



icon

THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Values of conservation

a research and engagement project

Icon is an ambitious advocacy body.

Icon is a charity and membership organisation seeking to create positive change for cultural heritage by championing conservation.

From the Magna Carta to your grandmother's jewellery to your favourite book - we aim to preserve the items that matter most and to advance public understanding of conservation.

Find out more: www.icon.org.uk



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

Content

SECTION ONE - INTRODUCTION

Aims and objectives

Research context

Methodology

SECTION TWO - FINDINGS

The Conversation

The Grapevine

Both sides of the bench

SECTION THREE - A VALUES TOOLKIT

The what, how and why

Approaches to messaging

Audience-first

SECTION FOUR - CONCLUSION

Summing up

Next steps



1 Introduction

"we need to get better at explaining and demonstrating how conservation supports knowledge and understanding, national and local economies, a sense of identity, enhanced wellbeing and empowered communities"

AIMS & OBJECTIVES

Articulating the values of conservation

Icon's charitable object is to "advance the education of the public by research into and the promotion of the conservation of items and collections of cultural, aesthetic, historic and scientific value."

This project was developed in response to Icon's mission. In 2020, we launched a new research and engagement project to ensure that we can promote conservation effectively and make it more widely understood and appreciated. The Values of Conservation project sought out to identify and articulate the values of cultural heritage conservation to society.

The act of conserving cultural heritage objects and collections makes a significant contribution to society. It contributes to knowledge and understanding, national and local economies, a sense of identity, enhanced wellbeing and empowered communities. While we at Icon may know these values and benefits, we recognise that we need to get better at communicating them, particularly to a lay audience.

Similarly, while there are many studies demonstrating the value of cultural heritage; we wanted to understand and articulate the value of *the act of* conserving cultural heritage.

The research is timely as the Coronavirus pandemic and economic downturn have placed even more urgency on articulating the value of what Icon and its members do. In the aftermath of the pandemic, all sectors are being called on to describe their contribution to economic rebuilding and society's recovery. Widespread understanding of the core values of conservation are essential to evidencing our relevance and making a successful case for support.

The project aimed to

- Investigate what values characterise conservation and make its contribution to society distinctive.
- Engage conservators and non-conservators in an open discussion on what they think the values of conservation are.
- Collect statements from conservators and non-conservators on the values of conservation to inspire and inform messaging.
- Develop a Values Toolkit with tips on communicating arguments effectively to lay audiences.

This report summarises the results of the research.

The rest of this chapter introduces the research context of the project and outlines our methodology. Section 2 focuses on the findings of our engagement exercises with conservators and the public, explaining different stages of the research from our discussions on social media to our dedicated steering group. In Section 3 we provide a summary of values and demonstrate different approaches to communicating them. We have done our best to present the values in clear and engaging language so that we can demonstrate the positive effect of conservation activities on society, the economy and the individual.

The report concludes with an outline of Icon's next steps and a call to action for all those involved in conservation to be bold and creative in promoting their value.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

Categorising values

This research builds on Icon's previous advocacy work as well as an extensive body of research on the value and impacts of cultural heritage.

To avoid reinventing the wheel, and to allow us to focus on the engagement aspect of the project, we decided to use the values framework provided by others and already in use by Icon as a starting point for our conversations.

In 2018-19, Icon developed a suite of messaging resources that aim to translate what cultural heritage conservation means for us in our everyday lives as individuals, communities and a society. Icon's messages were categorised thematically under 5 main headings: cultural heritage, skills and learning, people and communities, the economy and business, and sustainability.

Based on Icon's long history and experience within the sector, research, evidence and case studies, the messages were created to serve as reliable sources of information on the benefits of conservation to society. The messages were developed in consultation with our Policy Advisory Panel, which consists of 100+ Icon members across conservation specialisms, sectors and geographies, to ensure the diverse views of the conservation sector were gathered, analysed and used to inform key phrases.

RESEARCH CONTEXT

The categorisation of Icon's values is supported by literature on cultural heritage values. A literature review of values research showed consensus amongst how values and impacts are categorised. Two of our main sources - Historic England and Cultural Heritage for Europe - differentiate between economic and societal/ cultural benefits, with the latter offering a further breakdown of these values into cultural, social, economic and environmental.

While both sources look at heritage values from a macro level as opposed to focusing on a specific heritage subsector's values, the classification of values corresponds with the breakdown of Icon's own messages. For this reason, we decided to use our existing messages to jumpstart our conversations with stakeholders. We adopted the Cultural Heritage for Europe categories of cultural, social, economic and environmental value to streamline our classification and to ensure our research aligned with the work of others. Icon's values messages are presented in the following pages while a summary of our key sources is in Appendix 1.

Icon values categories

Conservation and cultural heritage

People and communities

Skills, learning and education

The economy, business and innovation

Sustainability

Cultural Heritage for Europe values categories

Cultural

Social (including education)

Economic

Environmental

ICON MESSAGE

Access to culture

Conservation physically saves cultural heritage, allowing for items to be displayed, researched and used. This facilitates learning from the past that can help solve modern problems.

Collective memory and value

From financial to cultural value, conservation protects the values and significance of cultural heritage.

Knowledge and understanding

Conservation helps us to understand our cultural heritage by increasing knowledge of its physical and intangible characteristics.

Sense of identity

Conservation enables cultural heritage to enrich the lives of individuals by nurturing a sense of identity and promoting a positive connection to a shared past.

Belonging and inclusion

By drawing on diverse perspectives, lived experiences and cultural knowledge, conservation can help preserve the achievements and histories of all peoples so they are acknowledged and celebrated.

Skills

An education in conservation contributes to a future-proof workforce through a high level of professional training and the delivery of STEM and creative and crafts skills.

CULTURAL

SOCIAL

ECONOMIC

SUSTAINABILITY



Innovation and creativity
 Conservation preserves the source material of our future artists and cultural professionals, driving innovation across the arts and creative industries.

Participation
 Participation in conservation can help people build confidence, self-esteem and future employability through the acquisition of new skills and knowledge.

Sense of place
 Conservation supports healthy communities by preserving cultural heritage, which gives places their character, brings communities together and fosters pride of place.

Volunteering
 The conservation sector helps people build social connections through a range of volunteering opportunities that encourage individuals to work together in a positive atmosphere.

Social prescription
 The conservation sector can help save money in health services by offering activities for social prescription schemes.

Mitigation and adaptation
 Conservator-restorers can provide knowledge and expertise to protect and conserve at risk heritage and to inform mitigation and adaptation responses to climate emergency.

Sustainable techniques
 Conservation and heritage science can be used to understand and demonstrate the impacts of climate change and make informed predictions.

	CULTURAL	SOCIAL	ECONOMIC	SUSTAINABILITY
Innovation and creativity	✓	✓	✓	
Participation		✓		
Sense of place	✓	✓		
Volunteering		✓	✓	
Social prescription		✓	✓	
Mitigation and adaptation	✓		✓	✓
Sustainable techniques	✓		✓	✓

Climate change communication

Cultural heritage can be an accessible resource for communicating climate change, empowering people to confront the challenge and inspiring more sustainable lifestyles.

GVA

Conservation is a source of economic prosperity, providing services and goods and contributing to national GDP.

Workforce

Conservation contributes to national employment by creating jobs.

Regional opportunities

Conservation contributes to varied and dispersed employment, distributing the value of skills, jobs, investment and innovation across sectors.

Entrepreneurship

Conservation fosters a diverse business environment through its division of employment between medium, small and micro-sized businesses.

Regional competitiveness

Conservation supports local business and investment by preserving heritage assets that act as “pull” factors to places and catalysts for economic revival.

Return on investment

By preserving and enabling access to heritage, conservation maximises the economic value of industries like tourism and the creative industries.

International competitiveness and reputation

Conservation contributes to cultural diplomacy through the sector’s international reputation and by underpinning industries vital to the UK’s global reputation.

CULTURAL

SOCIAL

ECONOMIC

SUSTAINABILITY

			✓
✓	✓	✓	
	✓	✓	
✓	✓	✓	
	✓	✓	
✓		✓	
✓		✓	
✓		✓	

Not your average research project

We wanted to develop our thinking on values with others, and therefore chose to work collaboratively. The project was not your typical research project - think fewer trips to the library and more informal conversations between participants. In fact, from the very beginning we saw the work as an engagement exercise to encourage Icon members but also external audiences to think about the value of the work of conservators and why people look after their possessions.

Values are not only present at the end as the end results that we strive to achieve. Values are at the beginning - they inspire us and they are also the means - they impact what we do and how we do it.

Consequently, it felt important to frame our discussion around a broader set of questions than just the single question 'What are the values of conservation?' To investigate whether the claims about our values were substantiated and reflected by the work that conservators do and the way that they do it, we therefore wanted to study how conservators describe their work to others.

Each stage of the project sought to collect statements from both conservators and non-conservators on values. We used a range of techniques - from the more serious to the more creative and whacky - to get conversations rolling. We relied on our existing framework of values messages to structure the conversation.

Our research stages are described in the following table.

PURPOSE

CHANNEL

1 The Conversation

Test our values arguments on values on real conservators and those working within the sector

Steering Committee of Icon members to debate and offer perspectives on values online

2 The Social Network

Gather perceptions from conservators and the public on why they look after their possessions and what conservation is

Social media campaign on Twitter to engage the wider public in our questions, as well as to raise the profile of the discussions.

3 The Grapevine

To listen, record and analyse conversations taking place elsewhere on values

Icon ACR Conference 2020
Icon intern survey of perceptions of conservation

4 Both Sides of the Bench

To investigate the difference in how clients and conservators perceive the value of conservation work

The Real Repair Shop blog posts



Findings

"An intellectual response to some form of communication is great but an emotional response is even better".

FINDINGS

The conversation

The Conversation formed the most significant part of the project, as we wanted to test our identified values on real conservators and those working within the sector. As it can be difficult to talk about values, we decided to give research participants examples or statements about values to help to frame the discussions.

This stage of the project involved setting up a steering group with dedicated online discussion boards.

We invited Icon members to join a Project Steering Group to discuss the values of conservation, test ideas on and gather thoughts from. Our call out resulted in 40 members volunteering to take part. The Group comprised practicing conservators but also commissioners and clients of conservators ensuring an ‘outside’ perspective.

