# Strategies for Sustainability Survey Report: Conservation and Collections Care in Yorkshire, 2015

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**Museum Development Yorkshire** 

Providing Advice and Support for Museums in Yorkshire & the Humber



Commissioned by the York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship and Museum Development Yorkshire

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Thank you to all of the conservators and museum professionals working in the Yorkshire and Humber regions who generously gave their time to complete these surveys. Your responses were invaluable in gaining a clearer picture of the current state of the sector. Many thanks also to the initial conservator, and museum professional consultation group that met in December 2014 and helped to better define the scope of the surveys and the intended outcomes.

The surveys could not have been completed without the assistance of the steering committee of Dieter Hopkin, Susie Clark, Michael Turnpenny and Martin Stancliffe. Dieter Hopkin and Susie Clark gave their expertise in drafting the survey questions and were the original instigators of the study. Thanks also are owed to Michael Nelles at the London ICON office for details of ICON member numbers and categories.

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#### **Foreword**

York and Yorkshire are home to an amazing number of museums and galleries. These range from some of the most important collections in the UK to small but nevertheless significant collections of local interest. Care of these represents a serious responsibility for the various institutions concerned and a growing challenge to their ability to resource their proper curation.

Museum Development Yorkshire (MDY) and York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship (YCCC) believe that they have a common interest in working towards a better understanding of collections requirements for a sustainable future, and of the respective roles of curator and conservator. The two bodies have therefore joined forces for the first time to sponsor a survey of the present state of affairs, with the object of gaining a fact based understanding of the situation in the area's museums and galleries, and in the cohort of conservators working in the region.

These two bodies represent different interests, as MDY is charged with advice to museums on all aspects of curation and conservation; and YCCC represents the interests of conservators, both those working within institutions and freelance. But there are concerns which are common to both, and discussions between MDY and YCCC pointed to the need to find factual answers to such questions as: how is conservation provided in the current challenging times for Yorkshire's museums and what might this mean for the long-term care of the region's valuable collections?

This discussion led to the decision to sponsor two pilot surveys that aimed to examine the use of conservation in museums, what the needs of the sector are in this field and what conservation skills are available in the region. One survey was aimed at conservators either employed or free-lance and the other was directed towards museums and those within them who make decisions about collections care and conservation.

The results of this work are summarised in this report which we believe provides a useful snapshot of the way in which museums and conservators work together in their shared task to care for the museum collections in the Yorkshire and Humber region. The partnership between York Museums Trust's Museum Development team and members of York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship has itself been a formative and useful demonstration of how conservators and museum professionals can work together strategically to address issues of regional - even national - concern. It is clear that as a sector we need to respond to the growing

challenges to ensure the long term sustainability of the region's collections in which all concerned play a vital role.

The Report, which begins with an Executive Summary, is followed by individual responses to the findings, from YCCC and MDY respectively, which can be found at the end of the document in sections 6.3 and 6.4.

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## **Executive Summary**

This report provides an analysis of the current provision of conservation and collections care in the Yorkshire and Humber region. Evidence for the state of conservation within the region was gathered through two surveys, the first of conservators who have undertaken work within the geographic area within the last three years and the second of museum professionals within the region who make decisions regarding conservation and collections care budgets and procurement. This double-stranded approach was undertaken in order to gain a clearer picture of the current state of conservation and in an effort to better identify barriers to conservation care within the region. The data gained from the survey highlights the way that conservation services are used within the sector, assists in the detection of areas of weakness and provides a baseline from which to advocate for sustainable care of museum collections.

The two surveys were well supported by the professionals working within the sector. 49 conservators who have undertaken work in the region between 2012-2014 responded with answers about their employment/contracting experiences and 59 museum professionals supplied information about the ways in which their museums or museum services budgeted for and procured conservation services.

## **Key Findings of the Conservator Survey**

# **Conservator Demographics**

The Yorkshire and Humber region benefits from conservators in a wide variety of specialisms. Respondents to the survey included conservators with specialisms in paper, books, photographs, archives, objects, archaeology, paintings, gilding, frames, furniture, textiles, collections care, natural history, ceramics, glass and stained glass conservation. Yorkshire and Humber region conservators are highly experienced. 88% have been in practice for over 10 years and only 4% have been practicing for fewer than five years. Although the region benefits from an unusually experienced conservator cohort, the implication is that conservators within the region are skewed toward an older demographic and there is a potential risk that as the more experienced conservators reach retirement age there will not be younger conservators within the region to replace them. The mean for years in practice of conservator respondents is 23 years.

#### **ICON Accreditation**

92% of conservators surveyed are members of ICON, but only 57% hold accreditation (ACR) status. As 96% of respondents have been practicing for the recommended time necessary to apply for ICON accreditation, this is a low figure.

Accredited Museums are strongly encouraged to use conservators who "should be included on the Conservation Register operated by the Institute of Conservation (ICON)" Section 2.4. (h), Accreditation Standard.

Although the Conservation Register is administered by ICON, the body responsible for ICON accreditation, it is a paid advertising service and 71% of conservators practicing within Yorkshire are not listed on the Conservation Register.

Approximately 40% of conservators working within Yorkshire have also elected not to become accredited. Reasons given for this decision primarily centred on the high cost and a perceived lack of benefits offered by the accreditation scheme. The recommendation of the ACE Museum Accreditation Standard on the use of conservators listed on the Conservation Register will potentially exclude many experienced and accredited conservators from employment and appears to be a misunderstanding of the purpose of the Register as a paid advertising service. However, there is currently no other way of locating all accredited conservators through ICON.

The Museum Survey revealed that 23% of museums who use contract conservators are uncertain whether or not these conservators are ICON Accredited.

## **Key Findings of the Museum Survey**

The museum demographic within the Yorkshire and Humber region is varied and ranges from three large directly state funded national museums to a significant number of small independent voluntary run museums. Within this landscape, 67% of museum respondents work for independent charitable trusts. 23% work for the local authority, and the remaining 10% are spread across other heritage organisations such as the National Trust, English Heritage and Higher Education sectors. 91% of the respondents work for fully Accredited Museums.

Although all but one of the museums surveyed are fully accredited, provisionally accredited or working toward accreditation, only 50% of respondent organisations have a dedicated conservation and collections care budget. 68% of museums spend less than £5000 on conservation and collections care per year, and these budgets have tended to remain stable year on year. In the absence of dedicated conservation and collections care budgets, museums reported that they were most likely to pay for conservation services from other operational budgets (58%) or to rely on the success of external grants and funding applications (58%). Less likely sources of funding were Friends organisations, public appeals and private philanthropy.

#### **Museums and Conservators**

Although budgeting for conservation and collections care appears to be an issue, 86% of museum respondents reported using conservation expertise in managing collections. However, only 9 of the 59 institutions surveyed have an in-house conservator yet 11 institutions are supplying conservation advice or services to other museums within Yorkshire. 66% of museum respondents are contracting in conservators to provide advice or remedial conservation on their behalf. Museums were also asked about where they obtained conservation advice if they were not employing an in-house conservator or a contract conservator. Respondents reported taking conservation advice from non-conservators on a regular basis, with 14 respondents taking advice from their Museum Mentor and 8 taking advice from Museum Development Yorkshire. Another 9 received pro-bono advice from professional conservators.

Museum professionals reported that they are most likely to find contract conservators by word of mouth or recommendation from other museum professionals or their Museum Mentor, followed by the ICON Conservation Register. As only a minority of qualified conservators working with Yorkshire are listed on the Conservation Register, the museums may be at a disadvantage in sourcing affordable, quality conservation services due to lack of visibility of alternative conservation professionals.

