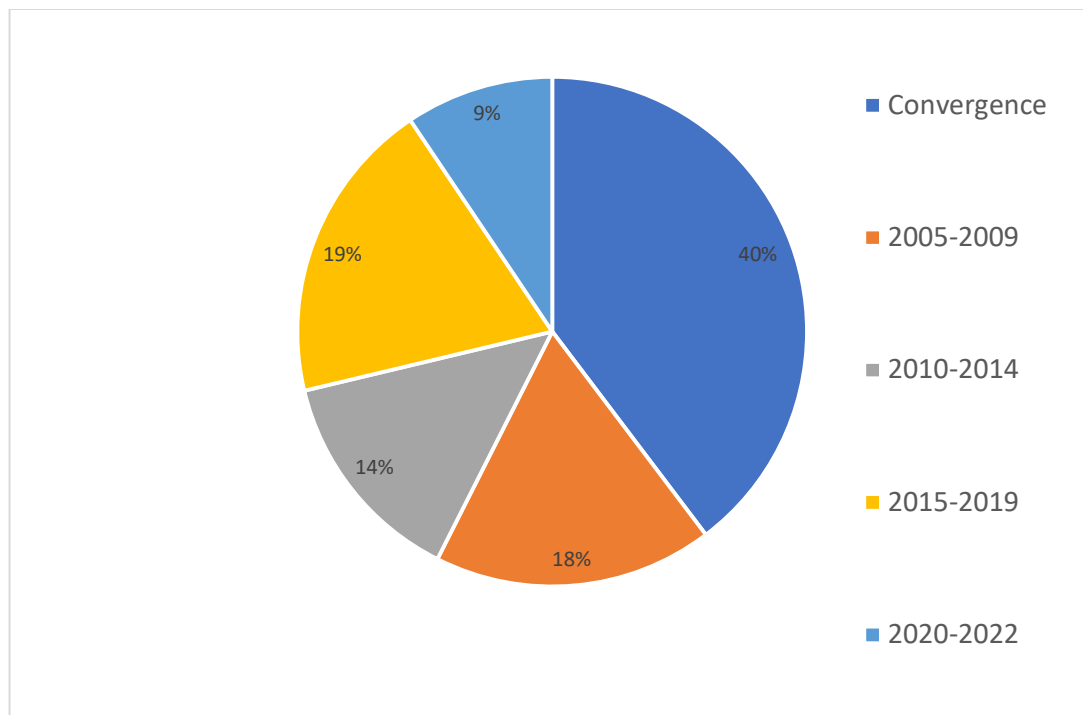


Figure 4. Joining year of survey respondents

## Age range of survey respondents

Compared to previous surveys, the age breakdown of survey responses was largely the same.

There was slightly less participation from younger conservators between the ages of 18-25, continuing a downward trend, although one less marked in the current exercise. Members between the ages of 18-25 amounted to 3.34% of respondents in 2015, 2.45% in 2019 and 2.18% in 2022.

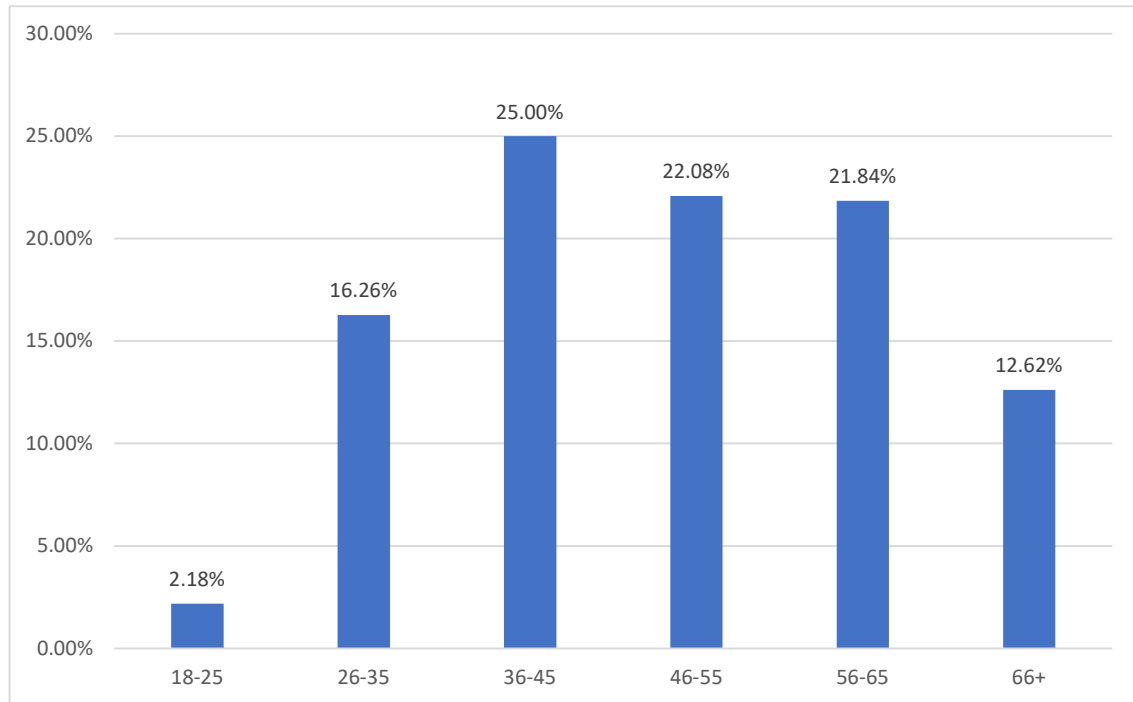


Figure 5. Age range of survey respondents

It was nonetheless noteworthy that 66% of respondents aged 18-25 reported living outside the United Kingdom, compared with just 10% of respondents aged 65 and above. Among those aged 18-25, places of residence were evenly divided between Europe and North America; only one reported living in London. Of these, 77% held 'Student' membership, and reported specialisms were predominantly textiles, paintings or ceramics and glass.

Among respondents aged 25-35, a substantial contingent were also based outside the UK (20%), and their locations were diverse – ranging from Australia, to Japan, Egypt, New York, and Switzerland. This was followed by a substantial proportion of those living in London (18%), and those living in the South East (10%),

At the other end of the scale, there was a slight increase in participation from those aged 65 and above. A total of 31% of these lived in London, with a further 35% residing in the South East or South West.

## Residence

There was a discernible increase in the number of respondents living outside the United Kingdom as a whole. A total of 19.05% of respondents lived abroad, an increase of nearly 3% on the 2019 survey. Members living outside the UK account for a total of 19% of the entire membership, so the extent of their representation among survey respondents now reflects prevailing trends in the membership mix.

Of international respondents, 50% lived in Europe; 14% of these lived in the Netherlands, with a further 9% resident in Germany. A further 26% of international respondents lived in North America, mostly the United States (73%). Respondents living outside Europe and North America accounted for 22% of responses, and among these respondents living in Australia and New Zealand were especially predominant (44%).

More broadly, for UK regions places of residence indicated by respondents across all age groups remained consistent compared to previous surveys, although there was a sharp drop in the number respondents who reported living in London, which fell by 4% compared to the 2019 survey.

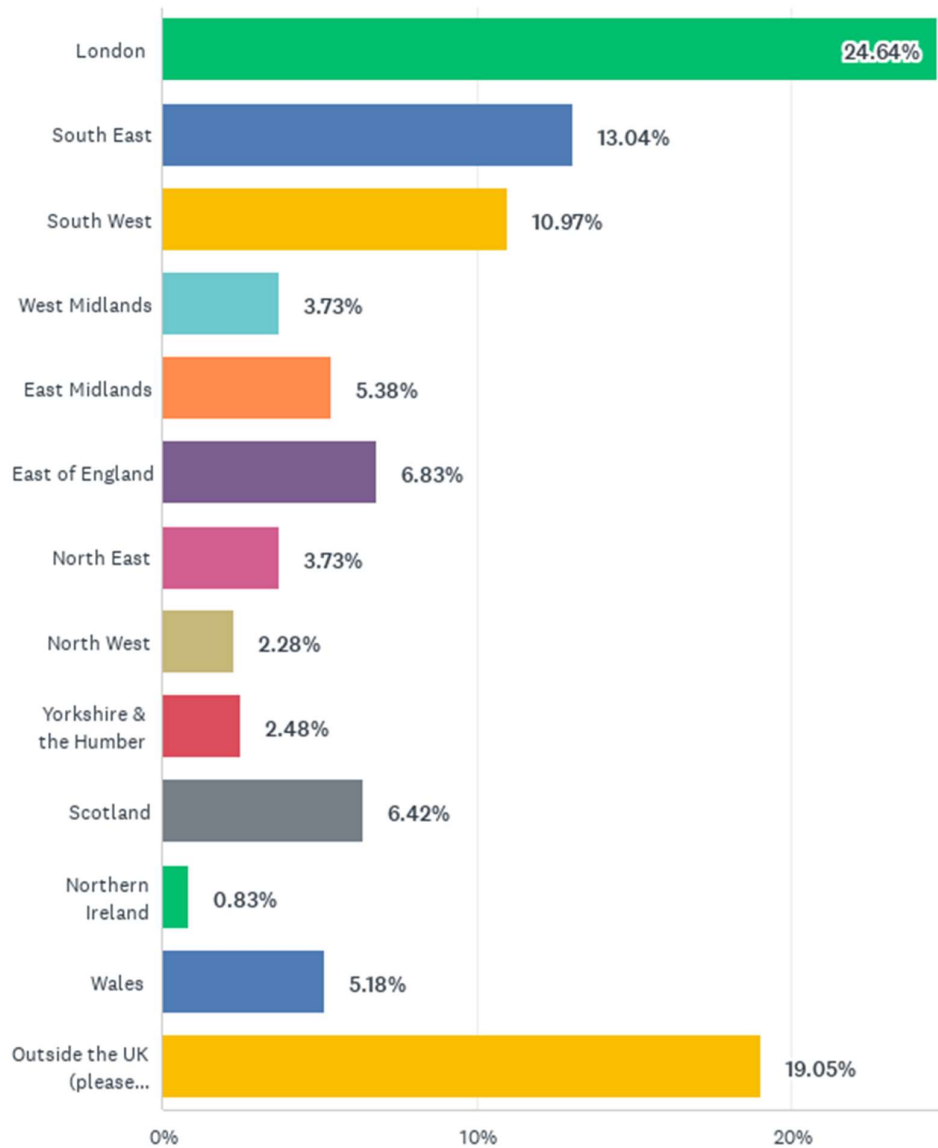


Figure 6. Location of residence reported by survey respondents

### Location of work

The survey asked members to indicate their location of work, including areas to which they were prepared to travel. The location of work reported by survey respondents was broadly consistent with previous results, although there was a perceptible decline in the number of respondents reporting London as a place of work, which fell by 3%.

An exception to this was the number of members reporting locations of work outside the UK, which fell by a full 10% compared to the 2019 results. This might be symptomatic of the

restrictions on travel imposed by the pandemic, in which Icon members would have been less internationally mobile in the scope of their project work.

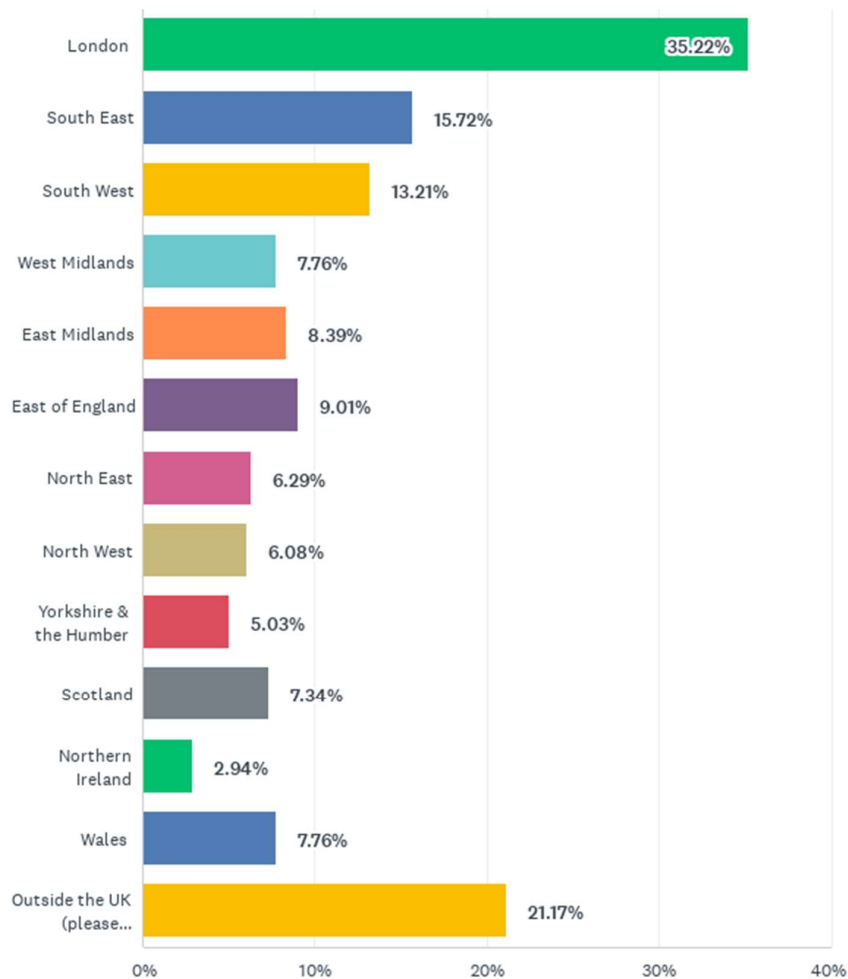


Figure 7. Location of work reported by survey respondents

### Social media use

Facebook and LinkedIn remained the most popular social networking platforms used by survey respondents, consistent with the results of the 2019 survey. There was a sharp increase in the number of respondents who were also Instagram users, up nearly 16% on the 2019 results. This sharp increase suggests that the decision to launch an Icon Instagram account was well timed. .

There was a perceptible decline in the number of survey respondents who reported not using any social media platforms. At 11.89%, this was down 4% from the 2019 results, and continues

an obvious trend; in 2015, a full 19.5% of respondents had professed not to use any social media.

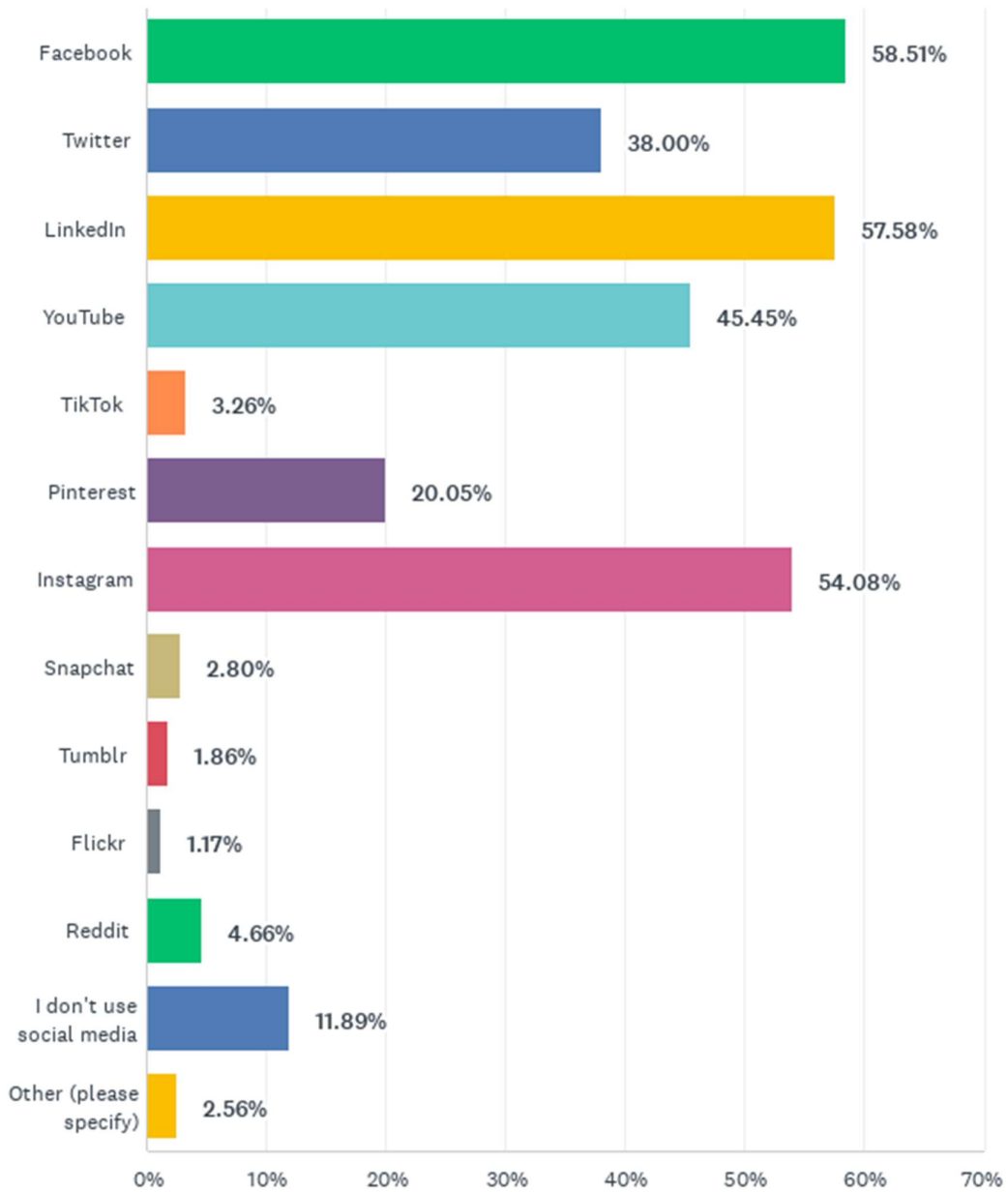


Figure 8. Social media platforms used by survey respondents



Do you follow Icon on social media?