Two online Padlet discussion boards were set up for the Group to discuss the topic. Our first Padlet Board framed the discussion around values identified in the literature review. We encouraged group members to offer insights and evidence under each column or to challenge them.

Our second Padlet Board took a more freestyle approach. In order to avoid the pillars structure unnecessarily restricting or influencing the direction of conversation, we posed a series of questions that aimed to encourage participants to think about how they spoke about conservation to others.

The social value of conservation was discussed most broadly, with many highlighting how conservators build and retain connections to the past fostering a sense of identity and belonging. However, overall the pillars board generated much less discussion than the freestyle language focused one. This suggests that Icon's current messaging structure is fit for purpose and that we generally tend to be in agreement on the values of conservation.

However, the lively discussion on our second discussion board revealed varied perspectives on how best to articulate values, which confirms our focus on the articulation and communication phase of the project.

For example, we asked members to think about how they would describe their work to a 7-year-old to bring messages down to the bare essentials. Respondents focused on the end result of ensuring objects stick around for the enjoyment of current and future generations. Audience-focused messaging was noted as a vital element of efficient communication, with one participant arguing:

"I think we need to make the experience as personal as possible. I think one of the reasons it still feels like we are trying to validate our profession in the public realm, and one of the reasons conservation posts are at risk again, is we still haven't found the right message to get the public to care. An intellectual response to some form of communication is great but an emotional response is even better."

The importance of understanding audiences was reiterated in debates on the use of certain vocabulary. Appreciating the level of our audiences' understanding and what they search for online is clearly important when choosing the words we use to talk about conservation.

Participants noted that finding a balance between industry specific language was important.

“There are cases when we can substitute a word. But in other cases I would argue for the use of a specific term. It depends very much on the audience. As a profession, we should not be afraid to use scientific, specific or technical language. I think it is our role to slowly make these words part of everyday conversations,” one member asserted.

The Steering Group conversations are presented in full in the Appendix 2.

FINDINGS

The social network

In September, the project ran a two-day social media campaign consisting of Twitter polls and questions to engage a broader audience in the conversation. As with our Steering Group conversations, we decided to ask questions to focus the discussion.

Day 1 targeted a lay audience and aimed to collect general perceptions and understandings about conservation and why people look after their heirlooms. Day 2 focused on engaging conservators, encouraging participants to share what it's like to be a conservator.

Some of our questions were serious while others were more fun and left-field (think colour palettes and theme songs) but we hoped they would encourage participants to talk about values in a variety of ways.

While one campaign aimed to target a more generalist audience, both campaigns received engagement largely from conservators, suggesting we hadn't fully succeeded in meeting our goal of reaching out to the public. Our Twitter polls - comprising easy to answer options - received greater engagement compared to open ended questions.

Considering our captive and conservator-dominated audience, it was unsurprising that our audience had a strong understanding of conservation, with nearly all participants knowing the difference between a conservator and a conservationist (someone who focuses on environmental conservation). Likewise, few disagreed with our statement that it is important for cultural heritage to be conserved for future generations.

The majority associated the word 'conserve' with protection over repair, suggesting a tendency to associate conservation with preventive care rather than restoration. Indeed, participants felt strongly that it is not acceptable to use the terms restoration and conservation interchangeably. Some suggested that using the word restoration may be useful in a client setting, mirroring thoughts from Steering Group participants.

Nearly 90% of participants said they kept heirlooms due to sentiment, showing another parallel between findings in the Steering Group that also focused on the emotional and social value of conservation.

The question "What's the biggest misconception with conservation?" attracted the most responses and impressions. Many highlighted the age-old misconception of conservators as the "No Police" who restrict or limit access and can be found in "a basement somewhere working in isolation and continuously chanting no" under their breaths.

Our audience was conflicted between whether time travel or x-ray vision was a conservator's main super power, potentially indicating that understanding an object and restoring or preserving its past is a key element of conservators' work. Resilience, an open mind and curiosity were noted as key characteristics for being a successful conservator.

While far from a rigorous approach to research, the social media campaign demonstrated an appetite to engage in light-hearted conversations about conservation with scope for Icon to run similar campaigns in future. It showed that conservators are willing to think about their jobs from different and unexpected angles, which is vital to being able to adapt messages to different audience needs.

The social media campaign is shown in full in the Appendix 3.

FINDINGS

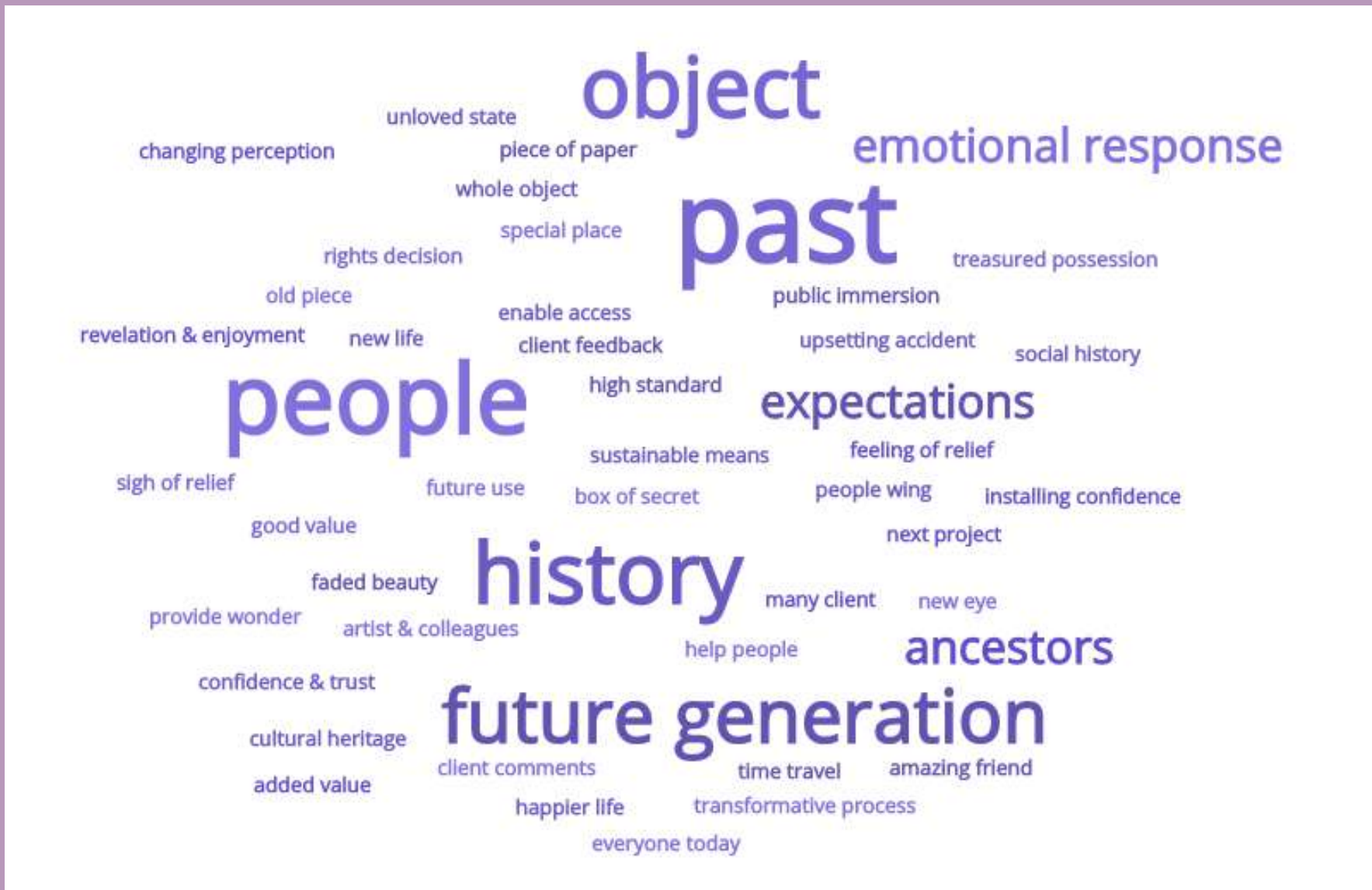
The Grapevine

Throughout the project we kept our ear to the ground and listened for discussions elsewhere so that we captured everyday conversations and more formalised research findings into our work.

Two concurrent Icon projects - the Icon ACR Conference and an Icon Intern's research project - formed a pivotal part of our 'Grapevine' through which we gained additional insight on perspectives of conservation.

In July 2020, Icon's annual ACR (Accredited Conservator-Restorer) Conference took place on theme of communication, language and impact. During the virtual conference, participants were asked to use the chat function to describe what they do as conservators.

A word cloud of delegates' responses shows a focus on objects, history, people, future generations and emotional responses. Icon's ACRs submitted thoughtful descriptions of conservation, focusing on the impact of their work as opposed to the tangible activities that conservators do. From changing perceptions, to inciting memories and opening history's box of secrets, the majority of responses relate to the societal value of conservation through building connections to the past and facilitating immersion in heritage.



Simultaneous to the ACR Conference, a research project led by Icon intern Anna Presland investigated the apparent division between the public and the conservation profession. Drawing on the results of an online survey, Presland aimed to highlight key differences between three groups: those who knew nothing, little and a great amount of the conservation profession.

When asked what first words come to mind that best describe heritage conservation, the most popular responses changed very little when filtering respondents who identified themselves as ‘extremely aware’ of conservation compared to ‘somewhat aware’ or ‘not at all aware’. This suggested that most people already had at least a very basic understanding of conservation. Presland proposed that any "deeper insight into division between conservation and the public could be revealed through greater analysis of chosen vocabulary."

Presland's research findings and the responses of our ACR Conference delegates are shown in Appendix 4.

FINDINGS

Both sides of the bench

Conservators and clients of conservators can have very different perspectives of what the value of conservation work is. In our final stage of the project, we therefore looked at a conservation project from both the conservator's and the client's viewpoint. Considering our social media campaign hadn't quite captured the engagement of as many non-conservators as we had hoped, this phase increased in importance.

For those of you curious about this chapter's title choice, 'the bench' refers to practical studio-based conservation work, as opposed to desk-based study and investigation. (In our second case study, we've swapped the bench for a scaffold as we head on-site!)

We asked Icon members and their clients to share experiences of undertaking or commissioning conservation work. The case studies showed that clients often spoke about the emotional value of conservation and fulfilling a duty to family or future generations. Meanwhile, our conservators noted the benefit of developing skills and preserving the artists' original intent.