Further questions in the Museum Survey attempted to elicit information on the roles that conservators are undertaking in museums. It appears that museum respondents were unlikely to use conservation expertise in many areas considered central to the conservator role.

#### Between 2012 and 2014:

- 25 of 52 respondents reported using conservation expertise for collections condition surveys
- 25 of 50 respondents reported using conservators to train staff
- 20 of 52 respondents reported using conservators to aid in the preparation of disaster plans
- 7 of 53 respondents reported using conservators for advice on care and handling for digitisation projects

#### **Museums and Volunteers:**

In the current economic climate many museums are relying increasingly on the goodwill and ability of volunteers in many areas of their operation. This also includes broad areas of collections care and conservation. In 2014, 39 of 52 respondent museums used volunteers to work on general conservation and

collections care projects. Although these projects were identified as conservation-based, a conservator provided training in only 32% of the cases. In 47% of the cases, a non-conservator provided the volunteers with training. This was reported as most likely to be a member of curatorial staff. Similar questions were asked regarding conservation training for volunteers working on cataloguing projects, photographing/digitisation projects and packaging and storing/rehousing projects. Again, the project least likely utilise conservators in the training of volunteers was photographing/digitising of collections at 10%, though all projects had a less than 20% likelihood of utilising conservator expertise in volunteer training.

Museums were also asked what may have prevented the use of conservators. Of a total of 38 respondents, 35 identified costs, 8 were unsure of what to ask a conservator to do, and 3 claimed conservation services were not readily available. A follow-on question regarding the specific services that were not readily available returned a variety of answers, mostly centred on general conservation advice or free conservation expertise. The lack of ease in sourcing ICON accredited conservators was also noted.

## **Payment for Conservation Services:**

Both the Conservator Survey and the Museum Survey responses indicated a great reliance on the good will of conservators in providing pro-bono advice. 89% of conservator respondents reported continuing to provide pro bono advice after their work was complete in an effort to ensure that further work is carried out to appropriate standards. 72% reported that they have been approached for free advice by non-client organisations and 92% reported that they have been approached for free advice by non-client individuals.

Museums also admit to using pro bono conservation advice, with 31% of museums without in house or contract conservators receiving free advice from specialists. Museums also indicated a desire for free or reduced rate conservation services in the questions regarding barriers to conservation usage with nearly all respondents claiming that cost is the greatest barrier and a number reporting that free conservation services are the greatest need.

# **Application of Findings**

The two surveys have yielded a large amount of data regarding the availability and provision of conservation services in the Yorkshire and Humber regions. The greatest issue identified is a lack of communication between conservation professionals and museum professionals from the national level to the local level. Confusion surrounds the ICON Conservation Register. Many individuals in museums

are under the impression that it is a list of all accredited conservators rather than a paid advertising service that accredited conservators in Yorkshire are entitled but unlikely to use. This is compounded by the wording of the detailed Accreditation Standard guidance documents which appear to be based on a similar misapprehension. The benefits of using ICON accreditation for conservators need to be clearer and more comprehensive.

Conservators have identified what they perceive as a lack of basic understanding from a significant number of museums and those working within them of what the role of a conservator entails and in what ways conservators might provide useful services. Only 13% of conservators reported that commissions are clearly expressed in the first instance, whereas 16% generally find the commission to indicate a significant lack of understanding of the conservator's work. This may also impact on the prioritization of such work at times when museum budgets are increasingly stretched. This indicates a need for clarity and outreach by ICON and conservators working within the heritage and private sectors.

The end result of this is a risk to the sustainability of collections due to a lack of budgetary planning for conservation and collections care on the part of museums. Although nearly all of the museums surveyed are Accredited or actively "Working Towards Accreditation", necessitating the adoption of a Care and Conservation Policy (Guidance Section 2.4) and a Care and Collections Plan (Guidance Section 2.6), only 50% account for this planning financially by allocating dedicated funding. A reliance on external funding, grants and the ability to take funds for conservation from other budgets within the institution is an approach that cannot guarantee the continued welfare of the collections.

These findings indicate the need for an urgent dialogue between professional conservators and the museum professionals responsible for making decisions about collections care and conservation within the Yorkshire and Humber region. Plans are underway for a symposium day for museum professionals and conservators to be held in the region in the coming months and ICON will be informed of the survey findings.

Whilst the survey findings relate to the Yorkshire and Humber region, the high number of respondents and institutions represented, together with the very clear results in many areas, suggest that the findings may have wider national implications.

#### 1. Introduction

## 1.1 Scope of the study

This report is a summary of the findings of two separate surveys conducted in January and February 2015. The surveys were undertaken in an effort to identify how conservation services are provided in Yorkshire, to determine the needs of the museum sector and to evaluate the range of conservation skills available within the region. These factors were identified as being extremely significant for future advocacy for the need for conservation within the museum sector and to provide a clearer and more accurate understanding of the current status of conservation provision and the implications for long term care of collections within the Yorkshire and Humber region. The survey responses were anonymous and participants were able to opt out of questions if desired.

Several forays into analysing the state of the conservation and collections care sector have been undertaken in the past, and these served to inspire the line of questioning followed in this survey. Of particular interest were the works "Conservation Future Challenges: Proceedings of a Meeting at West Dean College, November 1998" published by English Heritage, the 1997 "Survey of Industrial and Social History Collections in the Museums of Yorkshire and Humberside" by the Yorkshire and Humberside Museums Council and the "Conservation Provision in the East Midlands Report" commissioned by EMMLAC in 2005. The most recent and comprehensive work was undertaken by Ken Aitchison and published by ICON, "Conservation Labour Market Intelligence 2012-2013". This work surveyed institutions employing conservators to gather data about the state of the sector but the scope of the project did not include surveying the conservators. The surveys which make up this report included both employing institutions and conservators in an effort to gain a clearer picture of the current state of the sector in the Yorkshire and Humber region.

The study was commissioned as a partnership project between the York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship (YCCC) and Museum Development Yorkshire (MDY). The YCCC is an association of individuals and companies who are actively engaged in or otherwise support the conservation of built and artistic heritage (York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship, 2015). MDY is part of a national Museum Development programme funded by Arts Council England (ACE). In Yorkshire, this is delivered by York Museums Trust through MDY. MDY supports museums and galleries within the Yorkshire and Humber region in their efforts to provide facilities and services that meet or exceed recognised standards within the museum sector (i.e. Museum Accreditation). This is done through the provision of quidance, information, advice and consultancy services (York Museums Trust, 2015).

The decision to undertake two surveys allowed for the study to encompass the provision of conservation from the viewpoint of the conservator-practitioner as well as from the institutions responsible for collections care across the region. The first survey was intended to be answered by professional conservators who had conducted work within the Yorkshire and Humber regions over the three years 2012-2014. The second survey was intended to be answered by museum professionals and others who have responsibility for the management of conservation and collections care and the budgets and resources associated with these. The survey of museums also focussed on the three years 2012-2014.

The two individual surveys will hereafter be referred to by the terms 'Conservator Survey' and 'Museum Survey'. The structure of this report follows the question grouping of the two surveys, which may be found in Appendices 6.1 and 6.2.