In tandem with increasing social media use among members, Icon’s penetration into the social media feeds of members has dramatically expanded on some platforms, though the survey results suggest it has also plateaued on others.

Overall, 30% reported they had not seen Icon on any of social media platforms. This bodes well for Icon’s efforts to expand member awareness of its social media activity, for it represents a decline of 13% in those who had not seen Icon’s social media activity compared to the 2019 survey. The largest increases in 2022 were to be seen among respondents following Icon on LinkedIn (28%; up 14% on the 2019 results) and YouTube (11%; up 7% on the 2019 results). This coincides with the increased attention devoted to Icon’s presence on these platforms over the intervening years.

Of new developments, swift gains were also evident from Icon’s presence on Instagram, which launched only weeks before the survey opened for responses. Despite this short lead time, 26% of respondents reported following Icon on the platform by the time the survey closed.

Conversely, compared to 2019 figures, slight declines were evident in the number of respondents who reported following Icon on Facebook (30%; down nearly 5% on 2019 results).

### Q31 Do you follow Icon on any of these social media platforms?

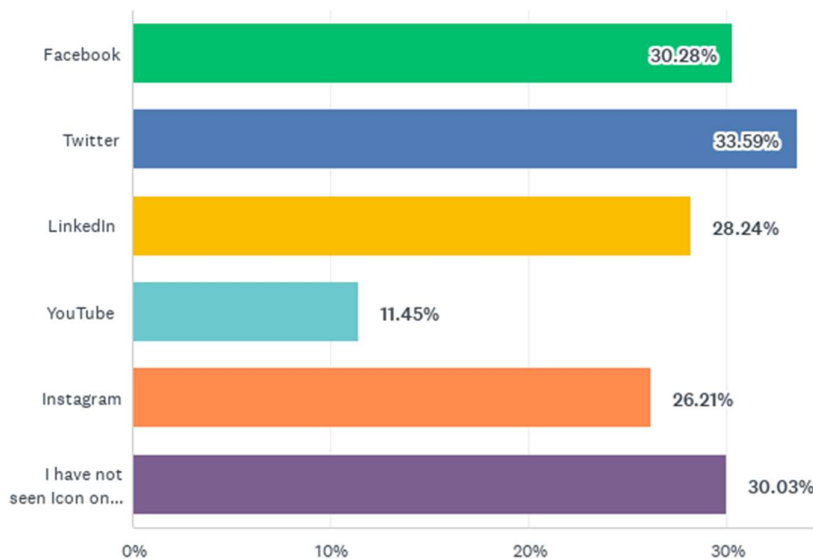


Figure 9. Respondents who follow Icon on social media

## 2. CONSERVATORS AND THE CONSERVATION PROFESSION

### Summary

Most survey respondents were conservation sector professionals or conservation sector students, and a substantial contingent had been active in the sector for between 11 and 30 years. Nearly 60% reported holding practitioner or senior practitioner job roles, and over 80% were presently employed as conservators. The majority of these were employed full time on permanent contracts, and the leading contexts of employment were national public sector bodies, private sector organisations and self-employment.

Respondents indicated a broad range of specialist areas of expertise, within which Collections Care and Preventive Conservation were predominant, but within this, most respondents reported Book and Paper as their primary group affiliation, while Care of Collections was most often indicated as secondary group affiliation.

### Are you a conservation sector professional?

Most survey respondents (94%) were conservation sector professionals or conservation sector students, with a mere 5.25% reporting they were not. This represents an increase in the number of conservation sector professionals or conservation sector students from the time of the last membership survey, in which those who reported they were not professional conservators or conservation students amounted to 7.13% of respondents.<sup>1</sup>

### How long have you been active in the sector?

Compared to the previous survey in 2019, there was sharply increased participation in the survey among those conservators active in the sector for between 11-20 years; up nearly 5%. Conservators at other ends of the scale here participated in roughly similar, excepting those active for between 31 and 40 years; down 4% compared to the 2019 results.

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<sup>1</sup> Michael Nelles, 2019 Icon Membership Survey, p. 16.



Figure 10. How long have you been active in the sector?

What best describes your role?

Most survey respondents reported they were practitioners, and these proportions were evenly divided between those who were senior practitioners or junior.

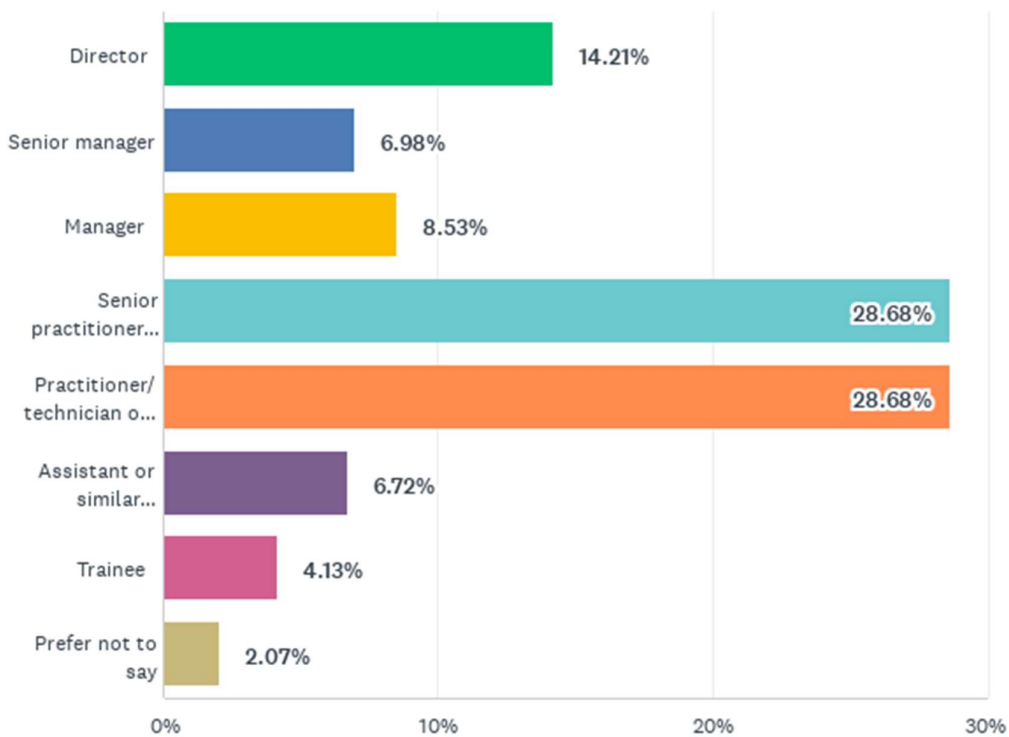


Figure 11. What best describes your role?

What is your current salary or average annual income if you are self-employed?

Most survey respondents reported earning between £25-£34,000.

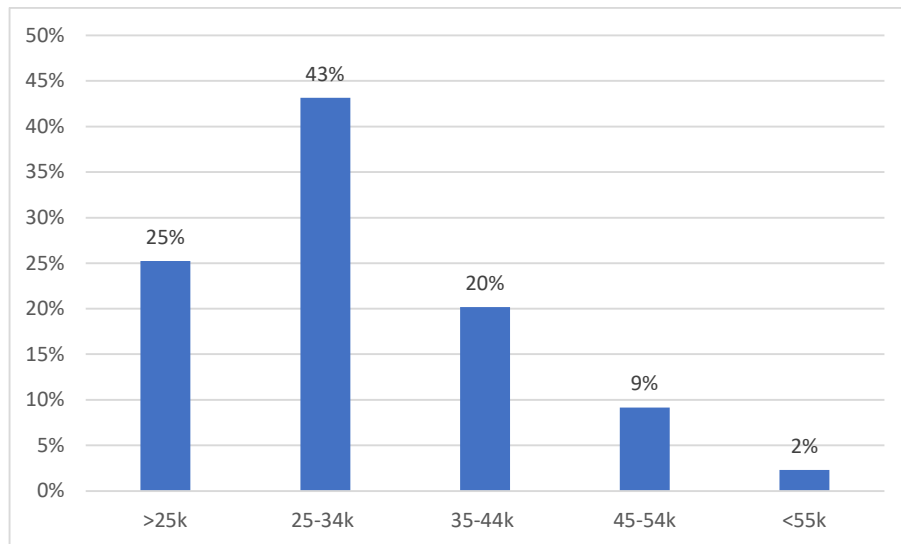


Figure 12. What is your current salary or average annual income if you are self-employed?

Are you from a combined income household or a sole earner?

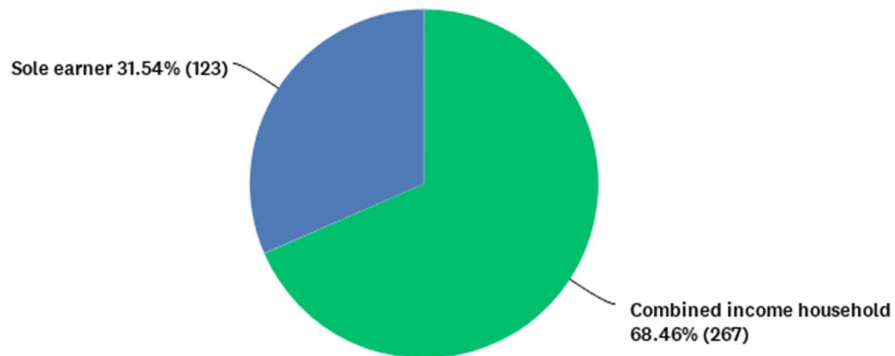


Figure 13. Are you from a combined income household or a sole earner?

What is your specialism?

Respondents were able to tick as many options as applied to them, or to specify a specialism not in the list. Compared to the 2019 survey, the only additions to the list of options were

*Building Conservation, Dynamic Objects, and Stained Glass* – the latter correcting a prominent omission in the list of options provided in 2019.

No guidance was provided to define each option, and so it is not possible to determine the extent to which survey respondents perceived differences between options such as *Architecture* and *Building Conservation*, or *Collections Care* and *Preventive Conservation*. This anomaly might explain the decline in respondents indicating *Architecture* as their specialism, down nearly 3% on the 2019 results while 5.29% indicated *Building Conservation* as their specialism.

Compared to the 2019 survey, there were very few quantitative shifts in the results of this section. Exceptions to this were the percentage of respondents reporting *Conservation Management* as their specialism, down 6% in the 2022 results compared to 2019.

Most prominent in 'Other (Please Specify)' was the conservation of photographic materials – an inadvertent omission from the list of options this year. Beyond this, responses included:

- Display case design and materials
- Historic ships
- Environmental monitoring and control
- Graves
- Rock art

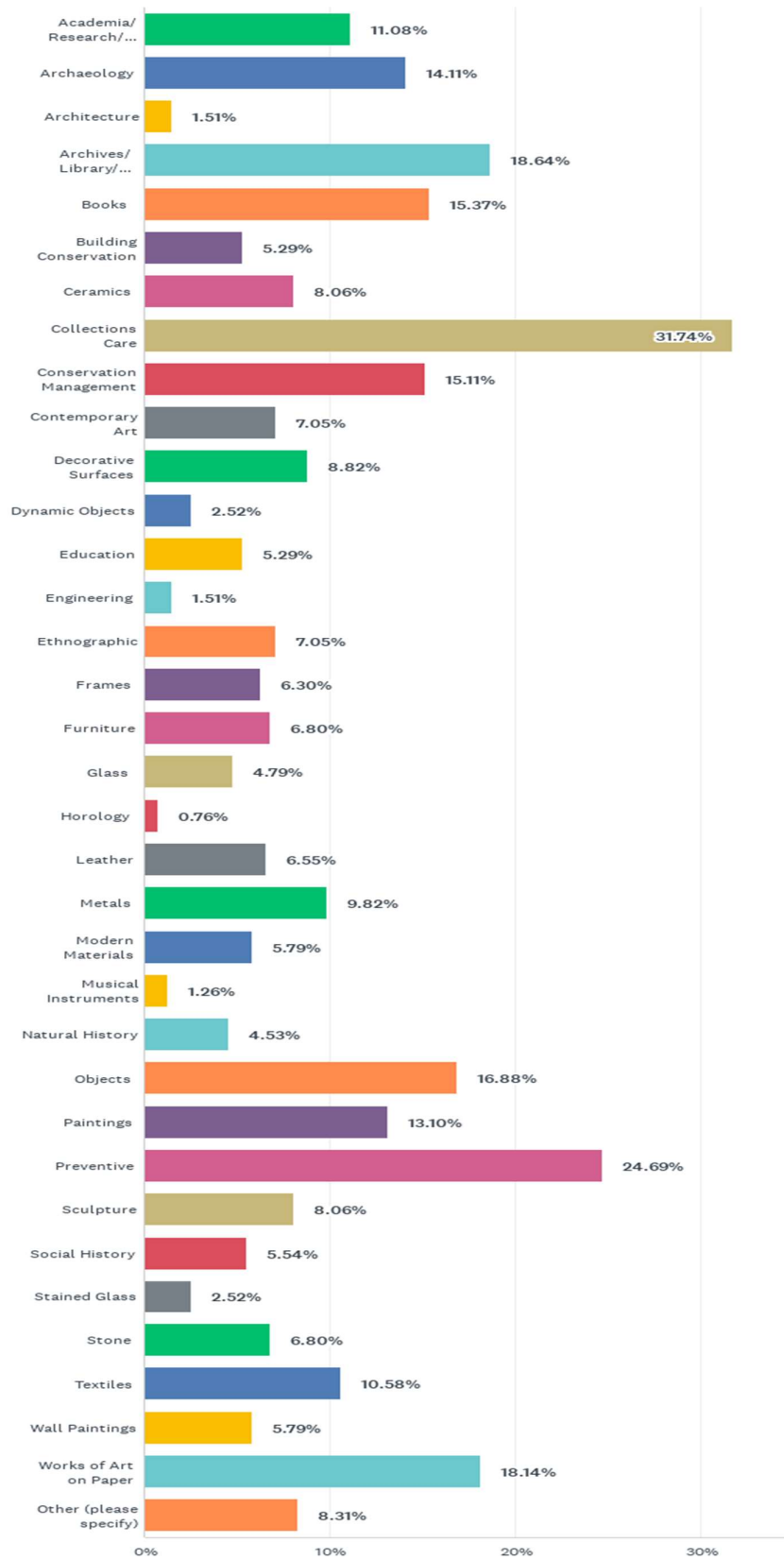


Figure 14. What is your specialism?

## What is your primary Icon Group Affiliation?

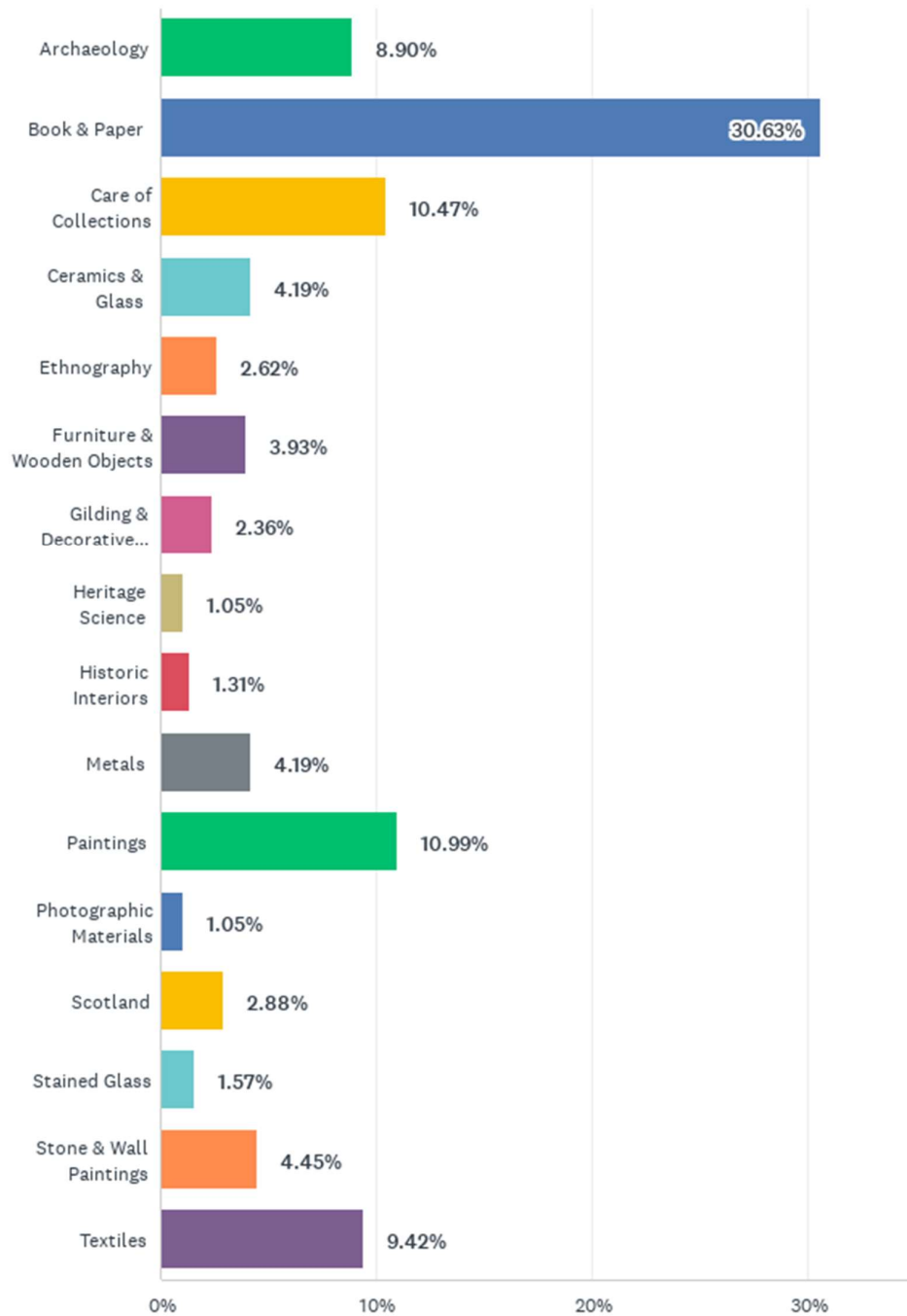


Figure 15. What is your primary Icon Group affiliation?