Comments from the conservators and clients can be found on the following page. You can also access the full [case studies](#) on our website, under our The Real Repair Shop blog series.

Francis Downing ACR

The conservator's priority is the preservation of the artwork and supporting the intentions of the artist.

Repairing areas of damage are intended to return harmony to the picture.

Conservation of Dutch miniatures

Icon Chair James Grierson commissioned Francis Downing ACR to conserve a neglected pair of Dutch miniature portraits inherited from his father restored.



James Grierson, Icon Chair

I can think of no better way of getting additional pleasure from an object that already means something to you than to see it brought back to life by the skilled hands of a conservator.

I had somehow done right by my late father.

The Conservator

The Client

The Project



Conservation of medieval wall paintings

The Perry Lithgow Partnership conserve medieval wall paintings in a Grade 1 listed church in Stoke Orchard, managed by the Parochial Church Council of Tedrington.

The Conservator

Perry Lithgow Partnership

The conservator's priority is the preservation of the artwork and supporting the intentions of the artist.

Repairing areas of damage are intended to return harmony to the picture.

The Client

The Parochial Church Council of Tedrington

It was the feeling of pride to be custodians in our lifetime, that led us to...find a way forward.

We can now forge a partnership with a specialist College/University course to carry forward educational activities and design better interpretation of the paintings...

The Project



3

Toolkit

"Focus on both the mind and the heart"
"Be normal - not formal"

Focus on the why

This project has sought to capture the value of conservation activities by engaging stakeholders in discussions on what conservators do. While the activities that conservators carry out and the methods they use are an important aspect of articulating and explaining conservation, it is the 'why' that conveys the profession's impact.

The Grapevine phase of this project noteworthy showed that ACRs naturally focused on the 'why' - the impact of conservation - when asked to explain their work. This could suggest that conservators are values-driven and motivated by achieving the bigger societal outcome.

The different values or 'whys' of conservation have been discussed throughout this project's stages and were first introduced in Section 2. We have summarised them under the four categories of 'cultural, social, environmental and economic' value as shown in the graph on the next page.

While far from conclusive, we hope conservators and others will consider whether and how they relate to their everyday working practices and that when describing their work to others, will continue to place impact and value front and center in their messages.

Cultural

Innovation and creativity
Collective memory Access to culture
Knowledge and understanding

Social

Social prescription
Sense of place and inclusion
Community cohesion
Ancestral history and family legacy
Sense of identity

Climate change communication
Sustainable techniques and materials

Skills

Regional opportunity
Workforce
Volunteering
Entrepreneurship

Mitigation and adaptation

Lifecycle prolongation

International reputation and competitiveness
Regional competitiveness
Return on investment
GVA

Environmental

Economic

Approaches to messaging

While we may be driven by values and are in agreement on what those values are, we need to be more consistent and bold in communicating them. In addition to the content - which values we choose to prioritise and communicate - we have a choice concerning language when talking about conservation.

In this section of the Toolkit we focus on language and offer approaches to effective messaging. These are meant to inspire, rather than restrict how we discuss values.

There are a variety of approaches at our disposal when developing messaging: we can go either the factual, evidence based and informative route to appeal to the heads of decision makers or use comparisons to familiar items to illustrate conservation in practice or storytelling to appeal to emotions.

These are demonstrated in practice on the following pages.

TRANSLATION

Translate specialist vocabulary into everyday words so that messages are inclusive and accessible. Industry-specific terminology may be relevant when speaking to colleagues but it may confuse or even intimidate people unfamiliar with the sector!

FAMILIAR COMPARISONS

A picture paints a thousand words, and that's equally true for the images we create through words. If you can get an audience to really 'see' what you're trying to explain, they will not only be able to understand it better, but they will also remember it.

Using practical examples of things people might be familiar with in real life or familiar comparisons when explaining conservation can help create a visual comparison in their mind.

IN PRACTICE

Use common words like 'protect and care for' rather than 'conserve.' For example, "Conservators help to stop damage happening to important things and fix them when they are damaged."

Use industry/sector specific language peers to give gravitas to arguments and to retain accuracy in communications.

IN PRACTICE

For example, conservation prevents metals becoming "rusty", bright colours on fabrics fading, insects using objects as food etc."

"Conservators are somewhere between a nurse and a doctor. I work alone with a large collection that I see regularly, like a nurse see's the patients on a ward!"

"Just like we put food in the fridge to stop it getting mouldy, conservators put photographs in a cold store to stop them getting cracked and broken."

HEART V HEAD

While we'd like to think people use logic to make a choice, it's emotion that guides decisions and actions. Messages therefore need to focus on both the head and the heart.

The most efficient way to get people on board is by appealing to their emotions. You can develop an emotional connection with your audience through storytelling or by making messages as personal as possible.

However, some audiences (such as decision makers) will find logical and evidence-based messages about values more compelling. Draw on statistics, facts and reliable sources when appealing to the head to heighten credibility and believability.

KEEP IT SIMPLE

Use easy-to-understand language; avoid jargon and acronyms. By avoiding long, run-on sentences, you can ensure that messages are easy to recall and repeat.

Remember to use active voice rather than passive so that messages sound authentic and human - Be normal, not formal!

IN PRACTICE

For example

"I allowed a person to see again the only image of her dead sister."

"Conservators take the objects that are special to you and help you love them with new eyes and understanding."

For example

"According to Historic England, conservation employs 11,000 professionals in England."

IN PRACTICE

"Conservators care for really old things that people used a long time ago, so that you can see and enjoy these things today."

Audience first

In the world of marketing, weak messages speak from the point of view of the seller, which is considered ineffective. Similarly, when speaking about conservation values, it would be pointless to purely focus on the benefits to ourselves. We therefore need to get into the minds of our audience and talk how they would and convey information that is meaningful to them.

Indeed our 'Both Sides of the Bench' project stage showed that a single conservation project can have different values depending on who you ask. Hence, when choosing which values we speak about, it is important to consider the interest of our audiences and answer the question 'what would make them care?'

For example, a Treasury government official is likely to be more interested in the economic value of conservation than its contribution to identity creation. In parallel, the owner of a family album may see more value in how conservation preserves family memories.

In the following pages we have translated our key arguments about the value of conservation into simple, audience-focused messages. We have used a variety of messaging approaches to further demonstrate how these can be used in practice.

The language and depth of information can be adapted according to audience, but we believe these messages are a good starting point for talking about conservation for a range of audiences.

VALUE

Conservation preserves cultural heritage, facilitating public access and enjoyment and enabling cultural heritage to maximise its economic and social value.

Conservation is a highly skilled and cross-disciplinary practice that links the arts, science, humanities, social science and technology. It delivers fundamental skills and learning, contributing to education, the advancement of knowledge and innovation across sectors.

Conservation supports healthier and longer lives and contributes to the wellbeing of communities by facilitating meaningful engagement with our cultural heritage.

SIMPLIFIED MESSAGE

Conservation helps us understand ourselves and our future by preserving our past.

Conservators save the things that matter most - everything from national treasures to family heirlooms and collectables. Not to mention household items like books, furniture and plastic dolls!

Conservators are highly trained and use their knowledge, skills and experience to understand precious objects before suggesting ways to protect and care for them.

From looking after the dinosaurs in our museums to revealing the hidden stories in a painting - a conservator's job is exciting and ever changing.

Conservation can help us live healthier and happier lives by allowing us to experience cultural heritage in meaningful ways.

APPROACH

Emotional

Comparison to familiar items

Use of familiar words, including 'protect' and 'care'

Comparison to familiar items

Keeping it simple

VALUE

Conservation can support communities dealing with climate change through direct rescue and refuge but also by helping to inform environmental action by building understanding of materials and change and promoting principles of sustainability.

Conservation is a source of economic prosperity and growth, contributing to business, industry and employment. It is a highly interconnected sector with multiple economic activities dependent and embedded within it.

SIMPLIFIED MESSAGE

Conservation extends the lives of objects and encourages us to care for our possessions, favoring sustainability over throwaway culture.

Conservation helps the economy by creating jobs and businesses, which supports industry and growth.

APPROACH

Translation

Use of familiar words



4 Conclusion

SUMMING UP

Values-driven communication



Icon's Values of Conservation project has sought to examine which values characterise the impact of conservation on society and to consider how we can better communicate them to audiences.



The project has been engagement-led, having collected a range of source material, including statements about conservation from conservators themselves and public votes on what conservation means to people.



We have identified a series of values associated with conservation that can be loosely categorised under social, cultural, economic and environmental impacts.



We have presented suggestions in the form of a brief toolkit on how we can effectively communicate and promote the profession's achievements to others.



The project found that conservators are willing and keen to talk about their work and are potentially already prone to being values-driven when describing their activities.



Icon hopes the material collected and presented in this report will inspire others to think about conservation from a values-focused perspective. Starting with the 'why' of conservation can help us to embed values within every aspect of our messaging and increase awareness of the profession's impact.

NEXT STEPS

Building our evidence base

- Icon will share the results of the research with Icon members and stakeholders, and encourage them to use the content in their messaging.
- Icon will use the material collected to inform advocacy and policy responses as well as communications and messaging.
- Icon will continue to build its library of case studies on the values of conservation by commissioning new posts for the Real Repair Shop blog series.
- Icon will continue building its evidence base of values by undertaking new research (Labour Market Intelligence to be carried out in 2021) and by collecting case studies from members.



© 2021 Icon - The Institute of Conservation.

Icon is registered as a Charity in England and Wales
(Number 1108380) and in Scotland (Number SC039336)
and is a Company Limited by Guarantee, (Number 5201058)





5

Appendices

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Research appendices

- | | | |
|---|--|---------|
| 1 | Research context: Icon's values messages and literature review on values | Page 41 |
| 2 | The Conversation - our Steering Group's discussions and comments | Page 45 |
| 3 | The Social Network - the results of our two-day Twitter campaign including polls and questions | Page 54 |
| 4 | The Grapevine - the additional information we monitored and gathered during our research project | Page 69 |

1. Research context: Icon's values messages and literature review

Icon's values messages

Icon's messages were developed to help us stay consistent when telling people about Icon, conservation and why it matters. Each category contains a set of submessages, which correspond with the values discussed by other sources.