#### 1.2 Methods

## **Conservator Survey**

The Conservator Survey was advertised beginning in November 2014 via the Conservation Dist List (a listserv run by Stanford University in California), the ICON Iconnect email bulletin (a subscription service offered by the Institute of Conservation in the UK which is emailed to members on an opt-in basis), the Museum Development Yorkshire e-bulletin and the York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship Newsletter. An additional 55 individual conservators known to practice within the region were also identified by the steering group and were sent an email notification of the survey. The survey was released on January 13, 2015 and closed for responses on January 31, 2015. In that time there were 49 individual responses. ICON's recorded membership numbers for Yorkshire (November 2014) are 13 Accredited Members (ACR status) and 25 Full Members. Due to the nature of the advertising and small community that is conservation in the UK, it is believed that a very high percentage of all possible respondents provided survey data.

The Conservator Survey consisted of 40 questions in an online format. The questions were divided into the following categories:

- Professional Demographics (questions concerning conservation specialty, level of employment, experience level, professional accreditation)
- Economic Trends (questions concerning employment stability, revenue and time allocation)
- Professional Visibility (questions concerning service procurement avenues, advice provision and perceptions of conservation within the region)

## **Museum Survey**

The Museum Survey was released on February 4, 2015 and was open until February 28, 2015. In that time there were 59 responses. The Museum Survey was advertised via multiple paper-based and online newsletter notifications by Museum Development Yorkshire and the York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship beginning in November 2014. Direct email recipients who had lead responsibility for collections care and conservation in museums and museum services were identified by survey partner Museum Development Yorkshire and a total of 85 individuals representing museums or multi-site museums services were contacted in addition to notifications via E newsletter.

The Museum Survey consisted of 48 questions in an online format. The questions were divided into the following categories:

- Institutional Status (questions concerning the type of institution and accreditation)
- Budget Status (questions concerning the existence and extent of a budget for conservation and collections care)
- Employment of Conservators (questions concerning the usage of in house or contract conservators within the institution)
- Role of Conservators (questions concerning the scope of work of conservators within the institution)
- Use of Volunteers (questions concerning the usage of volunteers to undertake conservation and collections care work within the institution)
- Factors Influencing the Use of Conservators

# 1.3 Evaluation and Response Rates

The Conservator Survey had a high level of response with 49 individuals completing the survey, or 89% of the predicted existing conservators working within the region. The Museum Survey was completed by 59 respondents, or approximately 71% of the estimated museums or other institutions identified by MDY. The high level of response for both surveys indicates that the resulting data provides a good general overview of both the state of conservation provision by conservators within Yorkshire and the Humber and the usage of conservators and collections care professionals by museums and similar organisations within the region. The Conservator Survey also returned a high level of completion. The Museum Survey fared less well with a number of respondents choosing to answer only select questions. The number of respondents is related at the bottom of each graph appearing in the following section (n=sample size).

## 1.4 Glossary of terms used in the report

**Accreditation (for Conservators):** Conservators who hold ACR (Accredited) status have undergone assessment of their professional practice. ICON recommends that applicants apply for ACR status after 5 years of post-programme practical work or after 8-10 years of practical work if the individual did not attend a formal training programme. Accredited conservators must have demonstrated that they are highly competent, utilise sound judgment and hold an in-depth knowledge of conservation ethics and principles. Accreditation must be maintained by continuing professional development and may be revoked if the conservator fails to maintain correct ethics and practice standards.

Accreditation (for Museums): The main museum sector standard, the Museum Accreditation Scheme was created in 2004 and replaced the predecessor Museum Registration Scheme which had operated since 1988. It sets nationally agreed standards for museums operating within the UK. It is administered by Arts Council England in partnership with CyMAL, Museum Galleries Scotland and the Northern Ireland Museum Council. The purpose of the Museum Accreditation Scheme is to raise museum standards in the UK through supporting museums through the process of identifying areas for development and examining standards (Arts Council England, 2015).

**Conservator:** A conservator is an individual who has undertaken professional training to gain the knowledge, experience and skills to act in the care of cultural heritage. They are distinguished from other heritage and museum professionals by their specific education in conservation-restoration (in the UK, this generally takes the form of an undergraduate or post graduate degree in Conservation). The role of the conservator consists of stabilising the condition of cultural heritage and retarding further deterioration (ICON, 2015).

**ICON:** ICON is an acronym for the Institute of Conservation. It is a registered charity organisation with the goals of advancing knowledge and education in conservation. ICON provides advocacy, education and training opportunities and seeks to unite the conservation profession. ICON pioneered the Accreditation scheme for conservators and hosts the ICON Conservation Register.

**ICON Conservation Register:** The Conservation Register is a list of businesses that provide conservation services. For a business to be included on the Conservation Register the lead conservator must have successfully completed the accreditation process and hold ACR status. The Conservation Register is a paid service provided by ICON and not all Accredited Conservators are listed (ICON, 2015)

**Museum Mentor:** Museum Mentors are museum professionals who support smaller, independent museums in the United Kingdom in developing applications for Accreditation and subsequent Accreditation returns. To fulfil the requirements of Accreditation all museums must have access to appropriately qualified professional staff. This can be through employing these staff or through the Museum Mentor scheme. Mentors work in partnership with museums and local museum support services to ensure the museum has access to the advice it needs. Without this support 31 per cent of all participating museums would be unable to retain the award (Arts Council, 2015).

**Practical Conservation Treatments:** This refers to treatments requiring physical intervention to the object as opposed to preventative treatment undertaken via environmental control.

## 2. Conservator Survey Data

## 2.1 Professional Demographics

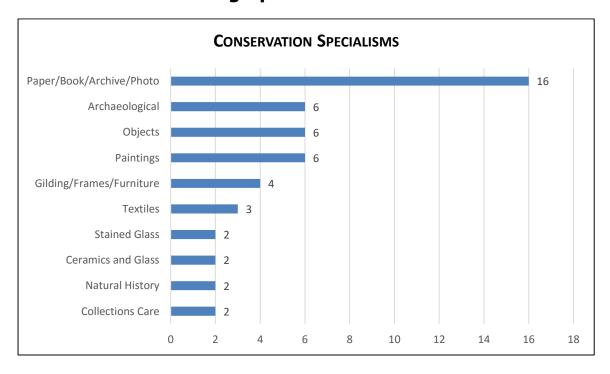


Chart 1 – n=49

Conservators in the Yorkshire and Humber regions provide a wide variety of conservation specialisms. Conservators were asked to self-identify their main area of expertise. The results show that each individual specialism is represented by at least two providers, which ensures choice for museums and contractors of conservation services. We asked that survey respondents answer the survey only if they have undertaken work in the region within the last three years. This limitation ensured that the data returned reflected the most accurate representation of the current state of the market for conservators practicing within the region.

The largest percentage (33%) of respondents self-identified as paper/book/archive/photographic conservators. The second most popular specialisms were paintings, archaeological and objects conservation which were represented by 12% of all respondents, respectively. (49/49 responded)

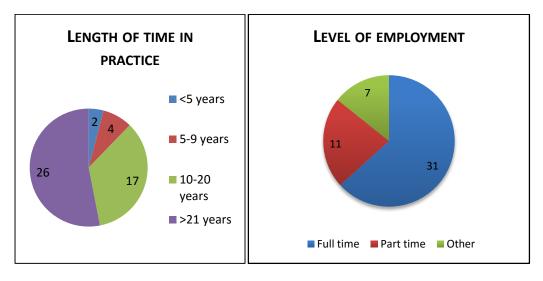


Chart 2 - n = 49 Chart 3 - n = 49

Conservators who practiced within the Yorkshire and Humber regions within the last three years tended to be highly experienced. Over 53% of conservators have been practicing for more than 21 years, and 35% have been practicing for between 10 and 20 years. According to ICON:

The Professional Accreditation of Conservator-Restorers (PACR) implements standards for the care of our cultural heritage across a range of disciplines. Accredited Conservator-Restorers (ACR) have demonstrated to assessors that they have the appropriate knowledge, practical skills and sound professional judgement. The processing of accreditation applications is overseen by the Accreditation Committee (ICON 2015).