What is your secondary Icon Group affiliation?

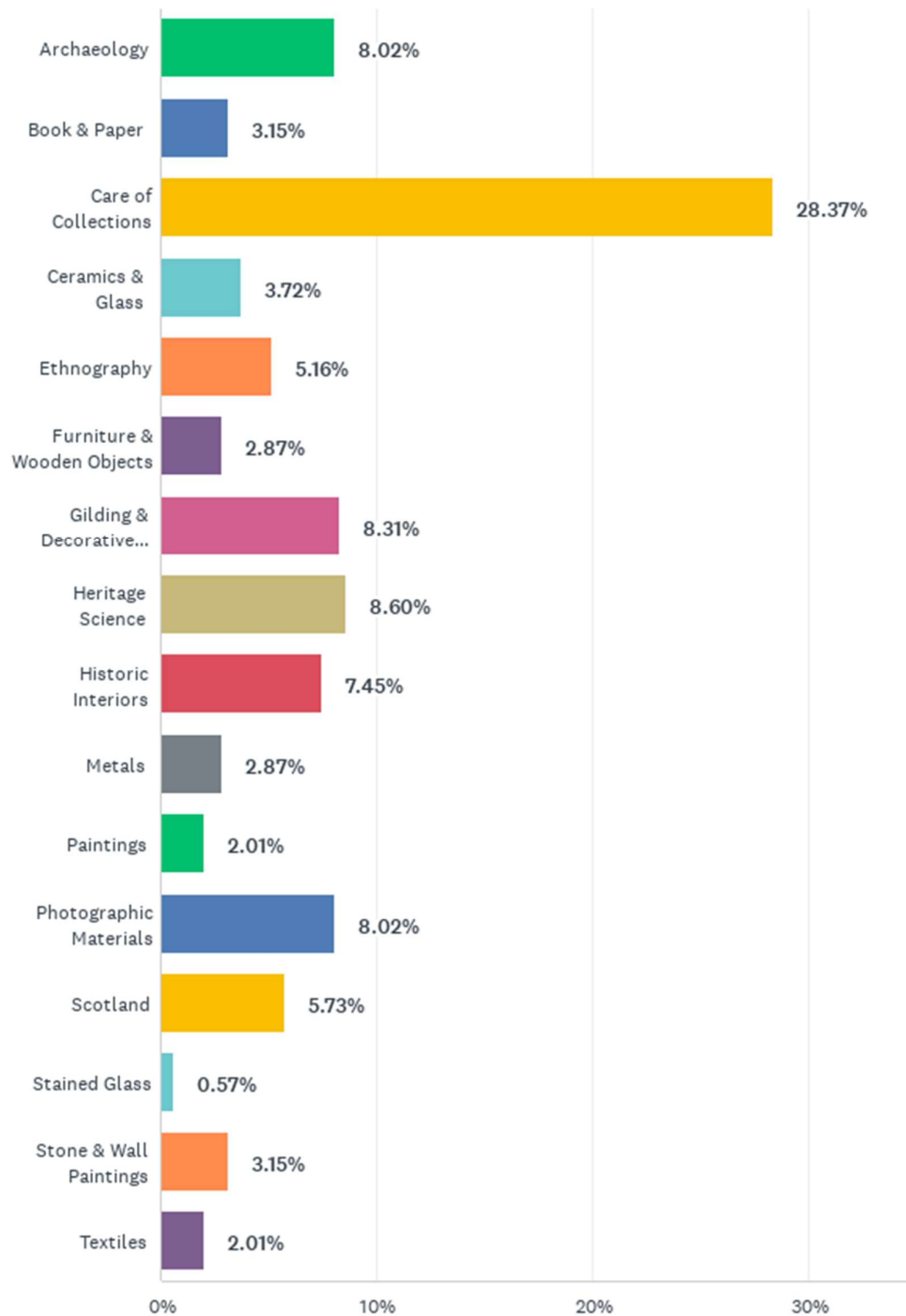


Figure 16. What is your secondary Icon Group affiliation?



Are you presently employed as a conservator (includes self-employed or part time)?

Compared to the 2019 survey results, there was a discernible increase in the number of respondents reporting they were presently employed as conservators; up nearly 3% on the 2019 results. Of those who reported they were not presently employed as conservators, respondents were most likely to be Students (32%), while Accredited members and Associates each amounted to 25% each of those reporting they were not presently employed as conservators.

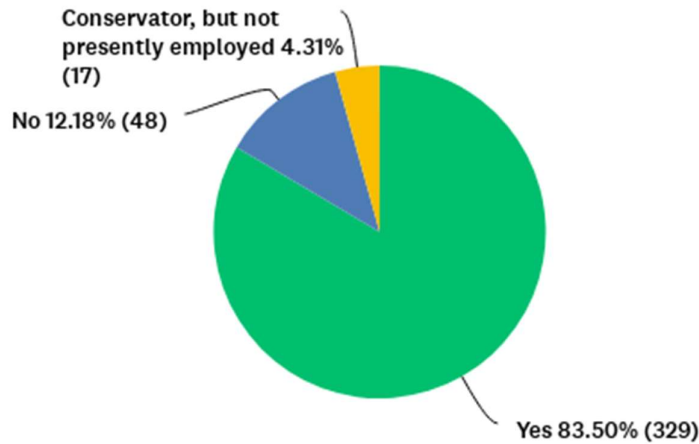


Figure 17. Are you presently employed as a conservator?

If not conservation, what is the nature of your current employment?

Those not presently working as conservators were asked to provide details on their roles.

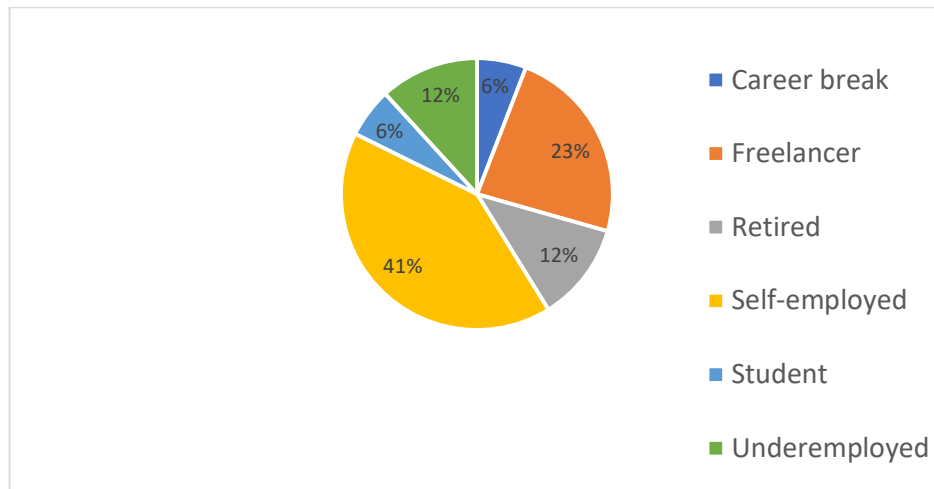


Figure 18. If not conservation, what is the nature of your employment?

Among respondents, most reported self-employed (41%) or freelance (23%) sources of employment, while a further 12% reported they were either retired or underemployed.

These results offer contrasts with responses to the same question when posed in the 2019 survey, in which there were greater contingents of academics (22.5% in 2019) and managers (11.2% in 2019), neither of which was strongly represented in the 2022 survey responses to the same question.

Other responses varied:

- Conservation Scientist
- Director of my own Ltd, furniture conservation
- Fully employed outside conservation; preparing to enter private practice
- Recently made redundant
- Volunteer

### What is your current employment status?

Most survey respondents (62.22%) reported they were employed full time.

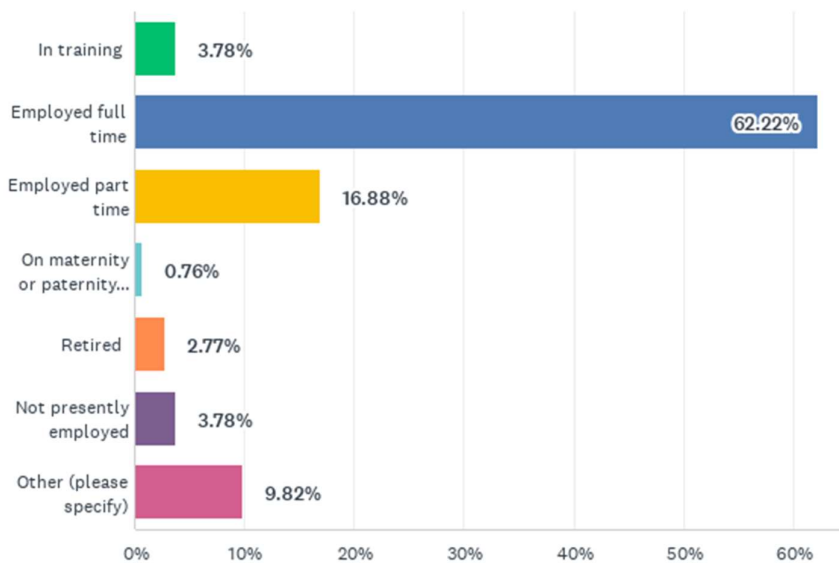


Figure 19. What is your current employment status?

Of those reporting employment statuses of 'Other (please specify)', the majority of these were self-employed (3%).

### What best describes the nature of your current employment?

Compared to the 2019 survey results, declines are evident in the number of survey respondents reporting they were employed on permanent contracts (-3.6%), and on fixed-term contracts (-2.8%). Meanwhile, there was no change in the proportion of respondents indicating they were freelancers (+0.1%).

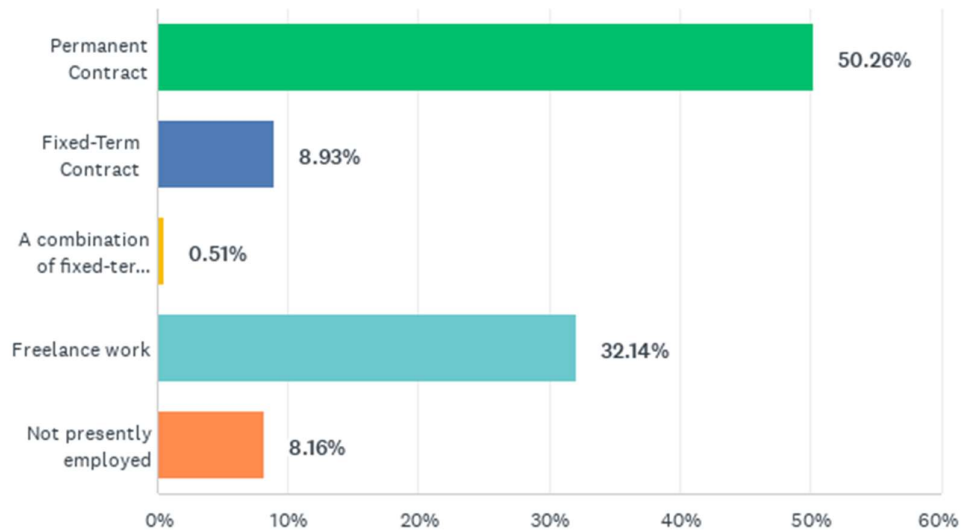


Figure 20. What best describes the nature of your current employment?

However, the 2022 survey included an additional option – one for respondents to indicate if they were not presently employed *as conservators*. This contrasts the question posed on page 43, which simply asked if respondents were employed at all. A total of 8% of survey respondents indicated they were not presently employed as conservators. Subtracting the percentage of respondents who reported they were not employed at all, it can be surmised that 4.38% of respondents are employed in worlds outside conservation.

### What best describes your place of employment?

The 2019 Survey revealed a rapidly shifting landscape compared to 2015 predecessor. The 2019 results revealed that those reporting national or local public sector employment contexts had fallen by more than 6%, alongside an increase in respondents reporting private sector contexts of employment (+4%). Although the ranks of freelance respondents remained stable in the 2019 picture, it was widely assumed their numbers would increase by the time of the present survey.

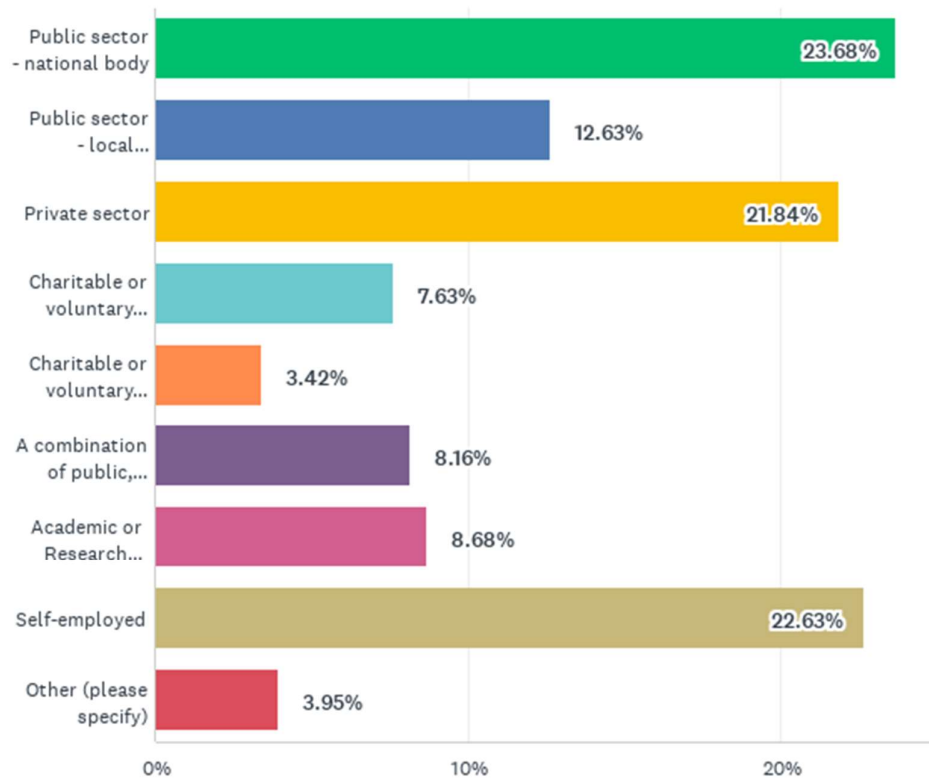


Figure 21. What best describes your place of employment?

The latest results suggest something of the impact of the pandemic on employment opportunities for conservators. While public sector and private contexts of employment remained stable compared to the 2019 survey results, the proportion of respondents reporting self-employed contexts of work fell by 9%.

**Other (please specify):**

Responses included:

- primary job Church of England, also sessional lecturer, freelancer and Director of a CIC
- Private Museum (non-profit)
- Retired but volunteer for a charity
- VAE contract with V&A, kind of private within public

How many conservators are there in your organisation?

The 2015 and 2019 survey results indicated a solitary working life for conservators, with a third employed as the only conservators in their organisation. The 2022 results indicate this trend has markedly increased.

The number of respondents reporting they were the only conservators in their organisation increased by nearly 6% compared to the 2019 results, alongside a decline in the number of respondents reporting they worked with colleagues in conservation across the options provided.

Compared to the 2019 results, those reporting they worked with 2-4 and 5-7 others declined by 3% respectively; while further down the scale a decline is evident across the figures. Excepting this trend are those working with 11-20 others (+3%) and 31-40 others (+1%).

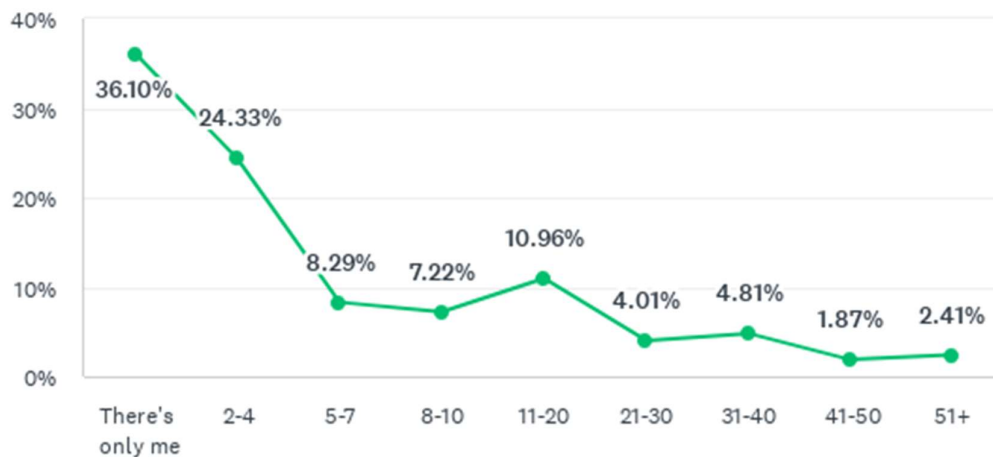


Figure 22. How many conservators are there in your organisation?

If not conservation, what is the nature of your current employment?