Conservation and Cultural Heritage

Conservation preserves cultural heritage, facilitating public access, enjoyment and engagement with cultural heritage. Conservation helps us understand ourselves and our future by preserving our past.

Skills, Learning and Education

Conservation is a highly skilled and cross-disciplinary practice that links the arts, science, humanities, social science and technology. It delivers fundamental skills and learning, contributing to education, the advancement of knowledge and innovation across sectors.

People and Communities

Conservation supports healthier and longer lives and contributes to the wellbeing of diverse and inclusive communities by facilitating meaningful engagement with our cultural heritage.

The economy, business and innovation

Conservation is a source of economic prosperity and growth, contributing to business, industry and employment. It is a highly interconnected sector with multiple economic activities dependent and embedded within it. It also protects the financial value of objects.

Sustainability

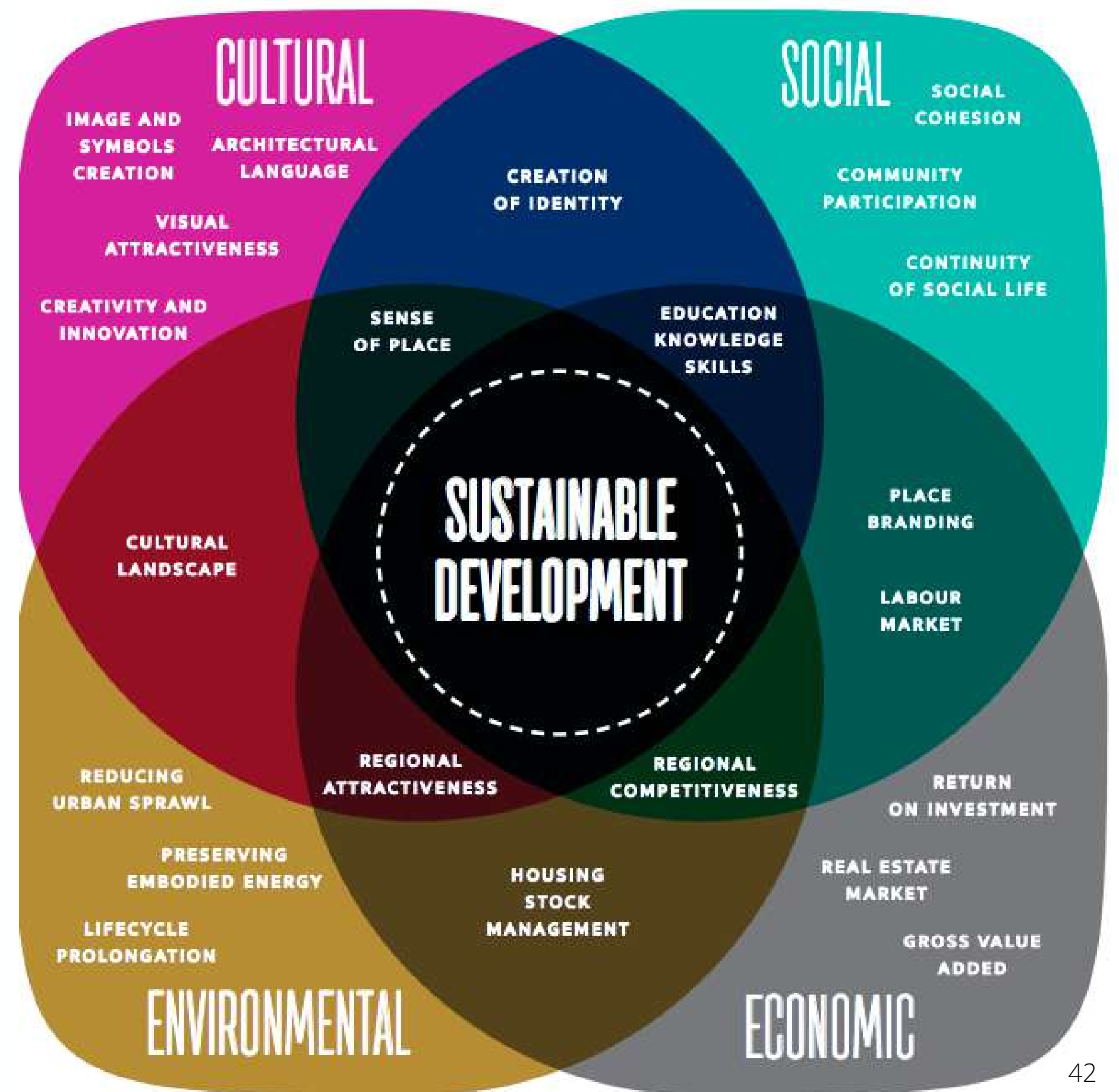
Conservation can support communities dealing with climate change through direct rescue and refuge but also by helping to inform environmental action by building understanding of materials and change and promoting principles of sustainability.

Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe

The Cultural Heritage Counts for Europe Report (2015) is a comprehensive study into the multiple benefits of heritage for Europe’s economy, society, culture and the environment and offers policy recommendations on how to tap into heritage’s full potential.

The report is the result of an EU-wide survey and analysis of existing research and case studies on cultural heritage impact assessment. The Report has been widely recognised as a key study on the impact of cultural heritage and served as a pivotal source of information and inspiration for this project.

Cultural Heritage Counts identified a number of significant studies dealing with the impact of cultural heritage and mapped evidence within a conceptual framework of four pillars or domains: economic, social, cultural and environmental. The project also found potential impact sub-domains and values associated with and derived from cultural heritage, which were mapped under the four principal domains.



	ECONOMIC	SOCIAL	CULTURAL	ENVIRONMENTAL
IMAGE AND SYMBOLS CREATION			⊕	
VISUAL ATTRACTIVENESS			⊕	
ARCHITECTURAL LANGUAGE			⊕	
CREATIVITY AND INNOVATION			⊕	
SENSE OF PLACE		⊕	⊕	⊕
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE			⊕	⊕
REDUCING URBAN SPRAWL				⊕
PRESERVING EMBODIED ENERGY				⊕
LIFECYCLE PROLONGATION				⊕
EDUCATION	⊕	⊕	⊕	
SKILLS	⊕	⊕	⊕	
KNOWLEDGE	⊕	⊕	⊕	
CREATION OF IDENTITY		⊕	⊕	
REGIONAL ATTRACTIVENESS	⊕		⊕	⊕
SOCIAL COHESION		⊕		
COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION		⊕		
CONTINUITY OF SOCIAL LIFE		⊕		
PLACE BRANDING	⊕	⊕		

The research recommended a holistic approach to cultural heritage impact research as many studies were shown to cover different combinations of impact and fell under several of the four pillars. The evidence suggested that cultural heritage has benefits across a wide range of policy areas and that heritage works as a multiplier, through which investment can have positive impacts beyond those initially intended.

LABOUR MARKET	⊕	⊕		
REGIONAL COMPETITIVENESS	⊕	⊕		⊕
REAL ESTATE MARKET	⊕			
GROSS VALUE ADDED	⊕			
RETURN ON INVESTMENT	⊕			
TAX INCOME	⊕			
HOUSING STOCK MANAGEMENT	⊕			⊕

Historic England Heritage Counts

Heritage Counts is research published by Historic England on behalf of the Historic Environment Forum, providing evidence for the value of heritage to England's economy, society and environment. This is demonstrated through five reports plus regional case studies. This project examined evidence and arguments presented in three recent Heritage Counts publications:

Heritage and the Economy 2019

Heritage and the Economy 2019 summarises the findings from studies on heritage and economic activity. The report argues that the historic environment has a close connection to economic activity, demonstrating how jobs and enterprises are dependent on, attracted to or based in historic buildings and spaces.

Key findings include:

- Investing in heritage creates places for businesses to grow and prosper
- Heritage and the creative economy
- Heritage shapes people's perceptions and authentic experiences of places
- Heritage generates demand and a property price premium
- Heritage still has a great untapped potential

Heritage and Society 2020

Heritage and Society 2020 presents evidence about the value of heritage to society, individuals and community groups across England. The evidence is gathered from a wide range of sources including major household panel surveys, systematic literature reviews, bespoke evaluation studies and public opinion surveys. The report argues that cultural heritage can play a critical role for community cohesion, collective action and in shaping human health and societal wellbeing.

The report makes the following arguments about values:

- Heritage enriches our lives and is enjoyed by millions
- Members of the public care for and want to secure the future of our heritage
- Heritage shapes the perception and quality of place
- Heritage fosters a strong sense of belonging and attachment to place
- Heritage has an important role in shaping our personal, social identity and sense of belonging
- Heritage supports social cohesion and strengthens social networks
- Heritage volunteering increases levels of social support and develops active and skilled citizens
- Visiting and engaging with heritage enhances our mental health and wellbeing
- The historic environment offers outdoor experiences that can improve our mental health
- Engaging with heritage can improve our physical health and support public health goals
- Experiencing heritage stimulates our minds and helps older members of society
- Heritage supports and empowers younger audiences

2. Steering Group conversations on online Padlet discussion boards

Social value

There is data that shows loss of cultural heritage has a negative impact on the social wellbeing of a people—conservation prevents that.

Connection with objects can make connections to the past, in a way that grounds you—same reason why family history archives are so popular. Helps form a sense of place and belonging.

Conservation connects us with the past and invests us in the future, giving us a sense of building a legacy for generations to come, and hope.

Conservation can help in the social transformation of our heritage, is part of a multidisciplinary team that interpreter, investigate and exhibit it (and much more!)

Restoration Trust - good example of social and wellbeing benefit

Belonging (vb) and belonging (noun) Belonging is an innity with a place or situation. People tend to have an 'inherent' desire to belong and be an important part of something greater than themselves. Many items/artefacts and collections were and can still could be described as the belongings (noun) of a specific person, group or culture. I believe we need to harness the power of involvement with and participation in conservation (caring for belongings) as a way of promoting a greater sense of belonging or WELLBEING.

Cultural value

Conservators often need to learn historic ways of making things - keep these skills alive.

to understand the how something is degrading you need to have an understanding of how it was made, this means understanding materials and crafting practices of different eras and cultures

Economic

The impact to tourism is often used. For example, a hotel room (in a historic building) with historic features (frames, paintings, tiles...) will attract more tourists than a pain-white-walled alternative.

Conservation maintains value and adds value (recovery, accumulation of knowledge, dissemination) to our heritage assets.