ICON Accreditation guidelines advise that most conservators apply (for accreditation) 5 years after completing their primary conservation training (e.g. a first degree or Masters, or 8 -10 years after working in conservation including practical training (Icon 2015). This indicates that 96% of conservator survey respondents are eligible to apply for accredited conservator status. 63% of conservators working in Yorkshire are employed on a full time basis.

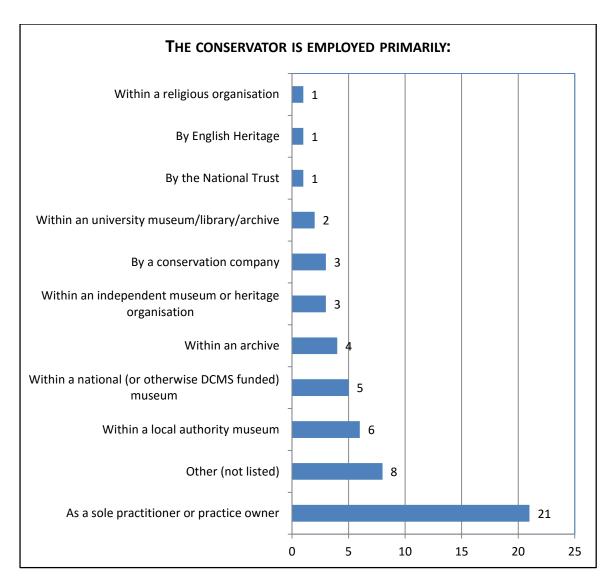


Chart 4 - n=49

Conservators were asked to identify the type of employer for whom they work. 43% of total respondents identified themselves as sole practitioners or practice owners. Conservators were also asked to supply the number of conservators employed by their organisation. 48 of 49 supplied answers ranging from a high of 21 to the mode of 1.

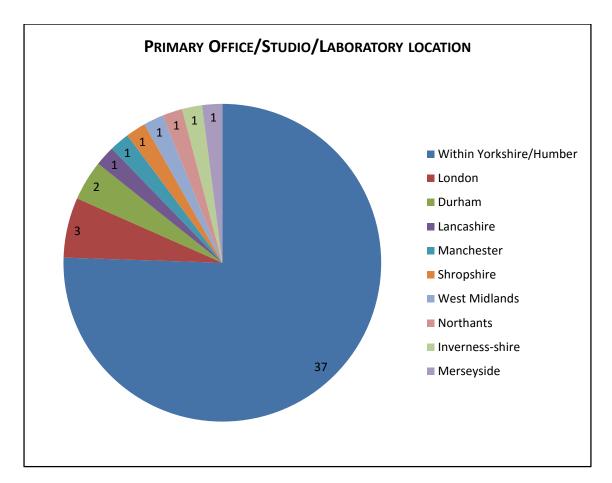


Chart 5 - n=49

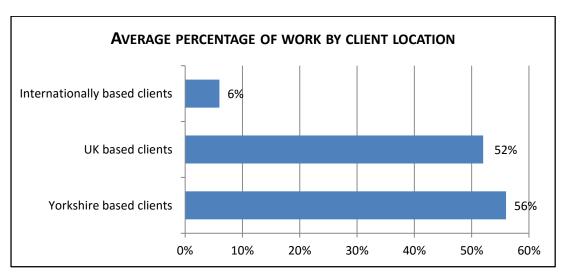


Chart 6 – n=47

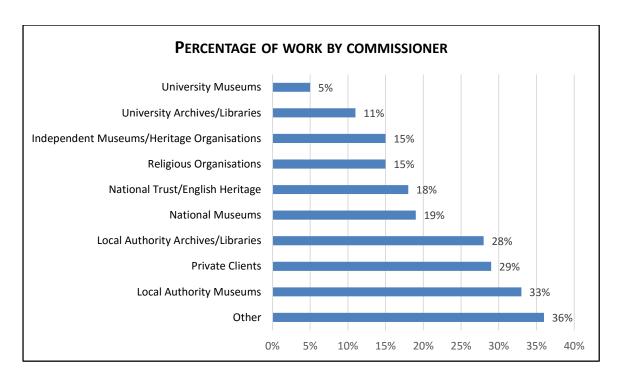


Chart 7 - n=47

76% of conservation survey respondents have their primary workplace within the Yorkshire and Humber region. All respondents (including those outside Yorkshire) were asked to estimate the average percentage of work commissioned by client location and by client type. Yorkshire-based clients accounted for approximately 56% of the average conservator's commissions. The most frequent specifically identified commissioners of conservation work were Local Authority Museums, followed by private clients and local authority archives and libraries.

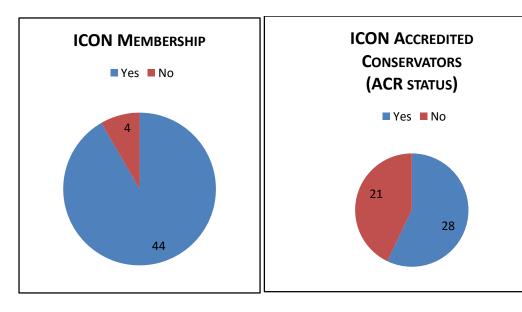


Chart 8 - n = 48 Chart 9 - n = 49

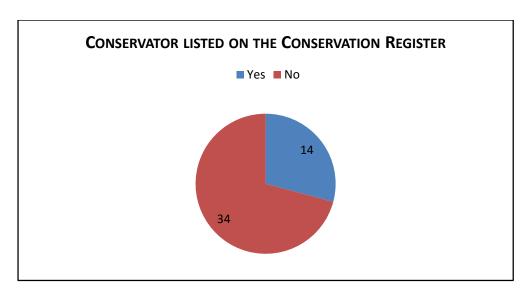


Chart 10 - n=48

The Museum Accreditation Standard recommends that conservation projects within museums should be undertaken by conservators listed on the Conservation Register. Museum Accreditation Standard Guidelines Section 2.4g states:

"The museum should receive regular advice from a conservator or collection care adviser, or other appropriately qualified/experienced person on the museum's approach to collection care activities. Remedial conservation work should be carried out by or under the supervision of a conservator."

Section 2.4h includes the reference to use of conservators from the ICON Register:

"The policy should state the criteria it will adopt in selecting private/freelance conservators. Where a museum employs a professional conservator, the policy should make reference to how their skills are utilised. Any conservator or conservation practice that is contracted to provide advice or services should be included on the Conservation Register operated by the Institute of Conservation (ICON) and, where available, a professionally accredited conservator should be used."

These recommendations highlight what appears to be a misunderstanding of the purpose of the Conservation Register. The Conservation Register is an advertising service provided (for an additional fee) by ICON and not a comprehensive list of ACR conservators. To be listed on the Conservation Register one of the conservators employed by a firm must hold ACR status (ICON 2015).