- Asst staff officer
- Building inspection
- Collections Care
- Collections Care Assistant to regional conservator
- Collections Care/ collections management
- Conservation advisory and management
- Curatorial and managing conservation projects on a freelance basis, matching objects to conservators
- Director for software company
- Doctoral training manager in higher education sector
- Grant writing
- Heritage science research
- Hospitality
- I am a student
- I am a student doing a Ba in conservation, Books and Paper
- lecturer

- Management
- Museum manager and Curator
- National Funding body - in my role I am responsible for conservation at national level
- not currently employed
- not employed - recently took voluntary redundancy
- Photographic retoucher
- Public library
- Retired
- Retired Actor
- Senior Manager
- Student
- student
- Student/ technician
- Very recently graduated (1 week!)
- Voluntary work

### 3. CONSERVATORS AND ICON

#### Summary

The survey results indicate that higher education institutions were the strongest recruitment ground for new Icon members, while there was also an increased tendency for respondents to report joining Icon based on positive word of mouth from a friend or colleague.

Respondents were asked to elaborate on their reasons for joining in free text responses, and among these responses *Access to knowledge, information and events* and *Because it's the professional body* emerged as the strongest motivations for joining decisions, alongside *Access to community, support and inclusion*. Respondents indicated they expected their membership to provide access to notions of *support*, closely allied to high *standards* of increased *professionalism* derived from *access to information, networking, training events* and *conferences*, and products such as *journals*.

Nearly 70% of respondents reported their expectations had been met or mostly met, while less than 30% reported they were only satisfied somewhat; a mere 5% reported their expectations had not been met. Respondents suggested Icon could better-meet expectations by resolving concerns around the affordability of Icon versus a perceived lack of benefits, by better-managing international relationships and forging new and closer partnerships with allied bodies in the heritage sector.

Member perception of barriers to Accreditation revolved around the process, regarded as unwieldy and bureaucratic by some, the time required, the cost and a perceived lack of real benefits for those ultimately Accredited. 'It is an expensive process that only increases your annual commitments to Icon,' wrote one respondent. Strong engagement with students and training institutions were suggested by most as the means to promote the standard and encourage wider take-up.

The majority of respondents were moderately engaged with the organisation and had attended between one and three events in the previous year. There was a marked decline in the number of respondents who reported having attended no events at all, compared to the 2019 survey. The majority of those who were active on an Icon Group or Committee reported a desire to support or contribute to the profession as their primary motivation for getting involved, followed by a desire to foster interpersonal and professional networks. A clear majority of respondents indicated they would find it easier to get involved if they had more time.

Respondent views on areas of activity where Icon did well emphasised the position of the organisations as an umbrella body connecting conservation specialisms and providing a single voice for the sector, alongside Icon's events and CPD programme. Asked to consider development opportunities for the organisation, respondents called for Icon to increase member benefits and attain greater recognition for the profession. Overall, 80% of respondents reported they were *Satisfied* or *Mostly Satisfied* with Icon.

## How did you first hear about Icon?

The latest survey results reinforce the centrality of higher education institutions as a key recruitment ground for new Icon members. An increased proportion of respondents reported they first heard of Icon at college or university (+3.59%) compared to the 2019 survey results. This coincides with the introduction of new student recruitment initiatives such as 'Student Month', which made its first appearance as a regular feature of Icon's outreach in September 2021.

There was also a slightly increased tendency for members to join Icon based on positive word of mouth from a friend or colleague compared to the 2019 results (+2.17%).

Conversely, there was a drop of more than 5% in those respondents reporting they first heard of Icon at convergence in 2005, while none reported coming across Icon in the news media (-1%).

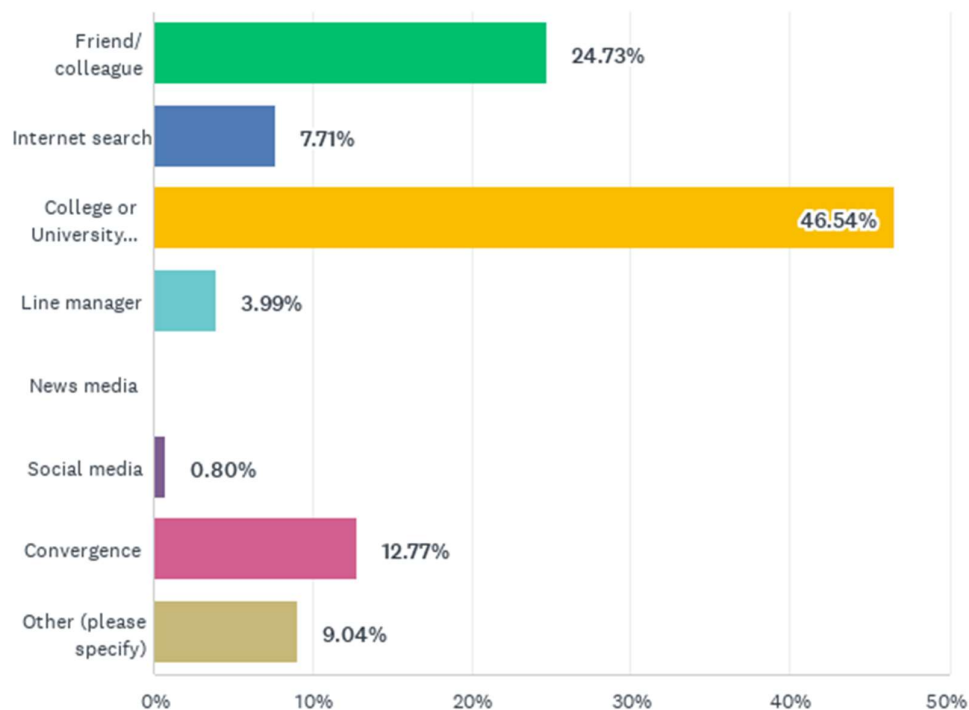


Figure 23. How did you first hear about Icon?

### Other (please specify):

A full 56% of respondents using 'Other' section explained they joined Icon at convergence, or were heavily involved in the convergence process, which might indicate the term *convergence* itself is today poorly understood as a means of explaining Icon's formation. Other responses included:



- Historic Scotland Conservation Centre, where I was a structural paintings conservation intern in the early 2000s
- I have worked in museums for all of my career so have always known about ICON
- ICON Internship
- Local Museum Conservator
- pre-studies internship supervisor
- Professional contact
- research
- Through work

### Why did you join Icon?

Surveys in 2015 and 2019 had provided a prescriptive multiple choice answer to this question. In a departure from that approach, the 2022 edition has sought to capture reasons for joining Icon in the words of survey respondents themselves, rather than via a prescriptive list presented to them.

The new categorisation here is derived from predominant themes in the free text responses. It has distinguished between those expressed a desire to attain smoother career development and job prospects, and those who explicitly mentioned a desire to gain accreditation:

<b>Why did you join Icon?</b>	
Access to knowledge, information and events	125
Because it's the professional body	122
Access to community, support and inclusion	69
Career development advantage	35
Advised by tutor	27
To gain Accreditation	20
To influence positive change in the sector	8
Peer pressure from colleagues	7
<b>TOTAL RESPONSES</b>	<b>413</b>

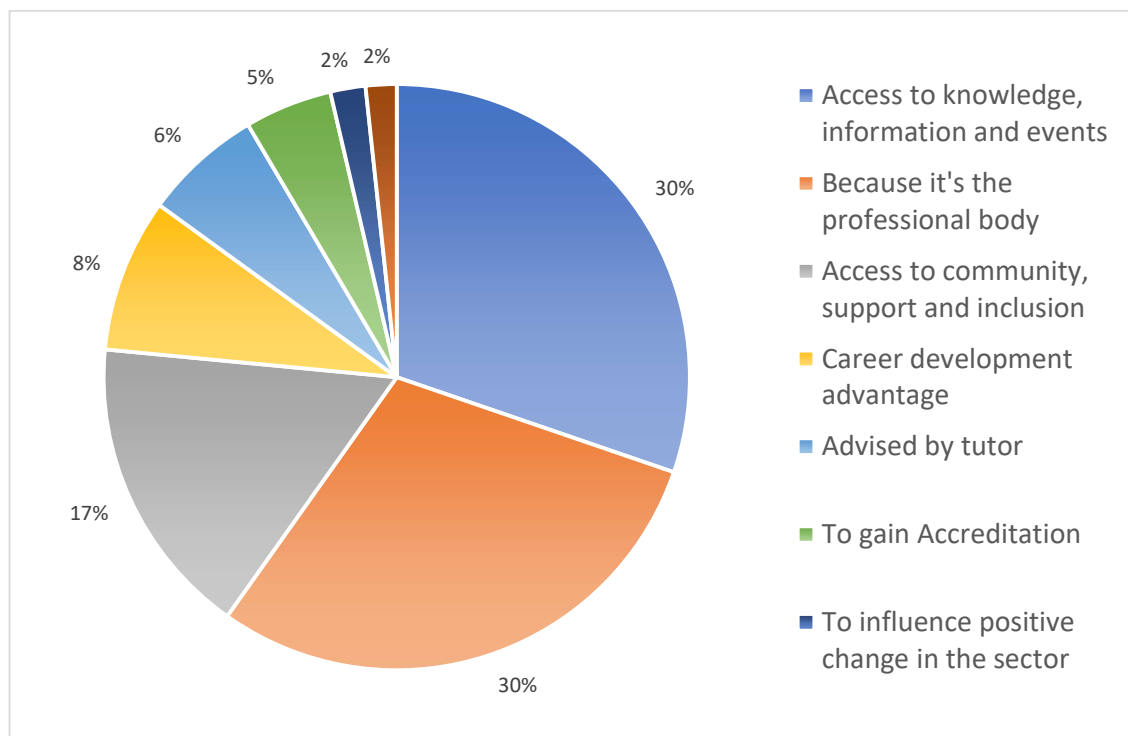


Figure 24. Why did you join Icon?

The free text responses make plain that the strongest reasons for joining Icon are (1) *Access to knowledge, information and events*, and (2) *Because it's the professional body for conservation*, and respondents reasoned that membership was necessary step to demonstrate their professionalism. A third contingent joined to *Access community, support and inclusion*.

Among the responses:

#### *Access to community, support and inclusion*

- For professional support and cohesion when we're all so dispersed
- It is important to be in consistent communication and exchange with others and ICON offers the perfect platform
- To be part of a international professional community. Since I started attending courses within the cultural heritage sector, I do encourage and defend strong professional bodies to represent ourselves among too. Also, at that time, I was planning to attend the Edinburgh Conference 2006. I joined Icon and am still a member!
- To connect with colleagues outside of the US and for access to excellent programming.
- To gain a professional qualification because I cannot afford to undertake an MA in conservation
- When studying conservation in the UK, the professors and friends were all ICON members and after attending some events with them, I found it very special to bond and to connect with other emerging or professionals. I also believed it was very important to be part of a bigger community, gaining exposure to other avenues or

opportunities of learning/training beyond academia, for networking and to get inspiration of other's practice and search for meaning in the conservation field.

#### *Access to knowledge, information and events*

- Because I was leading on introducing preventive conservation policies and processes in my organisation
- Because it seemed like a very important thing to do to keep up with news, lectures, events, training opportunities, to build networks etc.
- for insurance reasons and keeping up to date with profession developments
- For professional guidance, training and keeping up to date with the most recent developments
- Seemed the right thing to do after I started working in the UK to get the latest conservation news and developments, to network, to hear about training opportunities. It also seemed sensible to be part of an organisation and to show employers that I am working to certain standards.
- To keep up to date with everything going on in the profession To be listed on the conservation register
- To receive information what is going on in the conservation field. On-line courses and seminars are very important. The decision to join was influenced by Covid; all the normal meetings etc are cancelled.

#### *Advised by tutor*

- Advised by tutor that it was essential requirement for working in the UK, and would help with professional development.
- As a student it was a cheaper joining rate and I wanted to attend some lectures and have access to resources
- Because we were told too
- Essentially I was told it was the thing you should do as a conservator by my tutor.
- Ione Gedye fixed us with an eagle eye and said "join" It was iic ukg then. (Ione was one of the great pioneers of conservation teaching at the Inst of Archaeology)
- Studied in UK, student membership pathway allowed me to join without high fees
- student member made it affordable. normally belong to just North American organizations

#### *Because it's the professional body*

- At least one UK pipe organ restorer should be a member of the main conservation body
- Because it is the sole professional body in the country that represents conservation profession as a whole
- For recognition of my professionalism. CPD.
- I became aware of the emergence of the idea of Conservation as opposed to the previous role of antique restorers destroying objects
- I believe that it is important to actively support the profession and it is partly what defined/defined me as a professional.

- Initially news on jobs. I was an intermittent member initially depending on my personal finances. Later, continuous membership to ensure individual professional development & to contribute to a profession wide raising of standards.
- Natural step to belong to the professional body of your chosen profession, even more so as conservation is a small, very specialised profession - so having a professional body that can be there for you and where you can find support from others is important.

#### *Career development advantage*

- Appealing addition to CV when initially looking for jobs
- Because my company supplied paper to conservators and I wanted to understand conservation and the market
- I could see strength in numbers ie different specialisms combining forces to raise the status of conservation/conservators; enhanced professionalism; fear of missing out if ICON accreditation became a requirement for local authority/museum work
- It is generally expected as a conservator
- It's a requirement for most employment
- Necessary for professional recognition
- Some organizations require ICON accreditation as a basis for accepting their work so it was an essential move to make.
- To benefit from events/trainings and networking, and to show I am committed to a standard of conservation
- To work in the UK it is almost compulsory.

#### *Peer pressure from colleagues*

- For access to publication and conferences, but also pressure from senior colleagues.
- Everyone did it!
- Pressure from the National Trust

#### *To gain Accreditation*

- It was a necessity for job applications early in my career. Also, I don't come from a university background and I felt accreditation could help provide me professional leverage.

#### *To influence positive change in the sector*

- I joined when it was UKIC and left for awhile as I wasn't Happy with the way UKIC had changed into ICON, I re-joined because I hoped to make a difference

The results indicate disadvantages of the previous approach in providing a ready-made list of options for respondents to tick through. Absent from the free-text responses was any sense of *personal interest*, cited by 38.53% of respondents in the previous edition. Equally, Icon's advocacy did not feature either, although this was cited by 46.97% of respondents in the previous version.

However, the free-text responses also indicate that not everyone was convinced:

- Forced to do so to get Accreditation which ICON came up with and are using as a way to gate keep the profession and make people become members and pay extortionate fees and jump through ridiculous hoops to gain Accreditation ignoring and failing to implement requests for reasonable adjustments and allowing assessors to be ableist, bully and make inappropriate comments
- I thought at the time that the IPC then ICON would effectively represent the needs our its membership. This gender recognition and sexual preference nonsense makes me question renewing my membership as a woman.

### What were your expectations?

These responses may go some way to indicate prevailing member interpretation around what Icon is for.

As indicated by the Word Cloud below, most prominent among responses to this question were notions of *support*, closely allied to high *standards* of increased *professionalism* derived from *access* to *information*, *networking*, *training events* and *conferences*, and products such as *journals*. In these, perception of Icon's role as the fulcrum of conservation was very clear – along with widespread expectation that Icon would play a leading role in the provision of support for professionals across the sector.

Responses to the question *What were your expectations?* included:

- An enlarged and therefore more influential professional body
- An integrated professional body for conservators, working as advocates and setting professional standards.
- As the sole conservator in my organisation, in a new geographical location, I hoped getting involved actively with Icon would help me to build professional relationships for advice and support.
- better access to job market
- Early on I was trying to understand the field and looking for employment. I expected Icon to be a strong advocate for the conservation of objects in my material specialism by disseminating knowledge and providing opportunities for the transfer of hand skills.
- I joined because I thought it was the right thing to do as a student.
- I felt it was required to get a job in the sector.



Figure 25. What were your expectations upon joining Icon?

- I think in general I always expected Icon to fight for fair and better pay, better awareness and recognition of the conservation profession and a certain amount of protection for the profession.
- I thought ICON would exist to support its members, to assist in actively encouraging networking between professionals. I thought they would advocate for our industry, be able to advise and provide support services.
- I thought it would be helpful to my career, didn't find it very good whilst I was at my undergrad in Lincoln. Found most things were based in London, this was 2015/16/17 zoom not much of a thing then! Also I didn't know what specialism I was interested in then so didn't feel like I got much from Icon. Since going to London to Camberwell felt like I got more out of it esp as book and paper is a much more active group.
- Icon would professionalise and support the various conservation groups (IPC, UKIC etc) that had outgrown their resources and exhausted their volunteers

- That icon should be a support network for conservators where innovation could happen and conservators spoke with a united voice
- That Icon would be advocates for professionals in the field, that they would identify issues when 1 conservator was too little to fight for the object needs over other objectives. Fighting for the future of objects, future conservators and present conservators.
- To be able to have access to information, expertise and community in the conservation field. Expanding my views and horizons about the profession.
- To find out more about the industry I hoped that there would be training and courses, job profiles etc. Support against low paid jobs.

### Have your expectations been met?

This year, new variables were introduced to focus responses to this question. In previous surveys, responses to this question were offered only as a binary choice between *yes* and *no*. Respondent feedback indicated this approach was insufficiently nuanced, so for the 2022 Survey these response options were diversified.

A full 67% of respondents were reported their expectations had been met, while 28% reported their expectations had been ‘somewhat’ met. A mere 5% reported their expectations had not been met.

By comparison, when respondents were faced with a binary choice in the 2019 survey, 79% of respondents reported their expectations had been met, while 20% of respondents reported their expectations had not been met.