Environmental

Conservation research in environmental control can contribute to diminishing the museum's energy consumption

It doesn't always work this way, but, Could it be seen as a value the search for better systems and information to optimize resources?

KiCulture and SiC: " in a time of fake news and distrust in government, one of the last establishments that holds inherent trust are museums and cultural heritage centres. Visitors don't question information that is presented in museums" Therefore ideal platform for talking about environmental issues

Conservators are trained to preserve objects for the future - these skills can be shared with non conservators to understand how to maintain things for longer. we are also experts in "sticking and unsticking" - can these skills be used to inform manufacturers on making more sustainable products

Other

Academic: there is research value to other fields for most of our objects—for instance, notes in the margin of a book that indicate where the collector bought it that, with the rest of the collection, teach about economics and movement of objects and people in the area.

Conservators have science and art backgrounds, are creative problem solvers, are academic, are practitioners...ie great people to find solutions!

What are we trying to achieve? The main questions I think we need to ask are:

- *What are we trying to achieve when we are communicating conservation to a specific audience?*
- *Are there specific behavioural changes we would like to see in the target audience for our communication?*
- *When we have pinpointed the desired outcomes then we will have gone a good way in dening the value of what we do.*

How would you explain conservation to a 7-year old?

We put food in the fridge to stop it getting mouldy (picture of fridge full of food) and we also sometimes put photographs in a cold store to stop them getting cracked and broken (picture of degrading acetate).

conservation is caring for really really old things that people used a long time ago, so that you can see and enjoy these things today.

Like the mould example, by using practical examples of things they might be familiar with in real life, metals becoming “rusty”, bright colours on fabrics or pictures fading, paint flaking, insects using objects as food, dust on surfaces.

Make it fun, bring in sensational/ gory facts, use storytelling. Give the agents of decay personalities (maybe for a younger audience) and present the conservator as the hero who has to defeat them.

we look after things that are important to you so that you can still enjoy them and people in the future can too

we help to stop damage happening to important things and fix them when they are damaged

we can help to understand how things were made, what they were made from and why they are important to keep

Having done textile conservation in a gallery in front of the public, when speaking to children I asked them if they recognised what I was working on (a fragmented flag), then told them how old it was (WWI) and what had happened to it and then said that I was making a support for it so that when they come back when they're grown ups it'll still be there for them to see and won't have fallen to pieces.

How do you talk to clients about conservation?

I talk about how everything degrades over time but our goal is to stabilise the item and facilitate use for as long as possible, balancing sometimes competing needs of function, aesthetics, value (research, monetary, etc.). We try to intervene as little as possible to accomplish this, and make the interventions as removable as possible. We try not to cause damage that wasn't already there (i.e. with poor quality materials or techniques). We do not try to completely hide the treatment, although we may try to make it less visible, and we keep records to show what has been done.

colleagues would be clients in my case. And they don't know anything about conservation, and while some might say 'that's really interesting' re the conservation of a item, its not relevant to their work really. When most colleagues want to ask me (as the conservator) something, its always about housing (i work in the library).

important to manage expectations - what the problems are and what are the options available what are the clients expectations after conservation

Try to ascertain what they expect the outcome to be early on, and give them a realistic idea of time, money, ethics...

I try to work out what they are interested in first. And by clients I mean anyone in an organisation - that's facilities management, curators, security, managers. What is their interest in the collection / object? then work with that, for example, with FM I would talk about timescales - they need to consider instant results and I talk about my timescale which is hundreds of years.

It really depends on the question, project, task in hand. I don't work with clients as such, but colleagues or project partners. I would explain the stages and processes involved and make clear what benefits that brings and what would happen if we didn't do certain things. I also try to be honest about the time scales involved. It is all about managing expectations.

How do you talk to clients about conservation?

I look after the things that archaeologists find in the ground, or divers in the sea. I fix them, so that we can see them in a museum.

Intellectual vs emotional response

I think we need to make the experience as personal as possible. I think one of the reasons it still feels like we are trying to validate our profession in the public realm, and one of the reasons conservation posts are at risk again, is we still haven't found the right message to get the public to care. An intellectual response to some form of communication is great but an emotional response is even better. Involvement, positive engagement and importantly participation in conservation on a local and community level is, in my opinion, the way forward.

What everyday words do you use to replace industry specific language?

Restoration instead of conservation - although we don't love to reinforce the use of that term.

item instead of object

Looking at goggle's analysis of keyword-search on my website (ceramics conservation), the words that come up more frequently are repair, restoration/restoring/restorer, mending. In replying to their queries I usually refer to restoration and repair but do not use "mending".

When explaining IPM: we need to know what might be eating this so we can protect it

I think its important to use industry/sector specific language with peers, it gives gravitas to what i am saying. However when explaining my work to the general public I sprinkle my talks with specific words, but i don't go too heavy on them. So i guess, its important to know your audience. I personally try not the use the word restoration. I say conservation or preservation or caring for.

I personally wouldn't use the word restoration - for me the connotations that resonate around making it 'like new' are too strong

I often have to argue for industry specific language, especially when working with the marketing/ press team. There are cases when we can substitute a word. But in other cases I would argue for the use of a specific term. It depends very much on the audience. As a profession, we should not be afraid to use scientific, specific or technical language. I think it is our role to slowly make these words part of everyday conversations.

"Conservation is similar to..."

"My job is like ... mixed with ..."

Medicine is the most used correlation. Plastic surgery often rings a bell too, but relating to the "bad" examples of such and such person. From there to the recent "restoration-gone-wrong" episodes and the risks of not having quality people doing the work.

Yes i think medicine is a nice comparison. i think conservators are somewhere between a nurse and a doctor (depending on your job). For example, i work alone with a large collection and see the collection regularly, like a nurse see's the patients on a ward! I also think you could compare conservation treatment, especially very complex ones to engineering in some ways, focusing on the materiality of the items. So, conservation is similar to medicine. I'm like a nurse for cultural heritage, mixed with an engineer.

Medicine and engineering are good analogies. Surgical precision is required in some aspects of our work. Preventive conservation and collections care can be likened to preventative healthcare. Also I would suggest detective work, forensic work, and the analogy of putting together a really complex jigsaw puzzle.

analogy to medicine - preventive conservators are like GPs finding out what the problems are, advocating a healthy lifestyle. Consultants can then treat specific problems

I am in private conservation and have a couple who are both doctors and small but careful collectors. We agreed that conservation IS like medicine - 90% boredom and 10% terror.

Paper conservation - do you conserve trees? I usually say, 'No, paper conservators repair and look after books and documents in archives and museums' SOOOO BORING - by which time the person listening has starting thinking about their dinner. I feel as if I should say something like ' We don't conserve trees but the stuff made from them - or something better....

I think it is important for non conservators to understand that we don't just fix things. The decision making process - understanding an object - what is it made from, what was it used for, what is its use now, what is its significance etc. This all then feeds into the next step on how to decide how to conserve.

Other thoughts

other heritage professionals

in my experience, fellow heritage professionals, like librarians, have very little awareness of conservation from their training. I think ICON could and should reach out to fellow aligned professional bodies in this regard

I'd add (though its off-topic) that fellow heritage professionals, like librarians, have very little awareness of conservation from their training.

That can be true, though archivists are usually really good at understanding preservation / conservation issues. Its all in the training.