The conservators who responded to the survey are largely members of ICON (92%). Although all but 4% of the respondents are experienced enough to apply for ACR status, only 57% currently are accredited. Reasons given by respondents included the initial expense of accreditation and the higher fees for ICON membership for ACRs. Only 50% of ICON ACRs are listed on the Conservation Register.

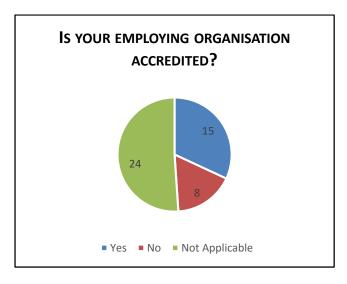


Chart 11 - n=47

Conservators were asked if the organisation by which they were employed is an Accredited Museum or Accredited Archive under the ACE and TNA schemes. Although a large number of conservators found this question to be not applicable to their situation, 32% of remaining respondents work for accredited organisations and 17% work for non-accredited institutions.

## 2.2 Economic Trends

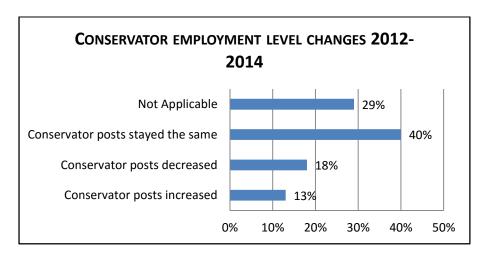


Chart 12 – n=45

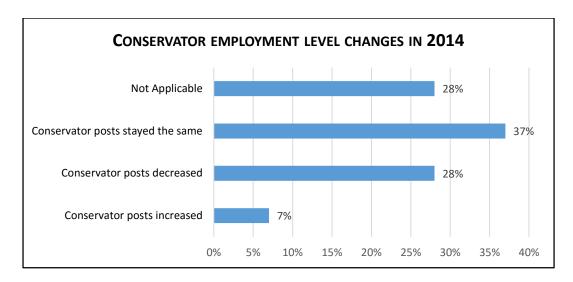


Chart 13 – n=46

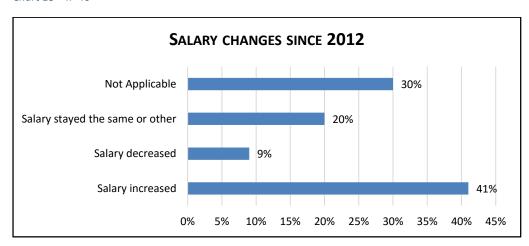


Chart 14 - n=44

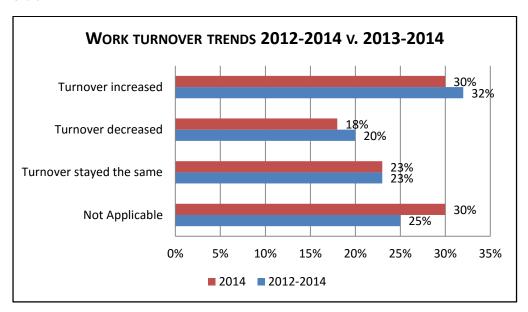


Chart 15 - n=44

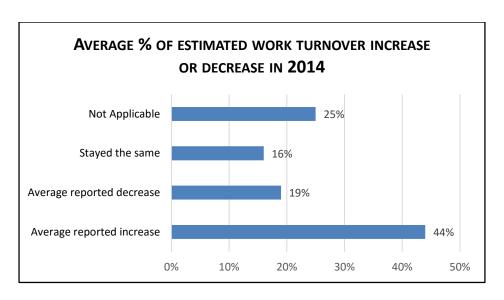


Chart 16 - n=32

Conservators were asked to identify the number of conservation posts added or lost by their employing organisation in the last year and over the last three years. A downward trend in employment was reported over all categories. For the years 2012-2014, 18% of conservators reported that posts had decreased at their organisation and 28% reported a decrease for the single year 2014. For the years 2012-2014 13% of conservators reported an increase in conservation posts, but for 2014 only 7% reported the increase.

40% of conservator respondents reported that their salaries had increased overall since 2012. 32% reported an increase in work turnover in the years spanning 2012-2014, and 44% reported an increase for 2014.

Conservators who experienced an overall increase in work turnover reported an average increase of 44% from 2013 to 2014. Conservators who experienced an overall decreased reported an average decrease in turnover of 19% from 2013-2014.

Some questions were asked specifically of conservators that have undertaken work for institutions over the years between 2012 and 2014. The following series of questions were intended to highlight conservation budget spending in institutions that employ conservators. Some of the questions applied to only a small percentage of the survey respondents.

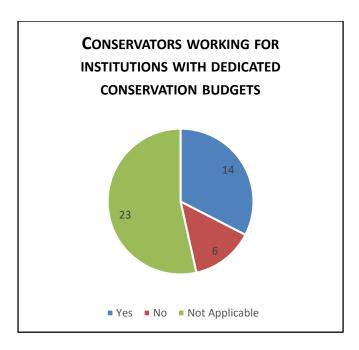
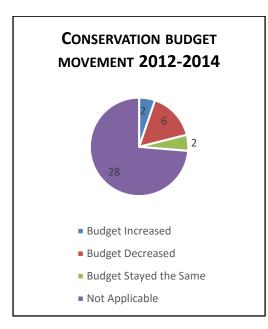


Chart 17 – n=43



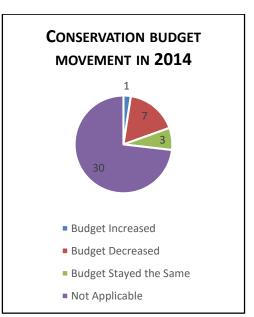
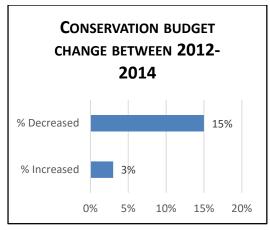


Chart 18 – n=38 Chart 19 – n=38



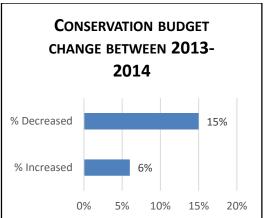


Chart 20 - n=6

Chart 21 - n=7

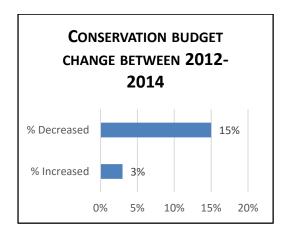


Chart 22 - n=8

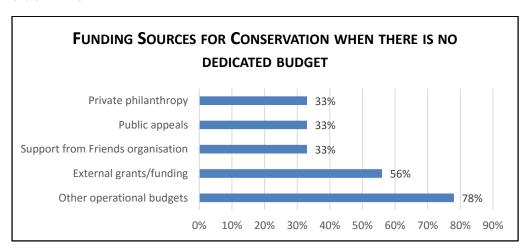


Chart 23 - n=9

When a dedicated budget is not in existence, funding for conservation work is most likely to be sourced from other operational budgets followed by the acquisition of external grants and funding. Only 23% of respondents found this question to be applicable, which is in keeping with the number that declared that their organisation did not have a dedicated conservation budget.

Conservators were asked to estimate the value of conservation work to the organisation if such work was undertaken internally. Of 9 respondents, 3 stated that their work had an internal value of under £10K, 2 respondents that their work had a value of between £25-50K and 4 respondents that their work had an internal value of between £50-100K.