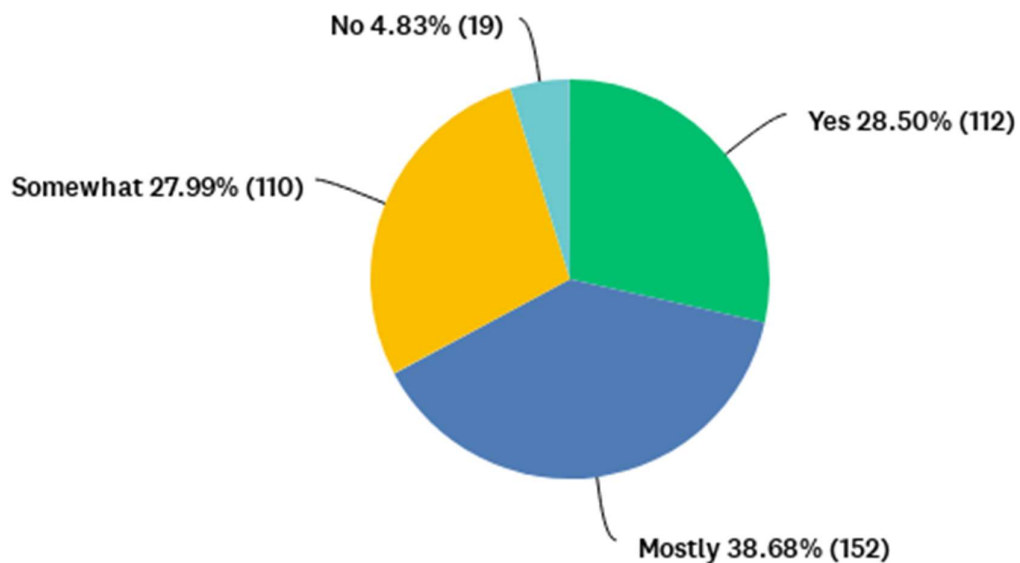


Figure 26. Have your expectations been met?

## How could Icon better-meet your expectations?

Prominent across these responses were concerns around the affordability of Icon versus a perceived lack of tangible benefits. Respondents also called upon Icon to better-manage international relationships and forge partnerships. There was also a sense that heritage skilled crafts and crafts related to building conservation were insufficiently valued within the organisation, and concern from some responses that within the organisation there were even perceptions of snobbery against them.

Responses included:

- [It's an] outdated, bureaucratic organisation mainly concerned with fleecing its members for extortionate membership fees.
- The UX of the website just makes me sooo mad. This should be the simplest part of the whole ICON website experience as we want the general public to be able to engage as efficiently and straightforwardly as possible.
- I think icon staff and volunteers work extremely hard to produce quality content. I think that recent initiatives to focus on diversity and inclusion, recognition within the profession and creating the icon 'brand' are really positive steps in the right direction.
- Uncouple from this Stonewall instigated nonsense.
- The organisation seems polarised to UK only information/interactions. Greater sharing and promotion of activity with similar affiliations in other countries. There is so much more going on in the Conservation world outside of the UK. Promote more workshops/talks/training/education/publications from outside of the UK.
- Embrace the Heritage skilled crafts and appear less elitist presently on Heritage skills forums ICON is not active and there is a distinct impression that ICON is not involved enough with those crafts & skills that actually build and restore the Fabric of our built heritage
- Currently I hope that I will manage to maintain the membership. It would be of a great help if Icon could offer membership fees more accessible, for instance by: - discounts to countries in development; - grants towards covering the membership fees.
- Bring ICONs understanding of conservation roles and education more in line with where/how Conservation is being practiced in the workplace in 2022. I find the need to pin yourself down to a specialism extremely outdated and no where near how me and my colleagues are required to work, or have even been required to work throughout the entire 9 years in the industry.
- Accreditation is too expensive for anyone other than high earners. No support for low earners and no recognition of those who came to conservation via alternative routes



- Not all will be able to afford, or be supported/subsidised, to reach the higher echelons of pathway accreditation. Some of our teachers are not even listed.
- As a mid-career conservator who has only ever worked for public institutions, I find the CDP opportunities at my level provided by Icon are very much geared to independent/freelance conservators.
- Supporting conservators in smaller regional museums rather than focusing in larger national organisations.
- I am not a conservation professional because I volunteer, where I can. ICON doesn't seem to recognise volunteering. Even though I have to pay subscriptions as though I were employed as a conservator, ICON surveys - including this one - have no category for volunteers. I feel excluded. ICON could at least offer this category or champion volunteers in the profession. I have a Conservation MA but am unlikely ever to be selected for employment because I need training and appear to be too old or differently qualified to be an attractive employee. I don't mind volunteering, but its really difficult and ICON don't seem to offer support.
- I think ICON needs to provide more considering we pay a substantial membership fee.
- I'm not sure, but being more affordable ie cheaper to be a member with more tangible benefits would help. More acknowledgement of mid career conservators who make up the majority of the profession.
- Icon are heavily promoting accredited conservators in the public domain. I understand this is the desired benchmark but for those not in a position to achieve accreditation, despite being highly skilled, it feels that I am not considered to be competent by my own professional body.
- implement changes to Accreditation, make all assessors attend diversity, equality and disability awareness training. stop just talking about diversity and expecting to just to cover skin colour, it covers every kind of diversity if you look properly you will see that conservation is far more diverse than you think.
- In general, Icon do brilliantly. One area that needs attention is that many conservation materials for my specialism have been imported from Europe - until Brexit. Personally I'm finding it difficult to obtain cutting-edge nanolime products, hydrogels, microemulsions etc (related to outcomes of the international Nanorestart Project 2014-18). Sadly organisations such as HES here in Scotland seem to lack interest in taking a lead on these addressing these important developments in conservation. Also it is frustrating not to have practical workshops in the UK using these new products.
- It needs to decide whom it is for. Is it a membership organisation for people in conservation or an organisation to tell the public about conservation? I don't think we are big enough to do both. I also feel that there is a an us and them feel between the office and the membership (especially the groups). We should be pulling together but

this doesn't seem to be the feel I get. It should be noted that it would undoubtedly be easier to get everyone working together if Icon wasn't made up of conservators!

- It's out of touch. As I understand it the majority of the membership work for themselves and not institutions, but I don't feel there is much in the way of support for the self-employed. During the pandemic restrictions I didn't feel ICON really understood the impact on those of us who were not fortunate enough to be furloughed.
- Keep on doing what you do :) More support on insurance, legal matters, informal meetings, offer post-prints of conferences (soon after conference) for those who can't get there. Be central point of access to research papers (similar to AIC) for members.
- Museums and private conservation projects are too poorly funded for accredited conservators to charge professional fees for professional standards. Icon does not do enough to stamp out cheap unprofessional work and to educate the public to use properly trained professional conservators for contract or freelance work.
- Public sector employment has contracted significantly since I finished training. This isn't something that Icon can stop but the organisation needs to recognise it and pivot toward supporting people working commercially.
- Reciprocity and partnerships with other conservation accrediting bodies around the world, like Canadian Association of Professional Conservators (CAPC), etc.
- Some specialist sections within Icon do not always feel very inclusive, as though the committee members of the Section are in their own small world and not particularly welcoming to those with the same specialisation.
- There is still very little representation for building conservation and even snobbery.
- Would be great if didn't still need such a high level of voluntary (members) involvement to provide the resources and to be assessing its members professionalism.

Whatever your membership type, in your view what are the barriers to Accreditation?

As depicted in the Word Cloud below, member perception of the 'typical' barriers to Accreditation revolved around (1) the process, which was regarded as unwieldy and bureaucratic by some; (2) the time required to progress an application for Accreditation; (3) the cost of Accreditation; (4) perception of a lack of real benefits for those ultimately Accredited, although Accredited members paid a higher membership fee.

'It is an expensive process that only increases your annual commitments to ICON,' wrote one respondent. 'Lengthy process. Expensive, on top of membership fee. Not seen as a pre-requisite for many jobs,' wrote another.



I go into working freelance, within the museum sector me becoming accredited doesn't mean a promotion or salary increase.' Within this, some respondents also perceived deficiencies in the process. 'When I was considering working towards accreditation, I realised my portfolio of evidence would be spread between a minimum of 3 employers, adding massively to the assessment costs,' wrote one.

Some members also keenly recognised the imperatives behind Accreditation. 'I feel that it is essential to the development and legitimacy of our profession,' wrote one. 'What else can we do to keep standards high and protect artworks from underqualified / underexperienced / underskilled practitioners? This is the best way,' wrote another.

Other responses included:

- The ongoing significantly increased membership fee. I was able to budget for accreditation but in light of inflation, increased living costs and no pay rises for 10+ years (consistent and wide spread in our sector), I cannot budget to pay your increasing costs, yet I lose a source of income, hard and painfully earned, if I don't. Paying your fees puts me in debt, with the concessionary rate
- It's not applicable for people outside the UK. -I can't really see the need. I can only see the barriers it creates. For example people that can not afford this or do not have the time get side lined and may end up in unemployment. I have seen this happen to talented colleagues in the UK when institutions demand accreditation for any job.
- Accreditation is not required or acknowledged in my workplace. I currently have a permanent contract. The yearly fee of Accreditation is much higher than standard membership.
- An overly complicated application form, that can be repetitive. Current application form needs to be reviewed, and restructured. Project matrix system needs to be scrapped. Considering we come across complex situations that we overcome, trying to work out what ICON actually want from you for the application process can be as clear as mud.
- I imagine it is a catch 22 to achieve accreditation as I witness the same conservators being used by institutions so I'm sure it is hard to get the relevant experience.
- Conservator salaries and Icon accreditation not being recognised internationally. Most conservators feel that there is no need for them to be accredited since their status does not change much in the way that they can apply and get jobs.
- Cost, the payment is more than a month of my Mortgage repayment. Also as a conservator who has reached quite a high level without accreditation and worked for some large international institutions I feel slightly aggrieved that my ability as a conservator is quite often based on an exercise which a lot of people in management got given.

- Employer's lack of support especially for those who are external conservators working on project basis or fixed contract. It is more common for those on permanent contract to be support by Employer. Uncertainty as to whether the accreditation is recognised outside of the UK. Making time or affording to commit to accreditation process are additional barriers due to existing work commitments or personal commitments.
- I can't afford to take weeks off work to make a strong application - I am already working far more hours than I would like to keep the wolf from the door. Although I fully intend to get accredited, there is no big gain in being accredited quickly. I need to do it at the right time for my business, and in the meantime I have hard earned and expensive qualifications which suffice.
- From what I hear from early career conservators it is primarily cost followed by a level of resentment, especially from Post Grads as to why they should have to do it at all. Lastly it is about finding the time and support from employers.
- I have been contemplating accreditation for some time, but I just don't see enough benefits, considering the effort and the annual fee. I see it more as achieving a personal goal and it shouldn't be just this.
- I personally feel there are few barriers to Accreditation. I had a very positive experience, and found all the support and resources I needed either from the Icon website or reaching out to Icon staff.
- I think being questioned by fellow conservators on your practice is an intimidating prospect. If you were to fail it would be a difficult situation. It requires a lot of work to prepare and this can be something to squeeze in outside of normal working hours. For conservators in institutions there is little need for accreditation if the employer does not recognise and reward it.
- I think I personally have no barriers, but that is because I have scored a job in a high-level nationally respected private conservation studio. I have access to master-level training, and am unlimited by material access (our studio uses all the best materials), and I work on Canada's highest value paintings. I have no idea how others do it, those who join peers to open private practices straight after graduation... I don't know how to advocate for accreditation when not everyone has access to post-graduate apprenticeships. I do however support the concept of accreditation... I just think there should be available/accessible 3-5 year post-graduate apprenticeships for emerging conservators to bridge the gap to accreditation.
- I was accredited in the very first intake/appointment cohort. Despite being in the USA by then, I went through the process because I feel that it is essential to the development and legitimacy of our profession. I let my status drop because I simply could not afford the Accreditation dues on top of the dues I pay for AIC and other conservation groups in the USA.

- what else can we do to keep standards high and protect artworks from underqualified / underexperienced / underskilled practitioners? This is the best way.
- It doesn't convey any real tangible benefits - there's no guarantee of higher salaries for instance (how nice that would be if only there was the money around) or discounts on insurance or products. There have yet to be jobs advertised that only want accredited conservators. The nationals don't support it as people at the nationals tend not to move on so they don't see the need to go through the process - this does send negative signals to other parts of the profession.
- Length of contract for newly qualified conservators: When I was considering working towards accreditation, I realised my portfolio of evidence would be spread between a minimum of 3 employers, adding massively to the assessment costs.
- Money and time. None of my previous employers would pay towards the fee, and as a poor person I couldn't save up. Applying for funding meant committing to the process and employers were also unhappy with the time needed to get accredited, expecting me to do all associated work in my free time. I felt unsupported even though I understand their view: why help a conservator through the process when they'll just leave and take that qualification with them? It's a hard sell in today's world. Employers want you to be ACR but won't help you achieve it. Also every conservator I've met who's ACR have told me how traumatising the process is so as a neurodivergent person I fear the process intensely.
- i had a loan in order to pay the accreditation fee
- The time set aside from daily work to focus on ACR can be costly if you are trying to make ends meet. I am becoming accredited this year, I hope, so I am talking from experience. If the people that pay me demand and value accreditation, then conservators will follow. Clients in museums and public institutions sometimes ask for acr status but they account for a fraction of what a self-employed conservator has to deal with. I feel that being acr is valued more to other conservators already acr'ed than to anyone else. It kind of proves your worth to your peers. It shouldn't be that way. I agree acr is needed and urgent for the benefit of all of us conservators, don't get me wrong. I am doing it and the application/assessment is well thought through. It's what's before that that would need to be looked at, perhaps. Talking to Art dealers associations, galleries, antique societies of collectors...
- None, it should be expected to be a goal. finances are often quoted. and if i allow myself to think about it, it is galling that Accredited membership is so much dearer than non-accredited when really when you think about it: the Accredited conservators are the ones who take their jobs most seriously, are most committed and keep the profession going.
- Providing the physical evidence from past projects that were completed for previous employers - this is not always accessible.

- Time! Running a busy studio it's difficult finding the time to jump through all the accreditation hoops. I've never been asked by my clients if I belong to a professional body so as an associate member I get the benefits of the conferences & talks, keeping me up to date with new information which may impact treatment choices etc.
- Too expensive. Also what's the point? Unless I'm in private practice, I don't need it. I work in an institution, the pay is already low, I'm not going to spend money from my low salary for accreditation when it gets me nothing back at the institution. I won't earn any higher because I'm accredited. And working at an institution I feel shows I'm working to a standard, which I wouldn't get if I was working in private practice.

### How should Icon promote Accreditation?

Answering this question, some survey respondents recognised the outcome desired – for ACR status to be widely known by one and all as the ‘professional marque for the sector. Without it progression should not be possible and anyone commissioning conservation work should insist upon it as it gives a guarantee about the standard of the person of company contracted.’ Among the survey responses there were less practical suggestions around the means by which Icon might achieve such an outcome.

Some respondents saw great strides made for Accreditation in recent years, but these views were not shared by all. ‘ICON has now gone from National recognition to international that is a massive achievement, However there is still a way to go as there are plenty of Heritage Skilled people who have never heard of ICON and also lots that have heard of ICON but still assume that it is very much based within the Museum & Galleries culture.’

Respondents encouraged Icon to begin with students and training institutions, and to build collaborative partnerships with professional bodies that overlapped with Icon’s aims. Employer outreach and stimulating client demand for the standard were also key.

A number of respondents emphasised that the journey started at home. ‘Don't promote it, spend a bit of time making it accessible for me!!’ wrote one.

Perceptions of client demand were unevenly distributed across the responses, and across the responses there emerged two opposing schools of thought – one that held employers didn’t sufficiently value accreditation, which in turn depressed ACR take-up, and another that contended employers sufficiently valued the standard, but aspiring conservators faced too many barriers and did not pursue accreditation as a result.

‘I was asked during interview to try and explain it because they had found Icon did not want to help them, so perhaps more effort could be made in promoting accreditation and exactly how the process works with employers,’ wrote one respondent. ‘Employers and organisations already want ACRs,’ wrote another. ‘What you need is sell the membership on the perks and help dismantle the barriers: why should they go through an expensive, time consuming, and harrowing experience? ‘

Of greater value to the self-employed. 'One that is only really necessary if you plan to move jobs or are self-employed,' wrote one respondent.

Other responses included:

- Accreditation is the benchmark for a profession that increasingly operates in a consultancy/practitioner small business sector. As such it should be promoted as a means for people to have a professional career in businesses, supporting public/third sector 'heritage' organisations. There remains a perceivable slant towards encouraging potential conservators to aspire to be recognised practitioners in large, primarily arts and museums institutions. An analogy might be architecture - architecture students' aspirations are to establish and run successful business practices because that is a large element of their sector and is what they see and read about in their professional literature and in culture news. I don't believe their early aspiration is to work in a local govt planning department, (not least as architecture depts have mostly now been outsourced). If Icon Accreditation can be seen as a sign of professional status and achievement en route to professional success, rather as RIBA certification is for Architects, and through that means a person can make a respectable professional living, it might be considered as a viable professional avenue for young people. But while we hide behind the guise of backroom heroes of public institutions, in the way we are perceived, the value of Icon Accreditation is not sufficiently recognised outside of our own community.
- Allow there to be an option to pay over 12 months. Give committee members a small discount on accreditation as a thank you.
- Already doing too much about accreditation, this is not my priority and ICON is missing out on other priorities
- Amongst the building professional bodies to raise the value as the extra work and expense does not translate to better earnings
- By making it clear it's something to aim for when you've gained enough experience (don't try it too early) and that it matters more and more for employers that higher level posts get accredited applicants. Also, many funding bodies now ask whether an accredited conservator is involved with the project.
- Chill out. Maybe promote your accredited members instead. I've got maybe 5% of my work from my accreditation. Because only conservators know what it is. Architects etc don't really seem to value it or care. I even have to pay extra to icon for them to list me, how ridiculous is that?!
- Ensure larger organisations encourage their employees to become accredited. Until you go through the process it's difficult to understand the benefits of being 'kept on your toes'!