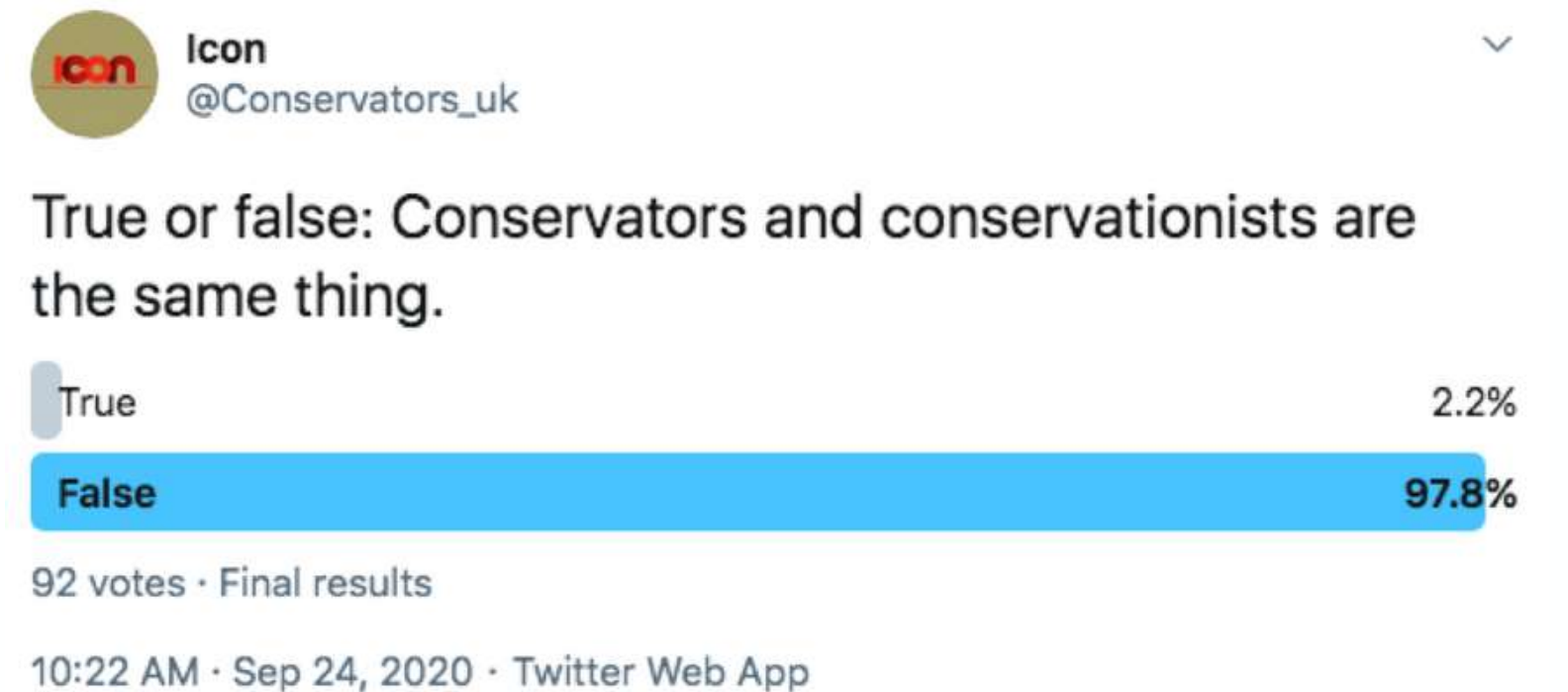
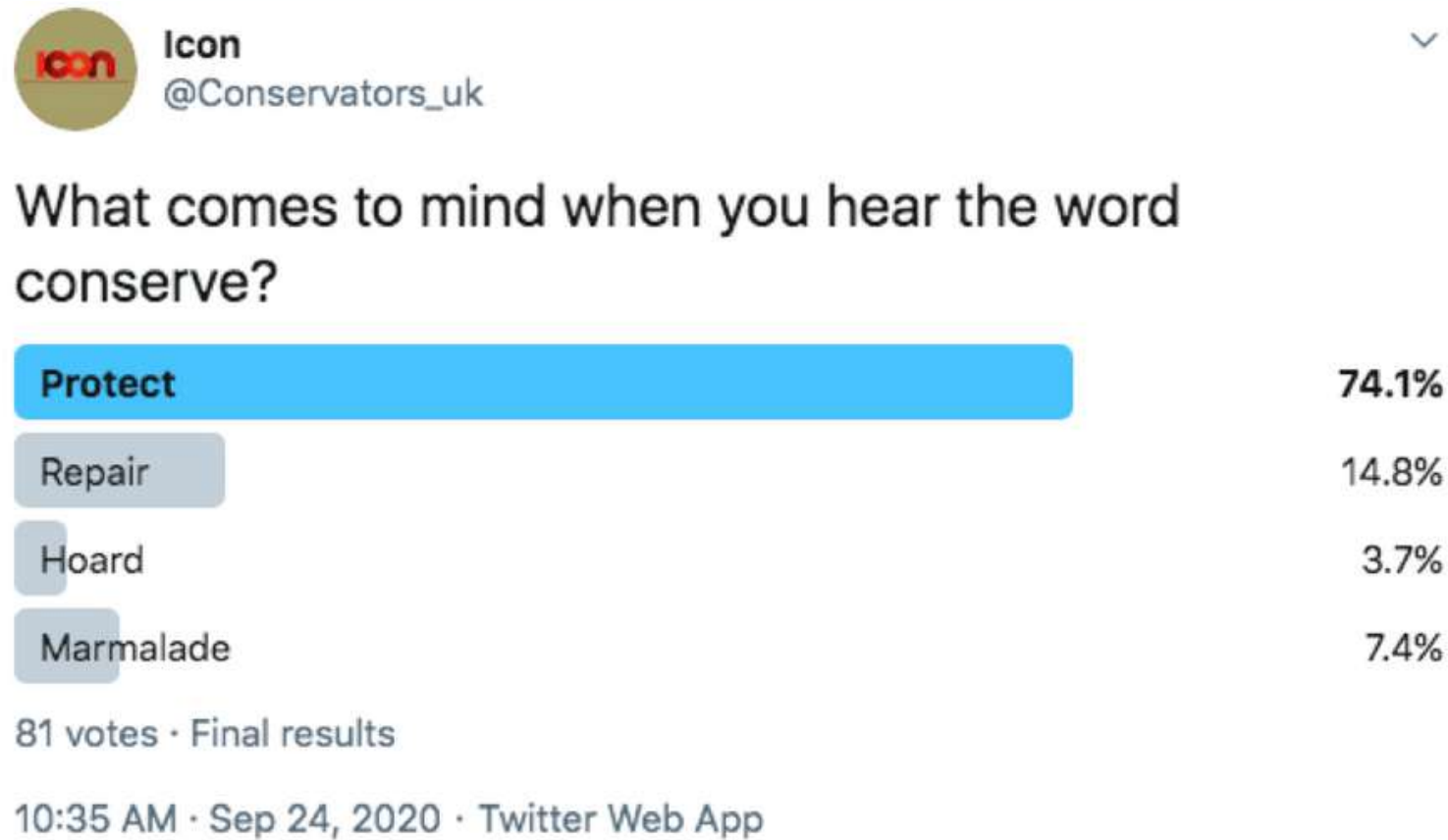
what conservation isn't

in communicating what conservation is, i think its useful to identify words that do a disservice to the conservation profession and the conservator. words like patience and slow, ideas that conservators are silently working away (they don't talk, or have an opinion), that its super expensive, not really necessary etc etc

when talking to members of the public at events or just friends/ family, I have noticed that a lot of people are not aware of "conservation" as a profession. It never occurred to them, that things they see on display in a museum, or a historic house and all its content has a huge army of staff behind it: researchers, conservators, scientists, curators, outreach, etc.... But most people are fascinated and interested to find out more

I agree, this was definitely the case at most public events I have taken part in, even the BM 'Conservation in Focus Exhibition' in 2007..

3. Two-day Twitter campaign poll results and discussions





Why do you keep heirlooms (be honest)?



61 votes · Final results

11:12 AM · Sep 24, 2020 · Twitter Web App

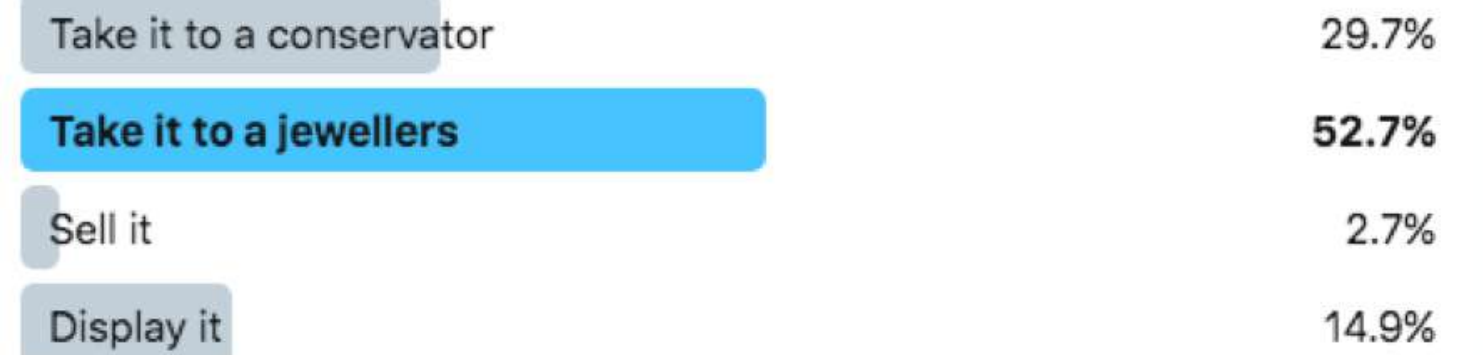


Where do you keep your wedding dress?



53 votes · Final results

12:28 PM · Sep 24, 2020 · Twitter Web App



74 votes · Final results

3 replies · 4 retweets · 2 likes

Icon @Conservators_uk

Now for some post-lunch fun. What's your most wacky family heirloom?



12:15 PM · Sep 24, 2020 · Twitter Web App

Lizz Thrasher @OriginalLizz · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk

My great-uncles electrical extension cord, swiped from a General Motors' assembly line.

1

Simon Green @simongreen2009 · Sep 24
Replying to @Conservators_uk

It used to be a stuffed European water shrew but someone stole it.

Meagen S @amazingMeagen · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Grace Kelly paper dolls #PaperConservation #Fashion



2

Abigail Bainbridge @BainbridgeCons · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk

A baby shark in formaldehyde: when Mom was dissecting an adult in college they discovered it was pregnant and everyone took home a keepsake baby shark 🤢 definitely getting handed down.

5

Jenny Mathiasson @curatedjenny · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk

Grandfather's wooden hand. Articulated and everything!

9

Christa Gerdwilker ACR @MacMakkaPakka · Sep 25
You win, hands down! 👍🤔

4



To kick off, tell us, what's the biggest misconception about conservation?



10:01 AM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App

||| View Tweet activity

13 Retweets 3 Quote Tweets 24 Likes



Replying to @Conservators_uk
That we can fix things (object/ exhibition/ store/ environment) in a defined time period and aren't needed thereafter.

1 2 5 3



Replying to @Conservators_uk
Are we assuming people know what conservation is in the first place?

1 2 8 3



In this case yes. Trying to understand what was the biggest misconception you came across from people who knew what conservators do

1 2 3 4 5

Show replies



Replying to @Conservators_uk
That it's all about restricting/limiting access and stifling others' creativity

1 2 6 3



Replying to @Conservators_uk and @curatedjenny
That objects last forever

1 2 9 3

Gloria Conti @UnNomeACaso · Sep 25
 Replying to @Conservators_uk
 That the cleaner and neater the object looks, the better it's been treated

1 13

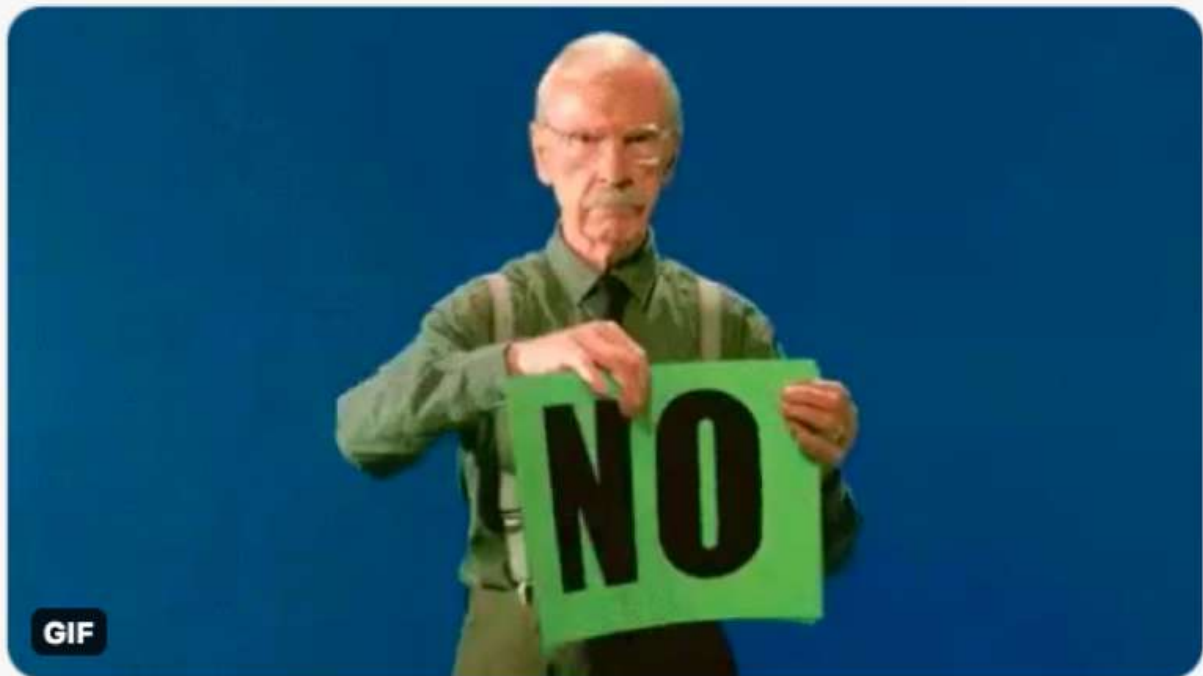
Abigail Bainbridge @BainbridgeCons · Sep 25
 That's a big one I think.