Conservators were also asked to estimate the value of the conservation work undertaken for external clients. Of 11 respondents, 5 estimated that their work had a value of less than £10K, 3 believed their work had a value of between £10-25K, 1 that their work had a value of between £25-50K and 2 between £50-100K.

#### 2.3 Conservator Roles

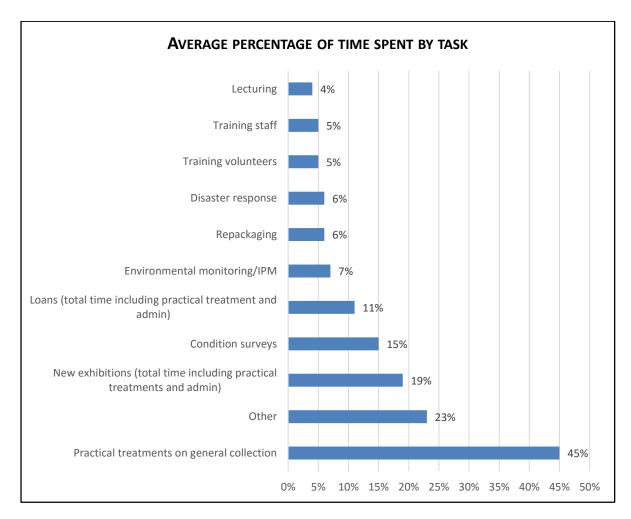


Chart 24 – n=41

Conservators were asked how much of their time was spent on the above tasks, by percentage. The average conservator's time is spent primarily on practical treatments on the general collection followed by the named categories of work for new exhibitions, condition surveys and loans.

Of the percentage of the day spent on practical treatment time, the majority of practical treatments are devoted to work on specific exhibitions and loans, followed

by work on general collections in store. The average conservator surveyed reported spending only 13% of their practical treatment time on items on routine display. This question was applicable to 17 of the 49 conservators surveyed.

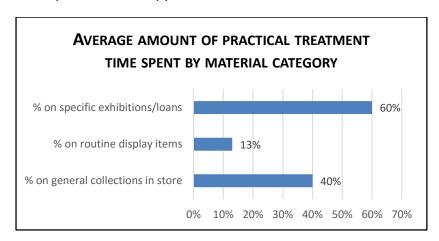


Chart 25 – n=17

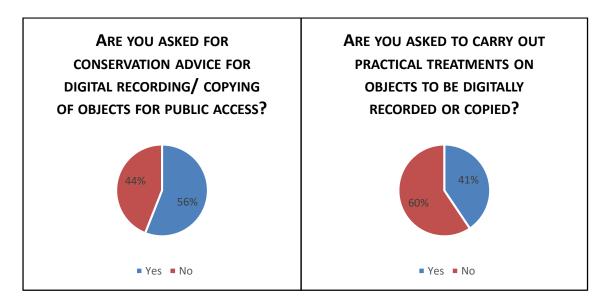


Chart 26 - n = 27 Chart 27 - n = 27

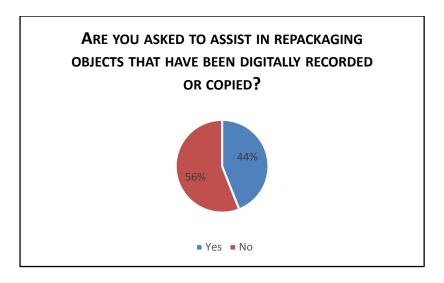


Chart 28 - n=25

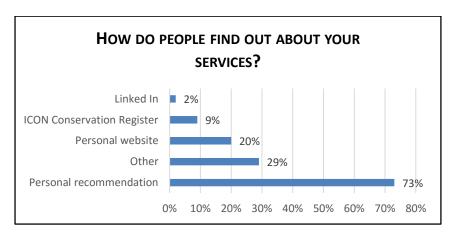


Chart 29 - n=41

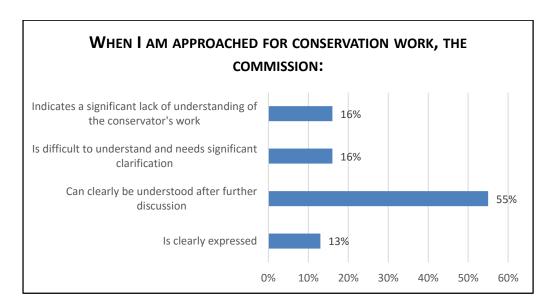


Chart 30 - n=38

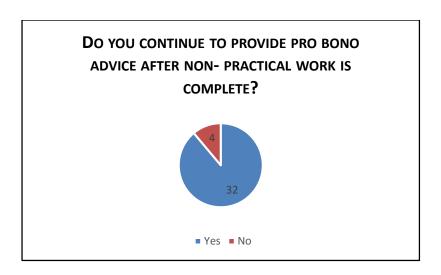


Chart 31 - n=36

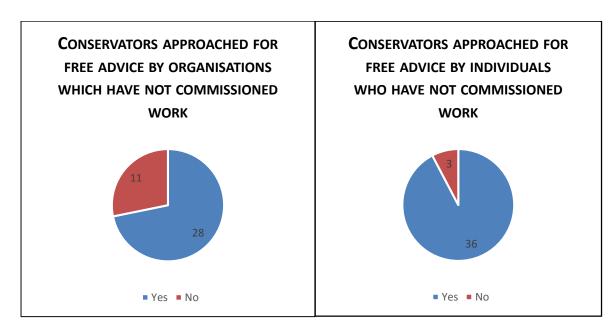


Chart 32 - n = 39 Chart 33 - n = 39

89% of conservators provide free advice after non-practical work such as condition survey or volunteer training is completed to ensure that work is carried out to appropriate standards. 72% of conservators are approached for free advice by organisations who have not commissioned paid work, and 92% of conservators are approached for free advice by individuals who have not commissioned paid work.

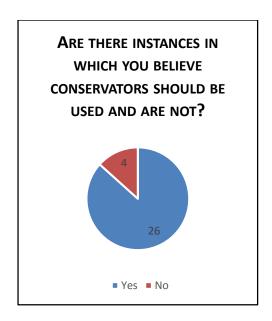


Chart 34 - n=30

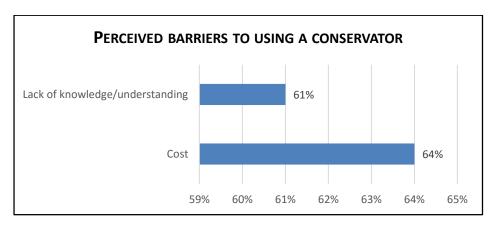


Chart 35 - 33/49 respondents

Conservators were asked if there were instances in which they believed that conservation services (theirs or those of other specialists) should be used and were not. 87% of respondents replied in the affirmative. Conservators were asked also to identify the barriers that they believed prevented the use of their services or the services of other conservation professionals. The question was open-ended and no suggestions were provided. The answers that were returned fell into only two categories: a lack of knowledge and understanding of the role of the conservator and the cost of conservation.

## 3. Museum Survey Data

The Museum Survey was slightly longer than the Conservator Survey and consisted of 48 questions in an online format. Questions were divided into categories relating to institutional status, conservation budget, conservator employment, conservator roles, use of volunteers and finally factors influencing the use of conservators. A number of the questions were designed to identify answers to the same questions asked of the conservators in the preceding survey.