- I cannot see the relevance except if you are a private conservator and want to be on the register. More jobs are requiring at least Pathway membership, and it seems like another hurdle to getting a job which is not accessible to many people due to the expense.
- I think the register of accredited conservators does a good job of making the case for freelance conservators, but I don't think larger employers e.g. council-run museums recognise the value or significance of achieving accredited status. To be honest, this is why it has slipped down my list of priorities. Would there be an option to recognise a workplace as a place of excellence (or something similar) if a high proportion of their conservators were accredited or working towards it? I think accreditation status isn't visible enough in large organisations.
- I'm still not sure of the benefits to me having undertaken accreditation, apart from being useful if I ever want to go freelance. How does it benefit those employed? It can be seen as an unnecessary large payment to make to obtain accreditation, then forcing those who now are accredited to pay more for membership. Where's the incentive, what do you actually gain from paying more for your membership.

How many Icon events have you attended in the last year, either in person or online?

As with previous surveys, the majority of respondents (52.8%) were moderately engaged with the organisation, having attended between one and three events in the previous year. While this represented a decline on the 2019 results (55.99%) – a trend towards increased events engagement is strongly evident.

Only 14.40% of respondents in 2022 had attended no events at all – down from 33.41% in 2019. The proportion of respondents who had attended between three and four events was also higher (+10.55%), as was the proportion of respondents who had attended five events or more (+11.65%). This coincides with the shift to online events, accessible to all members wherever they might be based, which has eliminated barriers of time and distance previously faced by those wishing to attend such events had they been held in person.

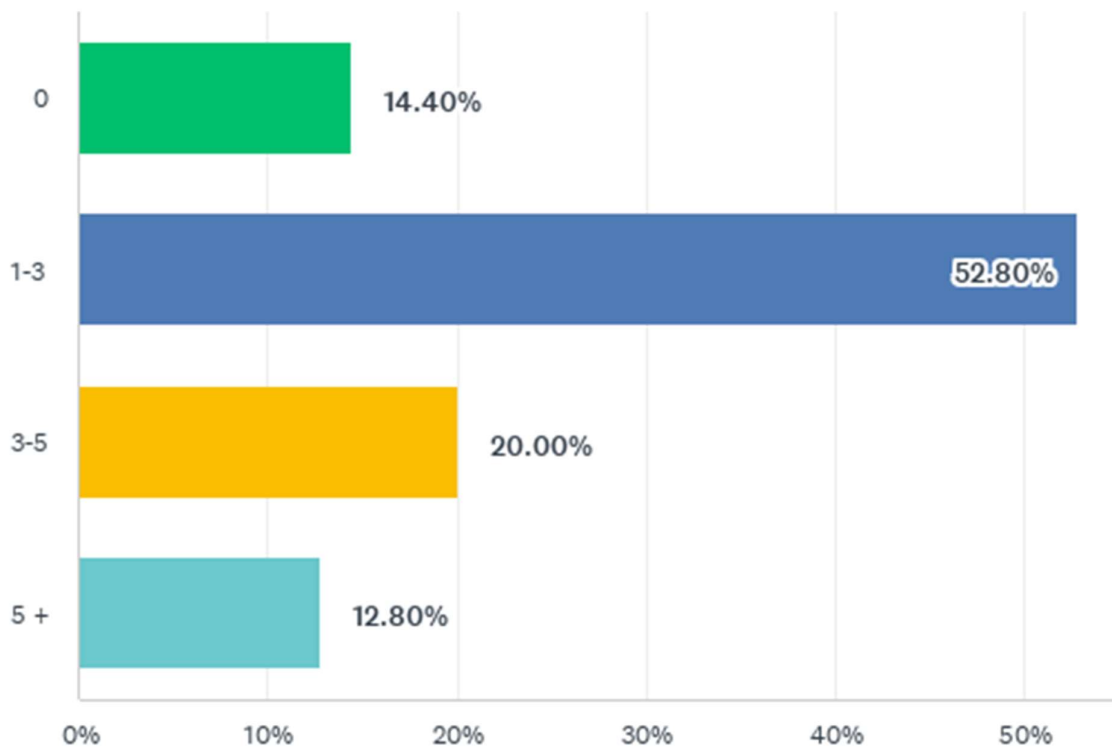


Figure 28. How many Icon events have you attended in the last year?

#### Have you found it easy to attend Icon events?

Most respondents found it easy to attend events (46.49%), or mostly easy to attend events (31.89%). While the question was less nuanced in previous surveys – amounting only to a binary choice between *yes* and *no* in 2019 and 2015 – this is a distinct improvement upon those results. In 2019, 51.76% reported they found events attendance easy, and 48.06% reported they found it hard; contrasting this, in 2022, those reporting they found events attendance *easy* or *mostly easy* accounted for 78.38% of respondents.

With the shift to online events, this is not an entirely surprising result – but still, 21.62% of respondents they did not find attending events easy, or only found attending events easy ‘sometimes’. An examination of the barriers they reported can thus add new dimensions to this picture.

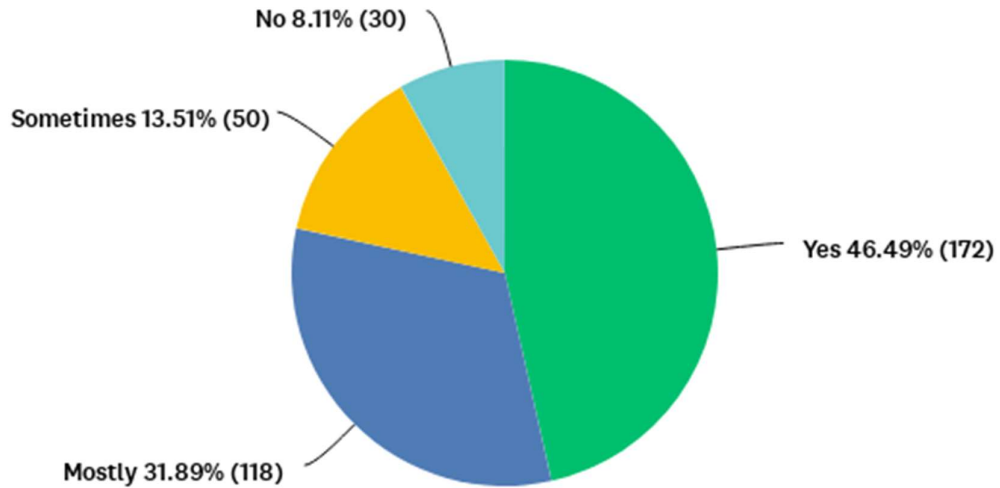


Figure 29. Have you found it easy to attend Icon events?

If you have found events to be inaccessible, what have the primary barriers been?

The 2022 Survey responses indicate that *time constraints* (+12.64%) has strongly overtaken *geography* (-16.83%) and *funding* (-6.69%) to become the predominant factor impeding the efforts of respondents to attend Icon events. As the Institute can do little to influence the free time available to Icon members, this can be viewed as a positive result.

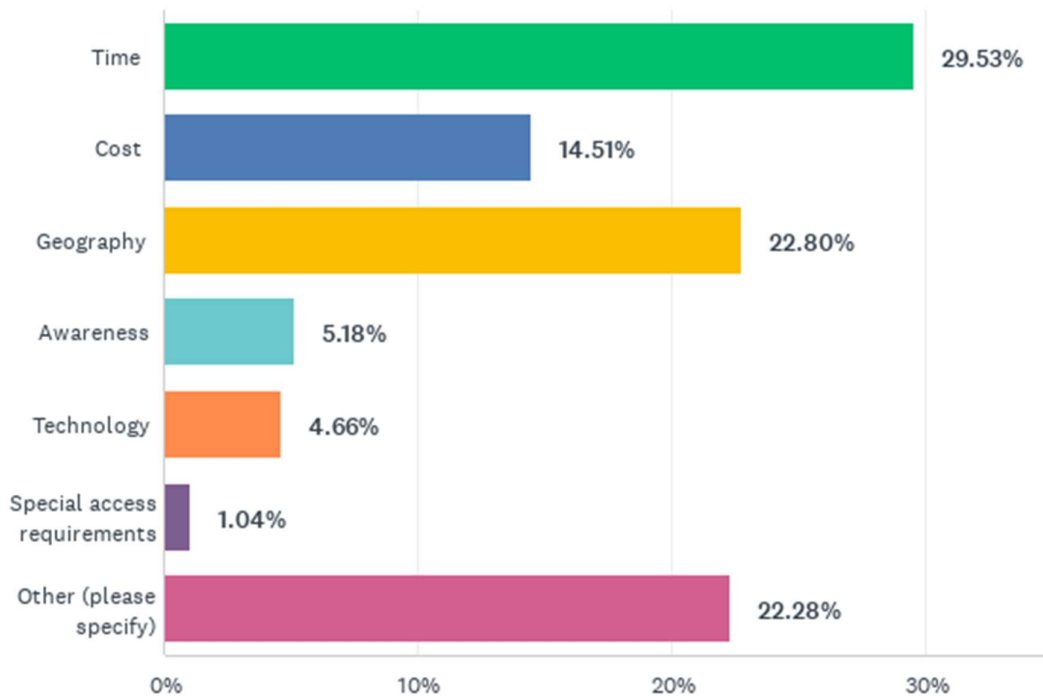


Figure 30. If you have found events to be inaccessible, what have the primary barriers been

Beyond this, other factors impeding attendance included:

- Can't always find the zoom links to events easily.
- I spot events on the website that weren't in emails so feel let down as a member
- I am reluctant to attend online events. Otherwise I do not mind making the effort to attend in London or to travel within the UK. However, now that I am a pensioner, cost will have to be considered. I worked beyond retirement age to make up for numerous unemployed periods as a self-employed person.
- I have young children and often events clash with their bedtimes which I have to be there for
- I live in a different time zone (+8hours). The events tend to be on my night time.
- Some events sell out very quickly and there are limited places - perhaps it would be useful to run very popular events several times or always have the event on the ICON yt channel. Because I am freelance I have last minute jobs come in which means I have missed some events that I have paid to attend, it would be so useful if all events could be recorded.

If Accredited, do you serve as a PACR Assessor, Mentor or Reader?

It was not possible to introduce skip logic to focus responses to this question, owing to the far earlier stage at which membership type was posed, so the results must be reduced further.

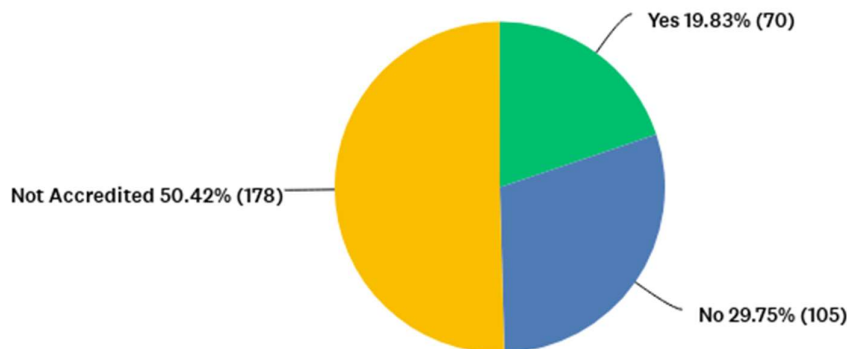


Figure 31. Proportion of respondent ACRs who have served as an Assessor, Mentor or Reader

Disregarding those who were not Accredited, 40% of eligible members had served as an Assessor, Mentor or Reader. This is an increase on the results of the 2019 survey, in which only 33% of respondents who reported they were Accredited also reported serving as a PACR Assessor, mentor or reader.

However, the result in the 2022 survey reflects the types of members who responded to the survey, as the actual proportion as recorded by Icon’s Professional Development Team is closer to 25% across the total ranks of Accredited members.<sup>2</sup>

Have you served on an Icon Board of Trustees, Group or Committee in the last three years?

While nearly 70% of respondents reported they had not served on an Icon Board, Group or Committee in the last three years, the framing of this question to focus on recent activism would exclude those among this constituency who have long histories in the organisation and have indeed served Icon in such a capacity.

Of those who had, the majority were Accredited members (52%), had joined Icon at convergence (35%), and were employed on permanent contracts (54%).

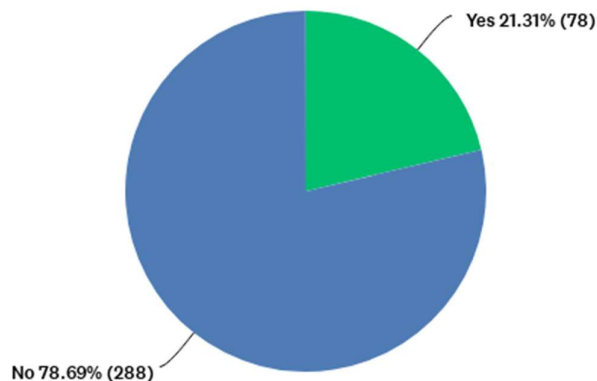


Figure 32. Proportion of respondents who have served on an Icon Board of Trustees, Group or Committee in the last three year

What was your motivation for getting involved?

Motivation reported by those serving Icon on various voluntary committees remains largely unchanged compared to the 2019 survey.

The majority of respondents (51%) who had been active on an Icon Board of Trustees, Group or Committee in the last three years reported a desire to support or contribute to the profession as their primary motive for getting involved. Second to this was a desire to foster interpersonal and professional networks (33%). Professional development (14%) and peer pressure (5%) were also determining motivations.

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<sup>2</sup> Patrick.

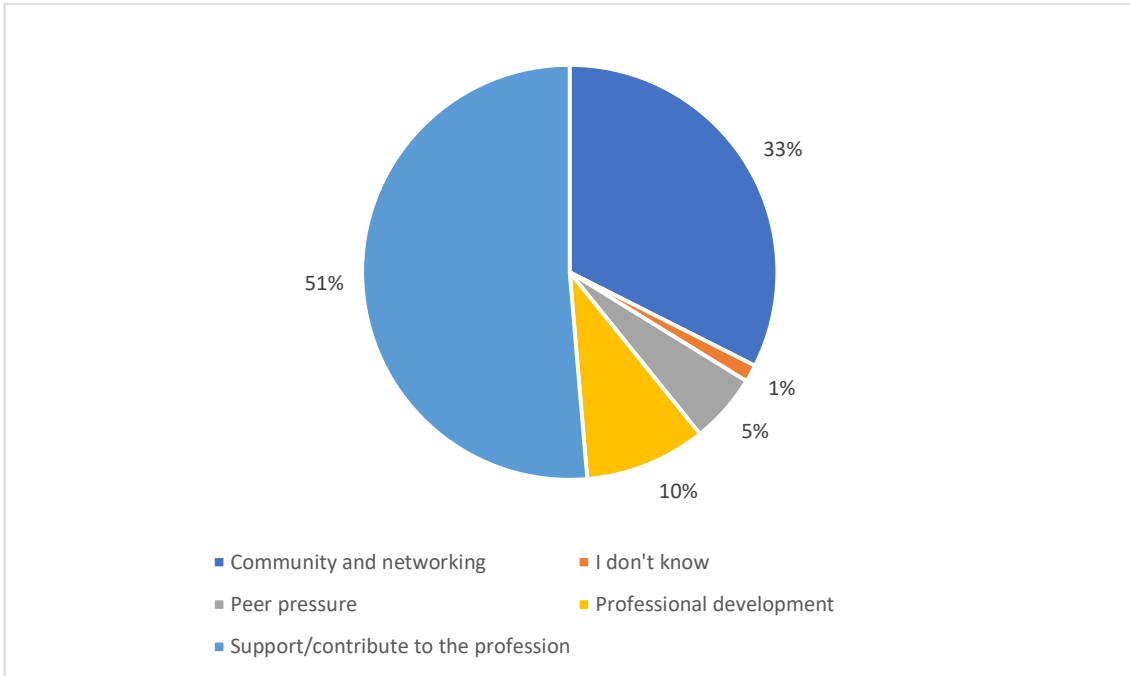


Figure 33. What was your motivation for getting involved?

Do you feel that your skills and understanding have been enhanced as a result?

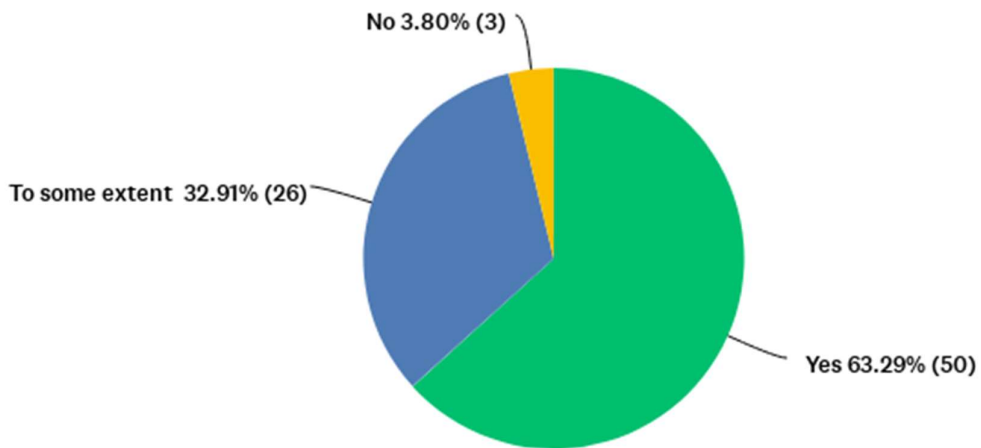


Figure 34. Do you feel that your skills and understanding have been enhanced as a result?

Have the networks and relationships that you established within Icon as a result of your activism been valuable to your career?

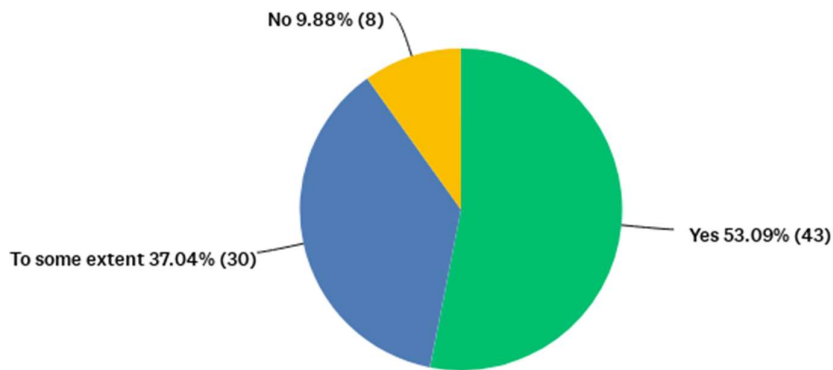


Figure 35. Respondents who found the networks and relationships derived from Icon activism had provided career benefit

There was no discernible pattern among those who reported the networks and relationships established within Icon as a result of their activism had been valuable to their careers.