1

Jonathan Wallis @JonathanMuseum · Sep 25
 Replying to @Conservators_uk
 That conservators are there to stop curators doing things with collections...

2 13

Helena Jaeschke @HelenaCDO · Sep 25
 The No Police...



9

Aly Singh @alysingh · Sep 27
 Replying to @Conservators_uk
 That it doesn't require extensive training, skill developing, and theoretical practice.

2

Lucilla Ronai @LucillaRonai · Sep 26
 Replying to @Conservators_uk
 I don't think this is the biggest, but it is often the thoughts of our GLAM sector colleagues: That conservators are quiet, covered in dust, in a basement somewhere working in isolation and continuously chanting 'no' under our breath.

1 7

Dr Hannah Fluck @hannahfluck · Sep 25
 Replying to @Conservators_uk
 That people have the same thing in mind when you talk about conservation?

4

Lesley Scott @LesleyScott67 · Sep 25
 Replying to @Conservators_uk
 That conservation is perceived to be expensive, restrictive and complicated so not always included in planning stages as a way to save money and time-as well as the object or interior!

7

Caroline Oliver @gildinggirl · Sep 25
 Replying to @Conservators_uk
 That it's all about the physical 'fixing' of things.

5

- 

elpeloalviento @elpeloalviento · Sep 25

Replying to [@Conservators_uk](#)

that conservation is not a socially/politically involved discipline

↻
♥
↑
- 

Mainimo Johnkennedy @MainimoJohnken1 · Sep 26

Replying to [@Conservators_uk](#)

It ain't worth keeping for some future we are uncertain of. Unused resources lay wasted

↻
♥ 1
↑
- 

Natalia Zagorska-Thomas @Expurgamento · Sep 26

Replying to [@Conservators_uk](#)

According to whom? To find out, the best question would be: what do you think conservation is? But you need to ask non-conservators.

↻ 2
♥
↑
- 

Natalia Zagorska-Thomas @Expurgamento · Sep 26

Otherwise it's just conservators complaining to one another and anecdotally misquoting and misunderstanding others.

↻
♥
↑
- 

Rob Lewis @rob_lewis_esq · Sep 26

Replying to [@Conservators_uk](#)

That it's a byword for 'contingency' in project budgets

↻
♥
↑

- 

Emma @Pippin_dog · Sep 25

Replying to [@Conservators_uk](#)

It's not puffins. Equally it's not all like "The Repair Shop" or "Fake or Fortune"

↻
♥
↑
- 

Thompson Architecture @thompson_archi · Sep 26

It would be great to have more programmes on at peak times highlighting the amount of knowledge, care and attention that's required.

↻
♥ 1
↑
- 

Katerina Vavaliou @kvavaliou · Sep 28

Replying to [@Conservators_uk](#)

The Greek word αναπαλαίωση, used by anyone who is not a restorer/conservator to describe what they understand as conservation. It means 'make something old again' so NO.

↻ 1
♥
↑



 **Icon**
@Conservators_uk

Fill in the gap:

"___" is the most valuable thing I have, so I try my best to "___" it.


10:14 AM · Sep 24, 2020 · Twitter Web App

 **Professor Jane Henderson.** @LJaneHenderson · Sep 24
Replying to @Conservators_uk

My family is the most valuable thing i have, so I try my best to spend time with it. With each emotional connection there are often things that symbolise that relationship and I treasure those things as well.



1 1 17

 **Aly Singh** @alysingh · Sep 24
Interesting. I consider my family to be who I am, what makes me me, as opposed to a thing I have. I cannot own my family, but I can own my ability to learn.

1 3

Show replies

 **Leanne Tonkin - working at home** @Lea_Tonkin · Sep 24
Replying to @Conservators_uk
My home, cherish and entertain good people

4

 **Fiona Macalister** @MacalisterFiona · Sep 28
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Found this hard! Apart from those I love, freedom, a tiny fraction behind. Both a gift and hard won. Trying to use it well.

2

 **Aly Singh** @alysingh · Sep 24
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Knowledge, expand

1 3

 **Hilary Jarvis** @HilarySJarvis · Sep 24
Positivity, nurture

1

 **Siobhan barratt** @Siobhanbarratt2 · Sep 24
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Family, make the most of our time together, enjoy it and experience every moment

1



Icon
@Conservators_uk

It's ok to use the terms conservation and restoration interchangeably.



76 votes · Final results

10:43 AM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

3 Retweets 2 Likes



Vanessa Applebaum @vanapples · Sep 25

Replying to @Conservators_uk

This feels like it needs a third option! 😊

1 3



Abigail Bainbridge @BainbridgeCons · Sep 25

Yeah I want more context.

We use "restoration" for normal people - but eventually we find a way of explaining the difference. With other professionals I would only use it in a very narrow context.

3



Gloria Conti @UnNomeACaso · Sep 25

Replying to @Conservators_uk

The line sometimes is finer than it may look. One can restore functionality in an object of use and still conserve its historical integrity.

1 2



Gloria Conti @UnNomeACaso · Sep 25

Interesting is, also, that there are languages were this distinction doesn't apply. In Italian (and I believe Spanish too?) conservation is restauro, preservation is conservazione.

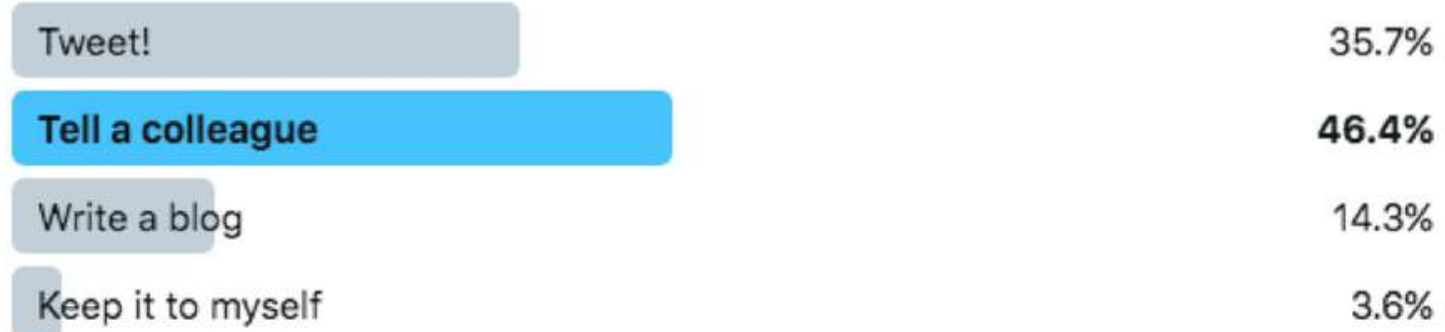
2 2



Icon
@Conservators_uk



When you make an exciting discovery, how do you tell people?



28 votes · Final results

10:57 AM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

1 Retweet 1 Quote Tweet 1 Like



Icon
@Conservators_uk



What's your theme song?



26 votes · Final results

10:21 AM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

3 Likes

 **Icon**
@Conservators_uk

How does this make you feel?



11:20 AM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App

 View Tweet activity

4 Retweets 5 Likes

 **Abigail Bainbridge** @BainbridgeCons · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk



 Save

 GIF

 **Claire Valero** @Claire_Valero · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk



 GIF

   1 

 **Janet Berry ACR FIIC FHEA** @janet_berry · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
I want to know what it is

 **Fiona Macalister** @MacalisterFiona · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Excited

 **Dr Theresa Oakley** @archaetexts · Sep 26
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Ah, the palimpsest of old walls! Yes, very intrigued to hear the revelation of the layers!

 **Jade Maloney** @Jade_Maloney · Sep 26
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Oh my god yes, let me at those flakes with a heated spatula 🥰

 **Helen Hughes** @HistoricInt · Sep 27
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Another day in the office. My life.

 **PressbengelProj** @PressbengelProj · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
A certain beauty to it. What's the context?

"To save any ruin from its own decay is essentially to deny its status as a ruin."

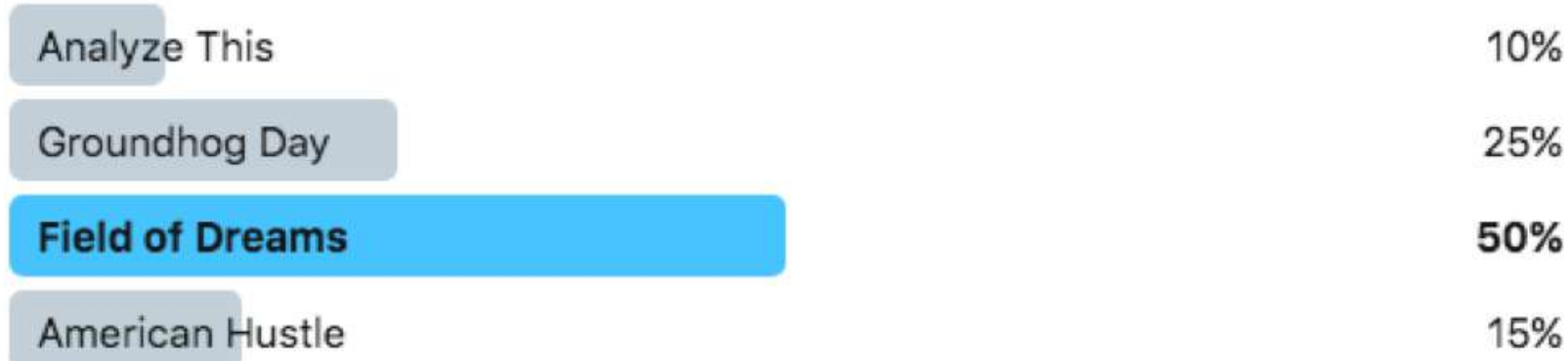


The Guardian

How ruins reveal our deepest fears and desires
As an exhibition opens at Tate Britain, Frances Stonor Saunders traces how the aesthetics of decay and dilapidation have been recast by ...
theguardian.com



Which movie title best describes your work?