## 3.1 Institutional Demographics

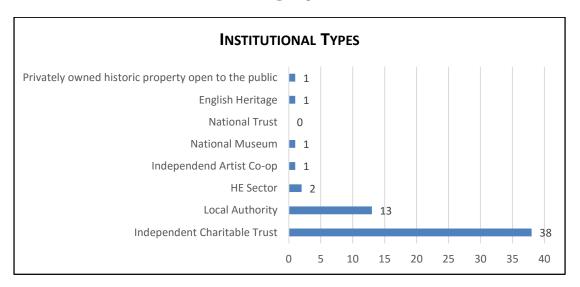


Chart 36 - n=57

Museums were asked to classify their institutional type. 38 museums self-identified as being independent charitable trusts followed by local authority museums at 13 institutions (which will include multi-site services). 2 respondents were from the HE (Higher Education) sector, 1 was an English Heritage property, 1 a national museum and 1 an independent artist co-operative (Co-op). The final respondent institution was a privately owned historic property.

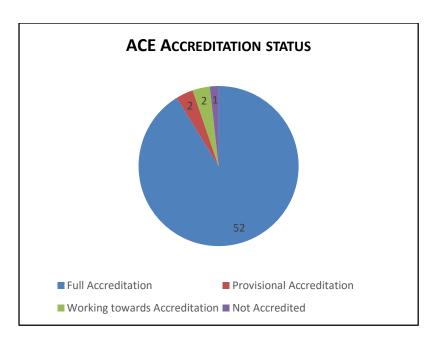


Chart 37 – n=57

91% of respondents hold ACE Museum Accreditation, with the remaining respondents apart from one actively working towards accreditation or holding provisional accreditation status.

## 3.2 Budget Status

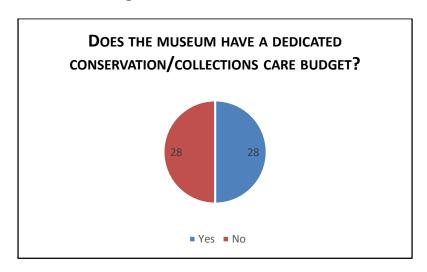


Chart 38 – n=56

Exactly 50% of museums that responded to this question have a dedicated conservation or collections care budget.

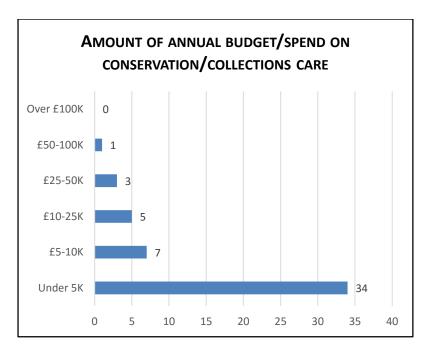
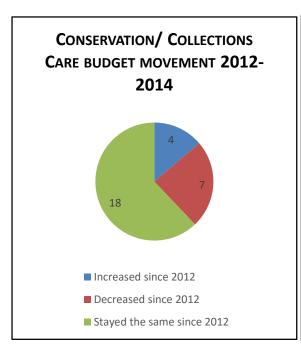


Chart 39 - n=50

68% of respondents spend less than £5,000 on conservation and collections care per year. 14% spend between £5-10K.



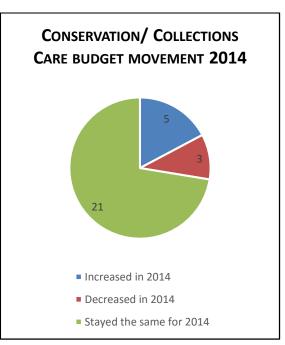


Chart 40 – n=24

Chart 41 – n=29

The majority of museums with a dedicated budget for conservation and collections care reported the budget has remained the same in the years since 2012. For the museums that reported a change, the average estimated increase and decrease were not significantly different.

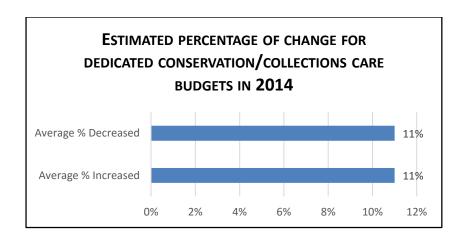


Chart 42 - n=10

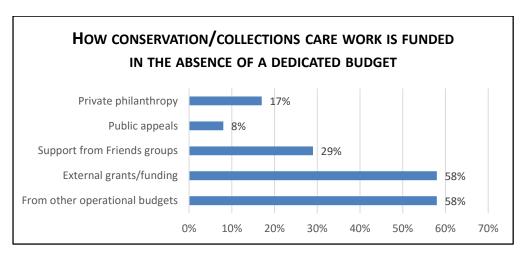


Chart 43 – n=24

Museums were asked to identify the ways in which conservation and collections care work is financially provided for when a dedicated budget is not planned. External grants/funding and other operational budgets are relied upon most frequently to cover conservation. Less likely sources are Friends groups, philanthropy and public appeals.

#### 3.3 Conservator Employment

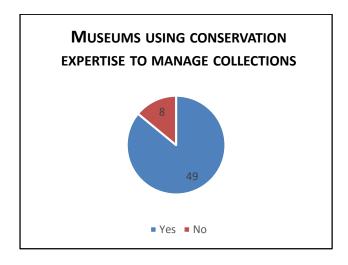
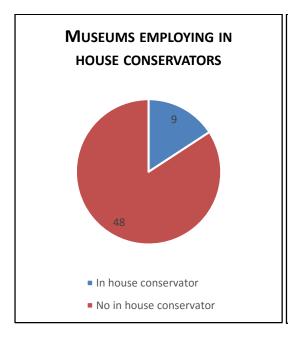


Chart 44 - n=57



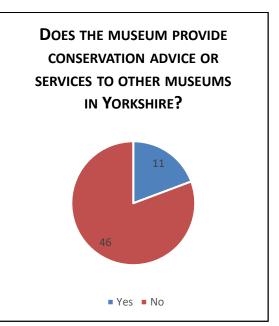


Chart 46 – n=57

Chart 47 – n=57

86% of museums use conservation expertise to manage their collections, and 84% do not employ an in house conservator. The number of in house conservators employed by respondents ranged from .5-4. The mode was 1. 11 museums reported that they provide conservation advice and services to other museums but only 9 museums employ conservators. When museums provide conservation advice and services to other museums, it most often takes the form of advice (9 museums). 4 museums provide training and 2 provide remedial conservation. When museums provide other Yorkshire organisations with conservation advice and services, 88% of the time it is given pro bono. 50% of the time it is contract charged for full cost recovery, and 25% of the time it is charged at a discount.

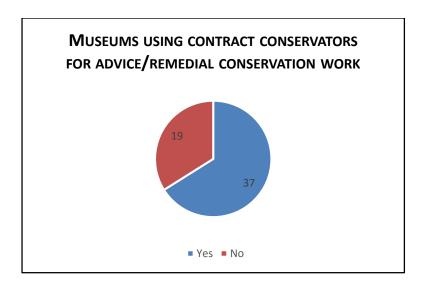


Chart 48 – n=56

66% of museum respondents use contract conservators for advice and remedial conservation work.