Do you feel that your activism has made your membership of Icon more enjoyable?

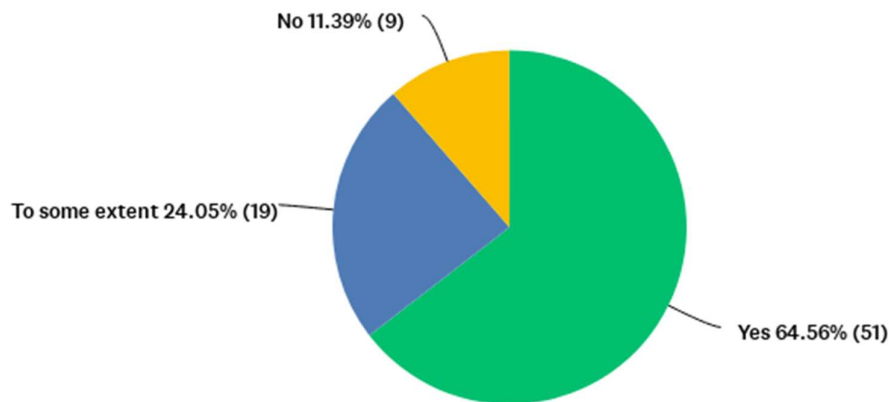


Figure 36. Has your activism made your membership of Icon more enjoyable?

There was no discernible pattern among those who reported that their activism had not made their membership of Icon more enjoyable.

## What might make it easier to get involved?

Among the free-text responses to this question, clear majority of respondents indicated they would find it easier to get involved if they had more time. A distant second contingent spoke of a lack of awareness about available roles, coupled with an ambiguity about what they entailed, prevented them from getting involved. Also prominent among the responses who were those who had already put in their time volunteering in the service of the profession.

Other responses included:

- Any Chair of a Group is wrestling with this question as it is like drawing Hens teeth to get members to involve themselves in any way. Publicity and a return to physical events - it is much easier to say you are busy and cant help remotely, much harder to back out of helping on a Committee when appealed to in person.
- There is a complete lack of understanding from many members, I believe, that a lot of Icon's work is done by volunteers, and a misperception that there might be a huge team of paid staff. I think people do not realise how critical volunteers are to providing events and training in particular and that this should be shouted about more. In turn, this might convince more employers to allow interested employees some time to pursue voluntary activities for Icon. This was definitely a barrier I faced - only allowed a few hours a year for Icon activities which the pushed these into my personal life which became unsustainable. So big, vocal shout-outs to employers who do support their staff standing for committees / as trustees! Might encourage others to do the same...
- have been involved in the past - done my bit!
- I am now rather old, and have little time. Also I find ICON is advocating more diverse issues which I don not understand, or seem a long way from the issues I have to contend with. I'm obviously out of touch.
- I don't see opportunities come up very often. Conservation can feel a little bit clique-ish sometimes, I don't feel like I can easily jump in without knowing anyone.
- I think I would be more keen to get involved if I felt the accreditation status system was fair
- I think it is easy enough. I did not experience many barriers to participation early in my career apart from the snobbery (academic and sociology-economic) of some senior professionals, and unfortunately that persists but it is a small but mere the less annoying minority imo. I think that if anything there are fewer barriers to participation now then when I first started my career. Basically if you want to get involved you can.
- I think it's already a lot easier thanks to the greater use of technology. For those of us who live and work away from the big cities, being able to take part remotely makes an enormous difference.
- Icon actually thanking their volunteers.. I have served on 3 committees since being a student in varying capacities, some of this has been considerable hours of work. Although there is comradery and thanks within the committee (also of volunteers) and members attending events, I have never been thanked by the organisation (staff, trustees, head) of icon in any way. Also I now unable to do this volunteer work



within work time, this was easier as a student and intern. Icon need to promote volunteering for committees to employers ahead of employees so work time can be given over to this, otherwise it becomes very difficult.

- Icon could rely less on the groups to get things done,
- If there were more people involved. If there was more happening and it was fun. Often it is very tedious and full of paperwork. It is a very large burden on the small number of volunteers. I have to take days off work to do any of this as my employer will not support this.
- It's really disappointing to see people in positions of authority in Icon that do not have very much experience in conservation.
- More diversity, stronger vision, engagement with policy makers and clear achievements with influencing and championing conservation and heritage
- more focus on the conservators and people in the profession - we need advocates.
- more options, different ways to apply, real life examples of other's involvement
- More roles, more openness to newcomers
- More time! No barriers that ICON can help with!
- Postings for volunteering calls, much like the job listings
- Stay on zoom - I would have applied to be a trustee last round but there was desire within the existing board that the meetings (in London) should resume in person at some point.
- The number of groups and committees and how they integrate into the organisation can be difficult to keep track of

## Icon members and CPD

### What does CPD mean to you?

'It's about investing in yourself and your future,' wrote one respondent.

Notions of professionalism and professional skills development, closely tied to personal reflection and self-improvement, were prominent among the responses. Respondents wrote of their motivation to become the best conservators they could be, and anticipated easier working lives as a result. 'Hearing other's experiences or having access to expertise and resources greatly helps us in day to day operations.'

CPD was 'a way of ensuring that I am up to date on all skills and knowledge that I need to do my job well'. A sense of responsibility for cultural heritage was a motivating factor cited by some. Constant learning was necessary 'so I can best represent the conservation community and serve the cultural heritage I care for.'

A minority of respondents emphasised less positive elements: it was mandatory to maintain their Accredited status, a 'necessary evil', a 'chore', and something that posed real time constraints. It was a 'a periodic, patronising irritant,' wrote one respondent. As one respondent explained, 'there are things that class as CPD that i do and do because i enjoy it and its relevant to what i do but a lot feels force on me and being done merely to tick a box'.



Figure 37. Wordcloud: 'What does CPD mean to you?'

Other responses varied:

- A constant renewal: reflection, pursuit of knowledge, being the best conservator I am capable of being
- A continuation of standards
- A frequent personal check on aims and objectives, in terms of learning, and regular recording of things learnt, reflecting on how the information can be used by me, and how it is passed on to others, and where there are gaps in knowledge.
- A natural and necessary part of professional practice
- 'A necessary evil' (x2)
- A proven constant/yearly updating of professional education; familiarity with development of materials and techniques within the conservators field of practice. It should be something that the public rely on and trust, that standards are maintained, when they engage the services of a professional in the heritage sector.

- Apart from being necessary to maintain my accredited status, it prompts me to keep up with current practice which seems to be more difficult when self-employed & working alone.
- ensuring that you keep up with current research and ideas, that you ensure you are striving for excellence and improvement in all aspects of work. that you care enough about your profession to always challenge what you learned and how you do things.
- Early career it meant taking every training opportunity available, attending every lecture and event. Now it means always questioning and considering what is the right decision, the right approach, the right material or technique. Also listening to the views and approaches of others and reflecting on their and my own practice. Formal CPD is less important
- I find it rather depressing when I review the past 4 Or 5 years and find what I wanted to do I have been unable to do. I'm not actually sure if CPD helps me except to impress on my employers my need for extra training. It seems to be more of giving an account of myself over the past 4 or 5 years.
- I would like to do more but my employer has been unsupportive. I try to attend a day /multi-day conference every 2 years but the travel and costs are very expensive and I never get this from my employer. But I do take holiday time to do this. I value it.
- It is a good reminder to search resources and develop my skills and knowledge. On the other hand, it means a lot of unnecessary stress when I am overwhelmed by my work commitments and do not have enough time to do extra things. I don't think it is very true to say that CPD can be done whenever and be a part of my work. Work-related learning is not considered valuable enough and meticulous planning is necessary for me to fill yet another form with CPD activities that fit my profile and action plan. In the end I don't attend as many events that I find purely interesting (but not predicted by my action plan) as it is hard for me to justify time out of work.
- It is very important to keep learning as the knowledge and skills of the field keep evolving! As an objects conservator, needing to adapt to different work situation and also to care for diverse materials types within a collection, hearing other's experiences or having access to expertise and resources greatly helps us in day to day operations.
- something i have to do to tick a box which i don't really have time for.
- When entered into honestly, pro-actively and with consideration, CPD is an opportunity to grow and develop as a practitioner, professional and person. The proscribed nature of the process can be a burden, however, especially in challenging times. Fundamentally it is a requirement of Accredited status and its worth is always tempered with the ability or opportunity to take the time and meet the costs associated with the process.

What further support from Icon would help you in your CPD?

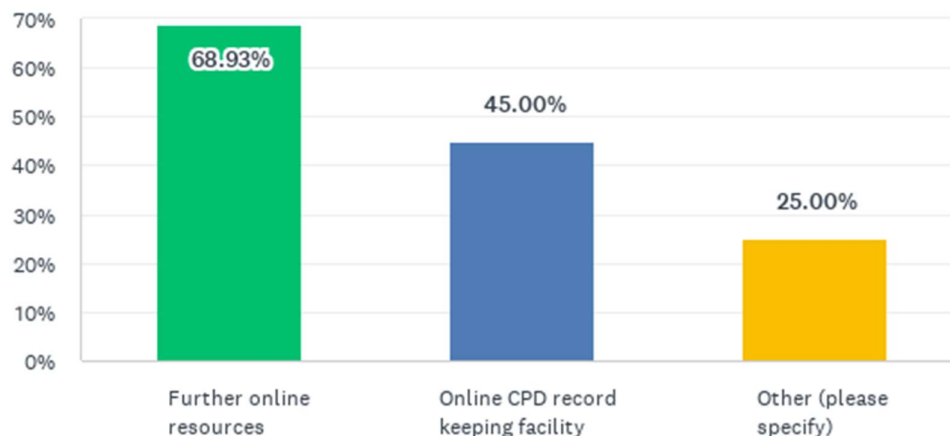


Figure 38. What further support from Icon would help you in your CPD?

Other (please specify):

- A way of somehow recognising that 40 hrs practical work practicing a new skill in the privacy of ones workplace is just as valuable as attending some seminar or other but is essentially unrecognisable for CPD purposes. Saying this I fully appreciate how difficult to define this would be.
- As mentioned before, grants and discounts are very welcome and most needed, especially for independent conservators.
- Essentials training suite relevant to conservators, similar to that offered by the Museums Association but more focused on conservators and how we fit into and can work across different organisation/business structures
- Funding to attend events
- Having a system that can also be used for Museums Association and IHBC
- I feel very well supported by ICON in my CPD. I think the online CPD log is really useful, although I often forget to fill it in (!). I also like the banner on the website that provided ideas for CPD activities, showing how broadly one can think about CPD. The specialism focussed webinars are also a super idea
- Maybe there should be a cost-free, basic level of CPD offered and required, for continuing professional membership of the association.
- noticeboard to offer secondment opportunities between institutions, where colleagues can advertise the work/ project they do and invite other conservators to join in as a development opportunity. I for example would love to be involved in a big exhibition install, but my institution does not do exhibitions.

## Icon's Strategic Priorities

How far do you agree the following are important priorities for Icon?

In this section, respondents were provided with a list of potential strategic priorities and asked to indicate whether they agreed they were important, using a five-point scale ranging from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*. There was a distinct tendency for respondents to indicate they were neutral towards some of the options presented, and very few respondents disagreed outright with the options presented.

The priorities garnering the most *Strongly Agree* or *Agree* responses were:

1. Promote the value of conservation to nonspecialists audiences
2. Deliver CPD opportunities
3. Advocate for the profession to policy makers
4. Attract funding for internships
5. Support the work of Icon's Groups within the specialisms

The priorities about with respondents disagreed or were the most neutral were:

1. Develop the membership offer for conservators outside the UK
2. Achieve Chartered body status
3. Increase the visibility, recognition and take-up of Icon Accreditation
4. Secure financial benefits for Icon members
5. Attain greater international recognition for the skills and status of Icon members

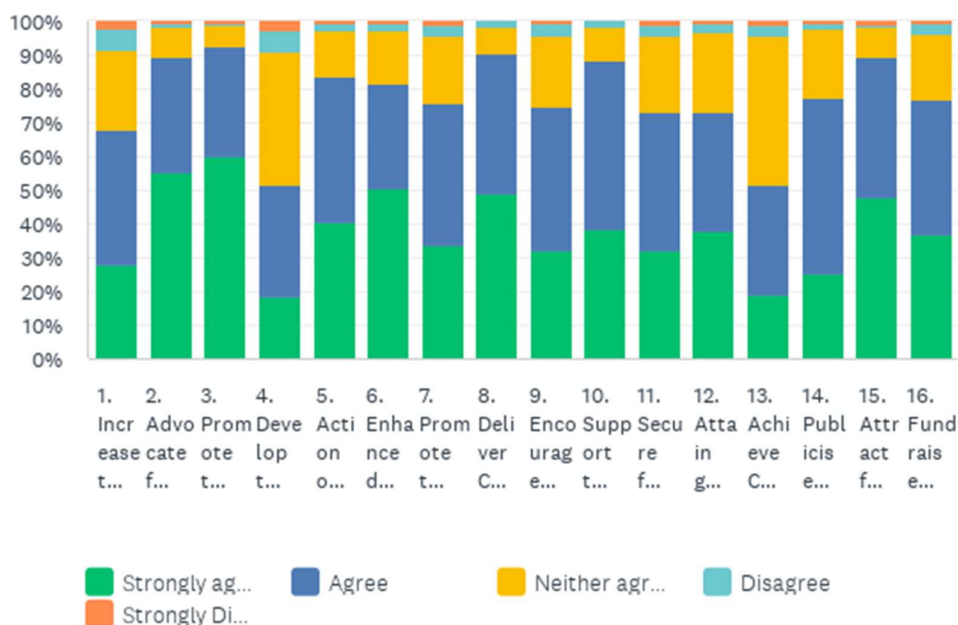


Figure 39. How far do you agree that the following are important strategic priorities for Icon? Legend on following page.

**Legend – Strategic Priorities:**

1. Increase the visibility, recognition and take-up of Icon Accreditation
2. Advocate for the profession to policymakers
3. Promote the value of conservation to non-specialist audiences
4. Develop the membership offer for conservators outside the UK
5. Action on environmental sustainability in conservation
6. Enhance diversity and inclusion in the conservation profession
7. Promote the Conservation Register to employers and the public
8. Deliver CPD opportunities
9. Encourage young people to aspire to careers in conservation
10. Support the work of Icon's Groups within the specialisms
11. Secure financial benefits for Icon members
12. Attain greater international recognition for the skills and status of Icon members
13. Achieve Chartered body status
14. Publicise the major achievements of Icon members
15. Attract funding for internships
16. Fundraise to subsidise the costs associated with professional progression

## Icon's Achievements

In recent years projects Icon has completed the following projects. How far do you agree these projects are valuable?

As in the previous section, respondents were provided with a list of recent Icon projects asked to indicate whether they agreed they were valuable, using a five-point scale ranging from *Strongly Agree* to *Strongly Disagree*. There was again a distinct tendency for respondents to indicate ambivalence, and very few respondents disagreed outright with the options presented.

The projects garnering the most *Strongly Agree* or *Agree responses*: the strongest options:

1. Launch of Icon's Environmental Sustainability Network and Action Plan
2. Launch of new Icon Ethical Guidance
3. Lobbying for Coronavirus support
4. Fundraising campaign for sponsored Student and international memberships
5. Icon Diversity and Inclusion Task and Finish Group

The Projects about with respondents disagreed or were the most neutral about were:

1. Launch of online conservation assessments
2. Care of Collections Stimulus Fund
3. 'Values of Conservation' advocacy campaign (research report and toolkit)

- 4. Online coronavirus support hub
- 5. Conservation Together at Home webinar series

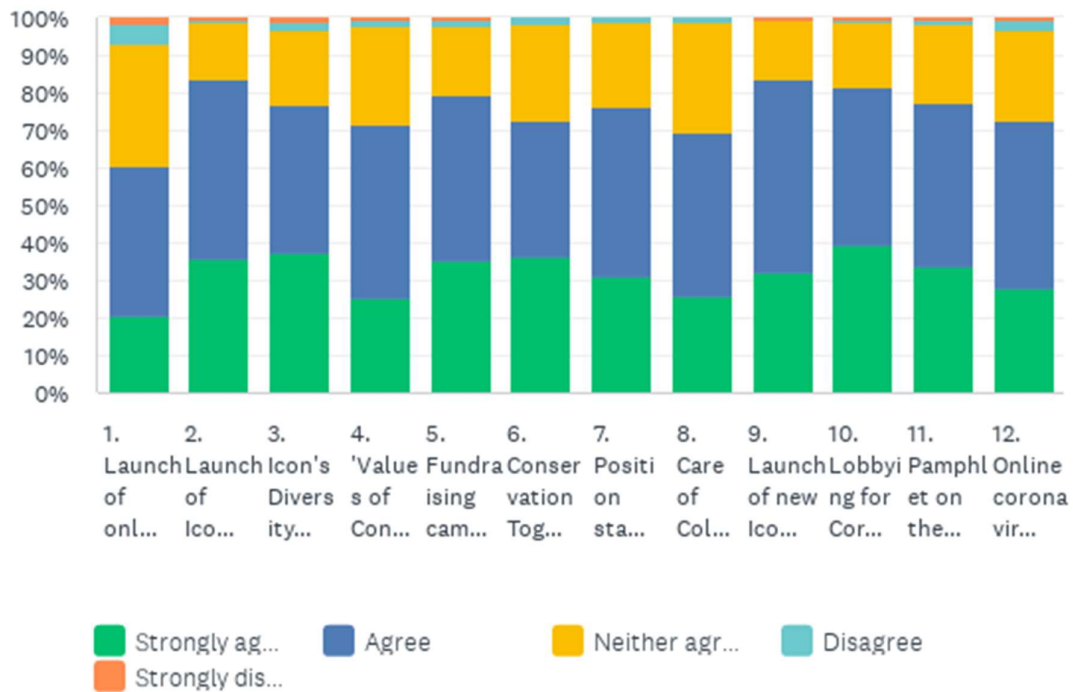


Figure 40. How far do you agree these recent projects are valuable?