20 votes · Final results

11:33 AM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App



What's a conservator's super power?



64 votes · Final results

12:43 PM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App

View Tweet activity

3 Retweets 6 Likes



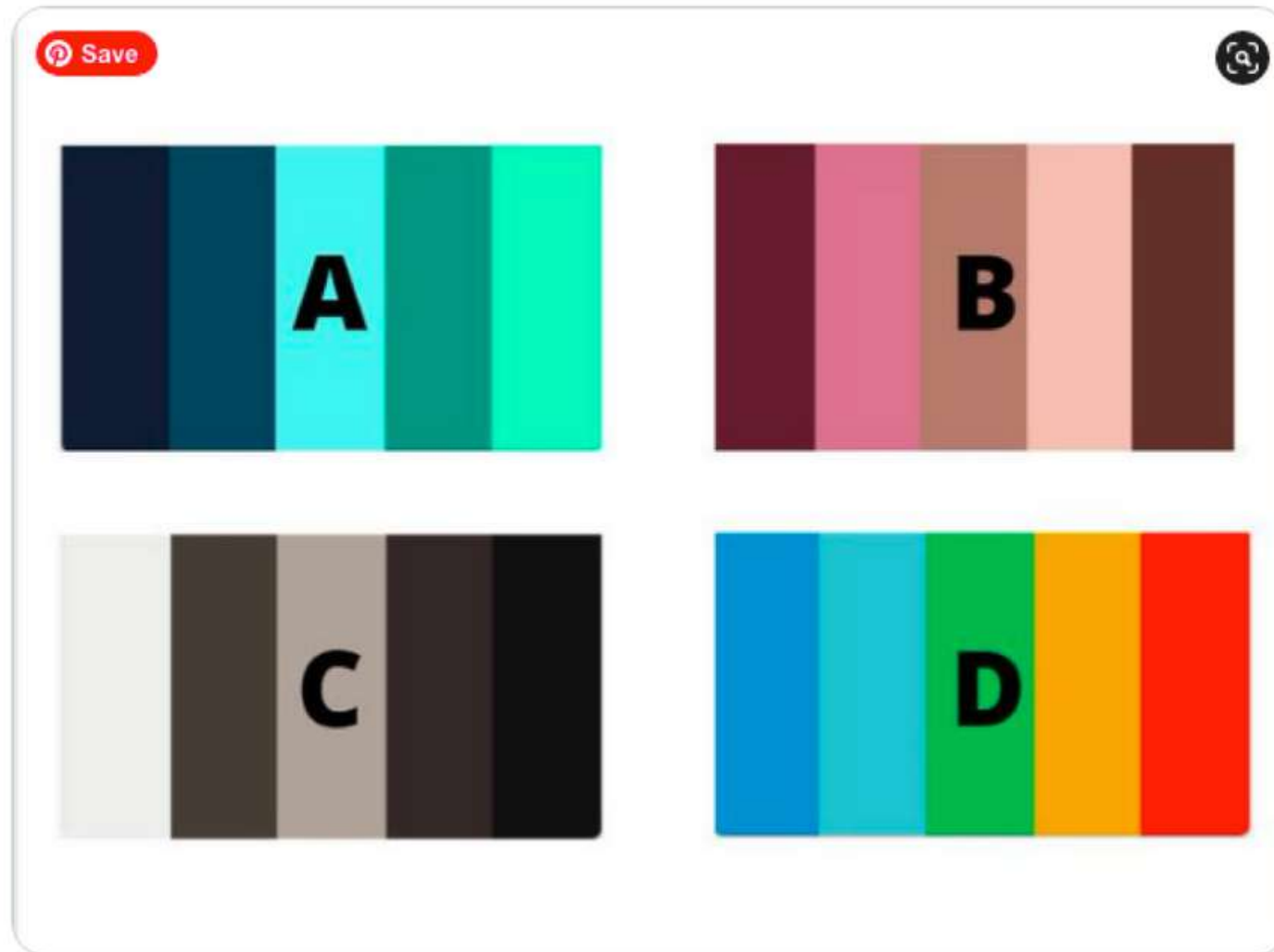
Vicki Wistow @VickiWistow · Sep 25
 Replying to @Conservators_uk

I nearly voted x-ray vision, but decided on clairvoyance because it would be nice to visually see exactly how something was made, how and when it's been damaged and the full conservation history of it (also who/when the last person to properly clean and conserve the object was.)



 **Icon**
@Conservators_uk

Which colour palette describes conservation?



12:27 PM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App

-  **Hilary Jarvis** @HilarySJarvis · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Um ... (not so confident here, but will give it a stab):
- D ? Because it's so broad and multi faceted in what it does/achieves.
But
- C in terms of diversity of workforce ...? 🤔
-  **Siobhan barratt** @Siobhanbarratt2 · Sep 26
Replying to @Conservators_uk
I think C - muted, subtle, invisible - but that sounds far to dull!
-  **Gloria Conti** @UnNomeACaso · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
It can be C as in monotone and flat, but also for a D as in vibrant and various. Depends what stage of life/career one is and on work environment
-  **Erkan Kambek** 🤔 @erkankambek · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Depends...
-  **Caroline** @CaroOkay · Sep 26
Replying to @Conservators_uk
C because the colors of the materials and supplies I use are best reflected there



Icon
@Conservators_uk

Our "10 traits needed to succeed as a conservator" (icon.org.uk/news/so-you-wa...) is one of our most popular articles. Suggest an 11th!



1:46 PM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App



Abigail Bainbridge @BainbridgeCons · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Bravery



Abigail Bainbridge @BainbridgeCons · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Humility



Janet Berry ACR FIIC FHEA @janet_berry · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
An open mind



Angela Middleton @AngyMiddleton · Sep 26
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Be curious!



Lesley Scott @LesleyScott67 · Sep 25
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Ability to share knowledge and nurture up and coming future conservation heroes. #skillsforfuture #conservation #learning



Siobhan barratt @Siobhanbarratt2 · Sep 26
Replying to @Conservators_uk
Resilience





Ok you're almost off the hook. But first, it's time to [#badlyexplainyourjob](#).



1:57 PM · Sep 25, 2020 · Twitter Web App



4. ACR Conference 2020 chat comments

How do you explain what you do?

Reversing Entropy

Facilitating public immersion in experiencing naval history

Help cultural heritage live again in the eyes of its ancestors

Changing perceptions

enable people to enjoy and understand special places and things, past, present and future

I enable feelings of relief, creativity and accomplishment!

preserve history for future generations to enjoy

Enable access and ensure accountability

Represented a community & brought an amazing friend, artist & colleague back to all those who'd lost him...

I let you see dead people

Giving people wings

make history live again

engaging people with conservation by creating opportunities for insight - often with emotional responses - for example at a 'have a go'

event at a National Trust property where there was a large building conservation project underway an 82 year old retired banker was very tearful after picking up some tools and working some stone with the help of a stone mason - he said he thought he would never have a chance to do anything like this. His response was moving for us and his family. client feedback: "trusted, collaborative, high standards, committed to making a difference and getting things done".

enable owners to see the whole object again

helping people move on from an upsetting accident

Connecting with the past

Client comment: "You made my family live again."

sticking the bits back together

I weave happiness into your past

Help people feel ready to make the right decision!

incite memories and allow closure

I open history's boxes of secrets!

I take care of really old pieces of paper so that they can live a longer, happier life.

A specific example: I allowed a person to see again the only image of her dead sister.

expectation, intrigue, delight

I unlock the secrets of the past, unearthing them from the layers of an object, to tell their stories, to have a voice before being hidden back for future generations to find.

Preserving social history, enabling an understanding of the past, to facilitate the understanding of the present and the future.

We talk to our past

helping us to carry on connecting to our past

I act to ensure that the Archives' holdings are accessible for present and future use

preserve for future generations to enjoy, connect and understand history

bringing the artists work back to life for us to enjoy now.

To be blown away by a transformative process that takes an object from a lost and unloved state to one of joy, and beauty and new life.

I take people back in time to see art as it was, and I'm not a paintings conservator.....

I do something unimaginable to many clients and open up the world and heavens again, to their astonishment.

I glorify faded beauty!

I enable people to enjoy, savour and appreciate their photographs by bringing them back to life.

Installing Confidence & Trust, having the skills to solve the problem, achieving results beyond expectations, providing good value, inspiring others through training

200 years old and still not dry!

The hairs on the back of your neck will stand on end. Knowledge is power. I will give you power.

Enable inspiration to time travel from the past into the future

preservation, revelation & enjoyment - for the present & future

Provide wonder, bring relief and create added value

sharing responsibility through appreciation

I am the alchemist, I can revive the past into colour and magnificence

I offer reassurance that there are sustainable means by which stories from the past can be enjoyed in the present and passed safely on to future generations

We help our clients breathe a sigh of relief!

My work triggers an emotional response to a treasured possession

I ensure that buildings and objects can continue to live and tell their stories for everyone today and for the future to enjoy.

you brought my ancestors back to life

I take the objects that are special to you and help you love them with new eyes and understanding

4. Anna Presland research on perceptions of conservation (2020)

Full report available here:
<https://www.icon.org.uk/resource/preserve-and-care-amongst-top-words-used-to-describe-conservation.html>

- “protecting items for the future”
- “preventing further degradation of artefacts”
- “protecting something that is of cultural or historical importance”
- “restoration of old things”

If at all aware of the profession, what first words come to mind that you feel best describe heritage conservation?