**Legend – Recent projects:**

- 1. Launch of online conservation assessments
- 2. Launch of Icon's Environmental Sustainability Network and Action Plan
- 3. Icon's Diversity and Inclusion Task and Finish Group
- 4. 'Values of Conservation' advocacy campaign (research report and toolkit)
- 5. Fundraising campaign for sponsored Student and international memberships
- 6. Conservation Together at Home webinar series
- 7. Position statement on the value of care of collections professions
- 8. Care of Collections Stimulus Fund
- 9. Launch of new Icon Ethical Guidance
- 10. Lobbying for Coronavirus support
- 11. Pamphlet on the economic benefits of conservation
- 12. Online coronavirus support hub for Icon members

Have you read Icon's Impact Report for 2020-21?

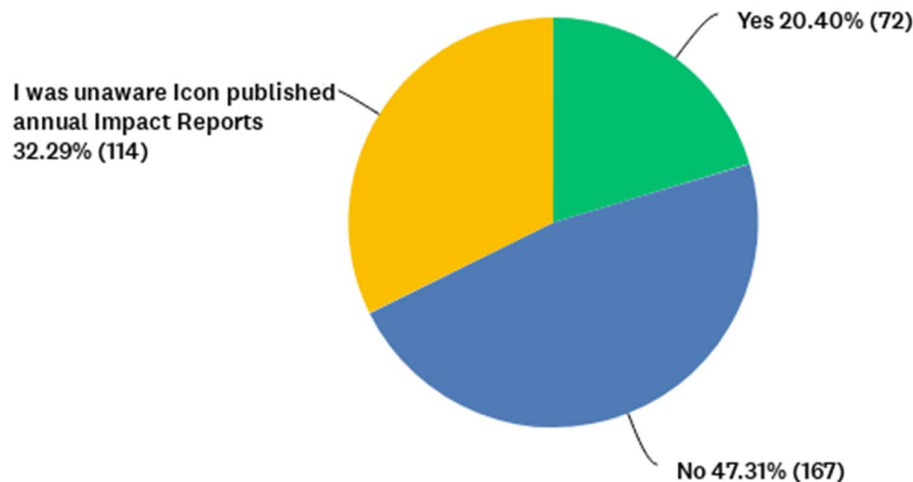


Figure 41. Have you read Icon's Impact Report for 2020-21?

## Overall member satisfaction with Icon

### What does Icon do well?

Respondents identified one of Icon's core aims – to connect the diversity of specialists across the conservation sector – as something the organisation did particularly well. In second place behind this was Icon's events and CPD programmes. Advocacy and publications were thirdly well regarded by survey respondents.

Other responses included:

- resourceful professional body; - offers good CPD resources; - it has been successfully reinventing itself (in my point of view) in the last years. Some points listed here on the Icon's priorities are still a step below of the others, but it seems Icon is willing to achieve them. :)
- Act as the outward facing single voice for the conservation profession; manage and deliver Accreditation; response to pandemic and support for members; good communications (Icon News, I-connect, jobs etc)
- Elitism, cliques, self aggrandisement and London-centricism
- Everything really but I have particularly benefited from study days & conferences, getting the chance to emerge from isolation and mix with colleagues.



- Everything. I have benefitted from the publications and from online meetings. I enjoy reading submissions to the website, including things like "My Favourite Tool".
- I think Icon is really good at trying to raise awareness of conservation. The question is just whether it reaches the right or important audiences. I would also say that it is really good at giving as much support to its members as possible. I also think that the events program, lectures, courses is really good.
- I was interested to read the list of projects in Q.65, but rather embarrassed that I was not aware of many of them. I wonder why I missed them?
- I'm not sure. As a very long term member I'm not sure my employment situation and freelance work has been improved by anything icon have done. My salary as an employee has fallen against the cost of living. My freelance work has been squeezed so much from new and previously employed conservators perusing freelance clients. I've lost clients to accredited conservators undercutting my prices. Clients have less and less money to spend on conservation, more conservators are working freelance, so much more competition from very much less experienced conservators. Major museums and historic libraries still using untrained restorers and bookbinders because they are cheaper.
- ICON is aware of the changing times and continues to stay relevant as a conservation body during times of pandemic as well.
- ICON responded well to Pandemic making an effort to include membership with online activities, events, resources, much better than some other organisations and for a conservator outside the UK I was able to attend meetings and an AGM which I had not been able to do for some years, due to geography and time required to travel to events
- It is a well run membership organisation. It operates and maintains a world calls Accreditation standard with CPD and development opportunities. It has. A useful website and delivers the conservation register. It enables specialist groups and associates events.
- It is the UK's professional conservation body. A reference! It serves its members and helps groups manage their events in an efficient manner. It tries to promote conservators and conservation to a wider public and to policymakers (or so it seems), it supported CRs throughout the pandemic and keeps us interconnected.
- Never discriminates. Reacts to change well. (Unlike ICOMCC). Friendly and inviting,
- offers members better resources than previously. Adapted well to Covid restrictions. Professional development.
- Projecting a professional image, the website looks good and most documents are presented well. The journal is very good and important in order to compete with IIC and ICOM-CC.

### What development opportunities are there for Icon?

A number of key themes emerged in this free-text response section. In order of the frequency with which respondents cited these development opportunities for Icon, they are:

1. Increase member benefits
2. Attain greater public recognition for conservation
3. Advocacy
4. Action on diversity and inclusion in the sector
5. Expand internationally
6. Attain Chartered status
7. Wider range of partnerships with allied bodies
8. Improve Conservation Register
9. Boost takeup of Accreditation
10. Assist conservators with Brexit-related challenges

Among the responses:

### ***Increase member benefits***

- I think Icon needs to provide more to its members, we pay a membership fee, yet still have to pay for Icon events (even though the prices are reduced). Since the Icon new journals have an option to be online instead of receiving a printed version, I'm not clear on what my membership fee goes towards.
- I think it would be amazing if icon could have an almost workplace union role (this might be a pipedream), and work to fight against precarious contracts, I know several people who have had to leave the profession because of this.
- more training for mid carrier conservators and for people who would like to become conservators, cheaper attendance fees for conferences
- more welcoming for encouraging involvement from members, changing how news reaches members - review icon newsletter format
- To find away of making some training courses more accessible, both in terms of cost for those on limited incomes and also geographically as, for example, a course in London at £120 for a morning + travel and overnight accommodation for me in reality is over £300 and totally out of the question. Look into regional training opportunities

### ***Attain greater public recognition for conservation***

- Engaging with employers in general, more than museums and stately homes, putting down prejudices against art dealers and collectors, raising their awareness to the benefits of professional and good quality conservation/restoration.
- Expand the benefits of Conservation & Restoration to the general public who in the most part are unaware of the amount of work that goes in the background of their lives.
- I feel like Icon could really promote the conservation register more, and could really develop it into a great place for public interaction rather than internal interaction.
- If conservation is not to fade into obscurity among all the other requirements of life ICON needs to develop greater recognition of its members professional status to the general public. Currently it is hard to persuade members of the public that our time is worth the same hourly rate as their hairdresser or garage mechanic. ICON might also push harder to the Heritage sector to value its conservators more highly, wages are

currently low and if ICON wants more people to stay in the profession it needs to increase pressure on organisations to provide a living wage.

- If we can have Digging for Britain, why not conserving for Britain. Many people are interested in the Repair Shop: could conservation do something similar?
- Raising their profile so that they are an internationally recognized body outside of our profession and sector. Then the public would actually know what we do and why it's valuable.
- To embed in the public consciousness that it is the UK body for conservators, to get the public to understand what conservation is, to get a recognition that caring for material culture is not just a nice to have. To get recognition on The Repair Shop and The Antiques Roadshow.

### ***Advocacy***

- Advocacy Support of UK conservation sector, members and potential members Reigniting the case for accredited conservators to be necessary for funding bodies and the biggest UK heritage organisations
- I like the greater focus on advocacy and I think this is an area that can be built upon. I think it is not just outward reaching to government etc but also to organisations key employers who can in my experience place greater value (literal and cultural) on other areas than conservation, while being v dependent on conservation. I would personally like some cpd on being better able to articulate my value and my professions value, to those who employ us.
- If this means what could Icon do better (?) I would say, set up a conservation economics task group to review the sector as a small business professional economy and how better to support it, both in policy as well as in activity
- Look into and advocate regarding the issues with limited specific conservator roles within the heritage sector. I have had to diversify my skills into other elements of museum work to be able to still occasionally apply my practical skills. Small / medium museums cannot easily afford the services of conservators.
- Speaking up more against poor practice - such as cowboy and outdated procedures we are seeing constantly on prime time tv currently. NOTHING WHATSOEVER IS SAID BY ICON - they don't stand up! It's sheer cowardice

### ***Action on diversity and inclusion in the sector***

- Clear leadership in equity and inclusion - accessibility online retained, subtitling for conferences, optimising text and publications for dyslexia
- Find a way to encourage engagement with conservation at an early age within culturally diverse groups.
- More accessible to people from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.
- Stop running a two tier system for accredited and non-accredited conservators. We are all equally important. When you advertise for campaigns (like recently, where you invited members to share their conservation stories), actually respond to questions about that. I feel like a lot of these campaigns where you ask for input from members is not going anywhere. Make sure you are more equal in your representation of all conservators. Not just the big players. It always feels like ICON is shining the light on the

same people, or same groups. Some conservators need a nudge! They won't tell you unless asked.

### **Expand internationally**

- Developing international ties. One way could be facilitating or encouraging students and interns from abroad to gain experience in the UK.
- International promotion of your established accreditation process, to make the ACR status an internationally known and recognized status.
- To open its offices in other regions of Europe

### Are you satisfied with Icon?

Overall, 80% of respondents reported they were *Satisfied* or *Mostly Satisfied* with Icon. This is a slight improvement on the 2019 survey results, in which 78.6% of respondents reported they were satisfied with Icon.

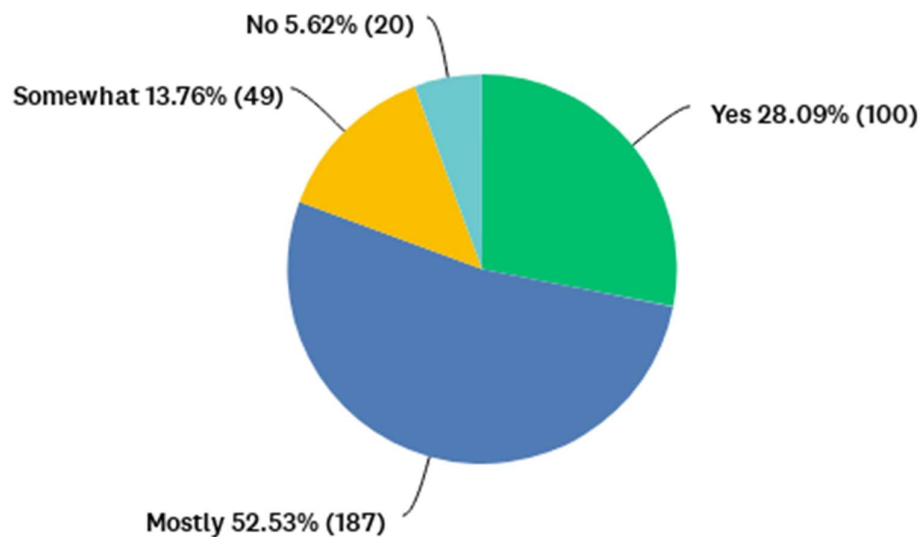


Figure 42. Are you satisfied with Icon?

Why or why not?

Among the responses:

### **Critical**

- Difficulty finding guidance particularly as someone who has gained their experience on the job rather than through higher education. I don't feel I have a place in ICON. I don't

know what advice there is for me, what opportunities there are. I feel rather adrift and, slightly, unwanted.

- Expensive membership, board members too remote/unapproachable
- Fine for the networking, conferences, accreditation. Not for feeling that one really is involved even when on committees. The drag feeling that the Central Icon employed core has little understanding of the volunteer group efforts, and the endless hassle that the poor treasurers always report (though there appears at last some improvement there), or of the private sector. This creates an unhappy them-us experience, reported far more amongst those who are not on committees than those who are. Icon missed a trick not getting on to of the Repair Workshop on tv - to prevent the negative effects of expectations raised by their unethical practices impacting on visitor & client expectations
- I am accredited, so tied in to paying fees for the rest of my career (which could be 30 years) and see no benefit of being a member. ICON News is pitched at a very low level - I understand this is for accessibility, but it feels written for the public, not for the profession. And the journal rarely has articles of relevance to me. The events are still often too expensive to attend. Accreditation would have more value to me if it was a chartership, where it meant something to anyone outside of the profession. I am only a member of ICON for my accreditation, which I feel I must keep for a few more years, and then I intend to let it go and save the money.
- I am finding it increasingly alienating as someone who has not been able to get accredited. I feel like all the focus is now on this and I understand the value of it but there are many reasons why someone may not have been accredited yet and should still be a valued member of the profession
- I think ICON could be more pro-active in commenting on issues that are in the public eye that relate to our profession. I would have liked to see ICON make a strong statement about the recent acquittal of people for the destruction of a scheduled monument statue, not specifically about the jury's decision but the likely consequences for our built heritage.
- Icon is run top-down which isn't democratic even though it is a membership organisation. Public sector workers have louder voices but aren't in touch with what it is like to work commercially. Icon is vulnerable to being hijacked by strong personalities. There is a lack of transparency about decision making and finances. I'd like to see an annual financial report aimed at the members so we can see where our money is being spent.
- It can feel like Icon sometimes works on the assumption that a conservators are accredited, which is not the reality for a lot of conservators, especially emerging professionals. With the talk of becoming a chartered profession, I worry non-accredited conservators will be left behind and it will be even harder to find work without accreditation (which then makes it even more difficult to get accreditation, since you need the work to be able to gain and show competency).
- Not a strong enough voice outside the sector.
- Sadly, I feel that Icon isn't really value for money. Membership is very expensive and the cost doesn't reflect the product. The monthly publications could easily be digital and provide a discount. With rising cost of living and poor wages within the sector, the renewal fee is something dreaded by many.

### ***Neutral***

- Always balk a bit at cost of ACR membership when am only very part-time self employed. But do value the achievement and recognise importance of supporting newer generations.
- For the cost of some training, I'd like to learn more outside and around my professionalism but again, costs are often too high to attend 'out of interest'
- I have to admit I am coming from the privileged perspective of someone who works at a large institution which receives the journal, Icon News, and which would pay for me to attend conferences and courses. I do find myself feeling like I'm just paying to be a member of Icon because it is 'expected' of me.
- I want members to know that they are Icon and not just members of a society run by someone else. I want the self-employed to have a better chance at joining in - institutional members are over-represented and it's easy for them to volunteer for everything, they may even get recognition in their own organisations for doing that, the self-employed have to give up active working hours to do anything. As a consequence, the specific needs of the self-employed are not always understood. I know Icon can't force a university to offer a course specific to our profession but they can (and do) advocate, perhaps it would be possible to link a (funding) donor organisation with a specific course to encourage a university to take it on. However that can be done, Icon still needs to be involved in the specifics offered on a course, otherwise the graduates will wander over to accreditation 5 years later and find out they don't have the right skills etc..
- There seems a conflict with what ICON wants to be and what its members want - the members want ICON to be their voice in the profession, but ICON wants to be heard about the objects the profession work on
- This survey has flagged to me that I am not aware of a lot of what Icon is doing, why am I missing this?

### ***Complimentary***

- Being part of Icon, 6,000 miles away from the UK, gives me the security of belonging to a bigger group and keeping connected to many great conservators with similar interests and fears.
- During lockdowns and being in another country I have found the Icon has through all its offerings ensured I feel part of a community and can continue my professional development, helping me to grow as a conservator
- I feel more comfortable with Icon than with AIC. It is well worth the cost of membership, even if I cannot attend events in person.
- I see a big improvement since Sarah Croft joined Icon, in relation to engagement and support for members in all forms, especially for the self-employed. I think Icon is going on the right path, just keep going!
- It does what I expect it to. It's relatively expensive (compared to IIC or ICOM) but I feel the benefits of membership make it a worthwhile expense.
- With limited resources I think Icon pitches above its weight. And conservators are difficult to please, well done for putting up with us.

- Being part of Icon, 6,000 miles away from the UK, gives me the security of belonging to a bigger group and keeping connected to many great conservators with similar interests and fears.
- I believe that Icon are trying to do the best to promote the profession in the public domain. I appreciate that you are unable to please all members all of the time and are limited financially regarding the areas they choose to focus on.
- I feel it is important to have an official Conservation body to represent the profession and they do well within the tight resources they have. I struggle to give time to this organisation which may be an issue for many others which it relies on for input. Fundraising for more staff and bursaries for work with ICON might be an idea. I do not feel very engaged with ICON currently due to the pandemic and time to look through what it offers so am struggling to answer this in any meaningful way!
- ICON has been a fantastic constant for me from the beginning of being a student to the start of being a professional, I have felt supported but also challenged to be a contributing part of the conservation 'team' that ICON represents.
- Icon supports a huge number of professionals working in many facets of the conservation field from student level to through to the highest level professionals. There will always be gaps, however Icon is able to at least provide some content to satisfy every need.