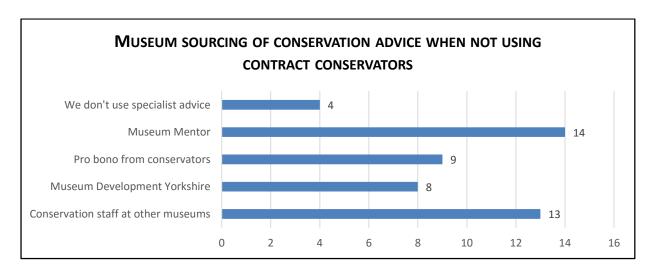


Chart 49 – n=29

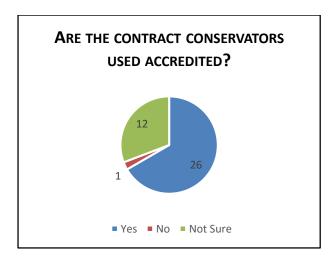


Chart 50 - n=39

Museums which reported that they did not use contract conservators took conservation advice from a variety of sources. Museum Mentors were the most cited source of conservation advice, followed by conservation staff at other museums, pro bono advice from professional conservators and Museum Development Yorkshire. 4 respondents stated that they do not use any conservation advice at all. In most instances the contract conservators used held accreditation status, but in 12 cases the museum reported being unaware of whether the conservator was accredited.

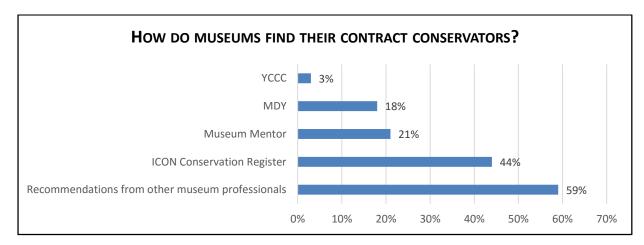


Chart 51 - n=39

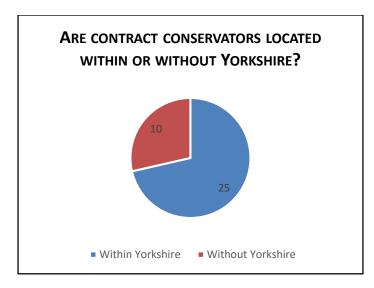


Chart 52 - n=35

Contract conservators are sourced primarily via recommendations from other museum professionals, followed by the Conservation Register, the advice of the Museum Mentor, and Museum Development Yorkshire. 71% of contract conservators used come from within Yorkshire.

#### 3.4 Conservator Roles

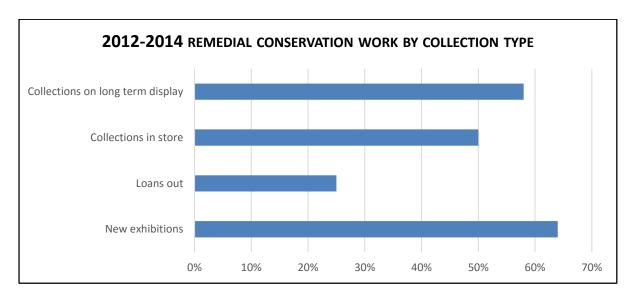
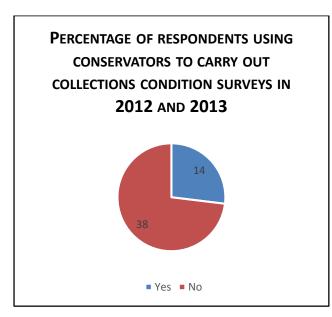


Chart 53 - n=36

Museums were most likely to use conservators to carry out remedial conservation work on new exhibitions, followed by collections on long term display. The least likely collection materials to receive remedial conservation attention were outgoing loans.



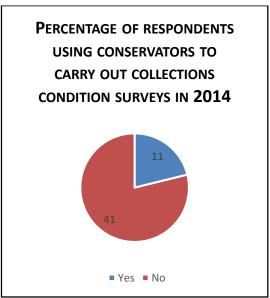
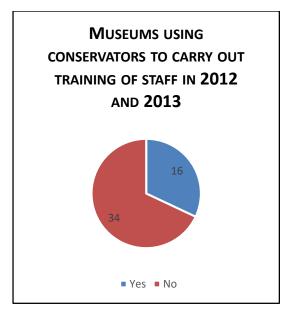


Chart 54 – n=52 Chart 55 – n=52

Museums were unlikely to use conservators to carry out collections condition surveys. In the years 2012 and 2013, only 27% of respondents used conservators for this purpose. In 2014, this percentage dropped to 21%.



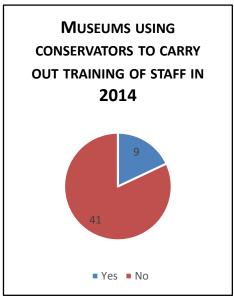


Chart 56 – n=50 Chart 57- n=50

Similarly low numbers were seen in the usage of conservators in the training of staff. In the years 2012 and 2013, 32% of museums used conservators for this purpose. In 2014, this number dropped to only 18%.

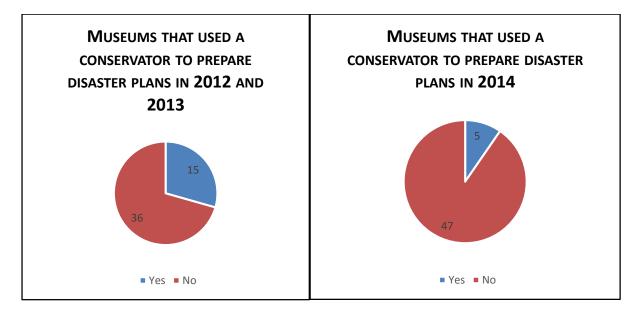


Chart 58 - n=51 Chart 59 - n=52

Museums were also unlikely to use conservators in the preparation of disaster plans (now part of Emergency Plans in Museum Accreditation Standard Section 1.9). In the years 2012 and 2013, 29% of museums used conservators for this purpose. In 2014, only 10% of museums reported using conservators in the preparation of their disaster plans.

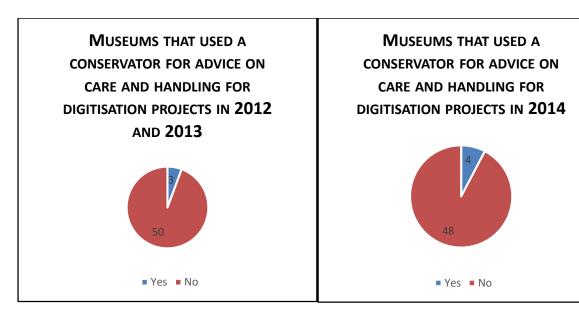


Chart 60 - n=53 Chart 61 - n=52

In 2012 and 2013, 6% of museums consulted a conservator for advice on care and handling for digitisation projects. A higher percentage of 8% used a conservator for this purpose in 2014.

#### 3.5 Volunteer Usage

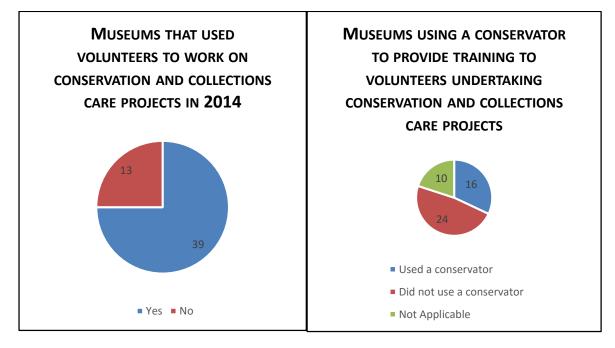


Chart 62 - n=52 Chart 63 - n=50

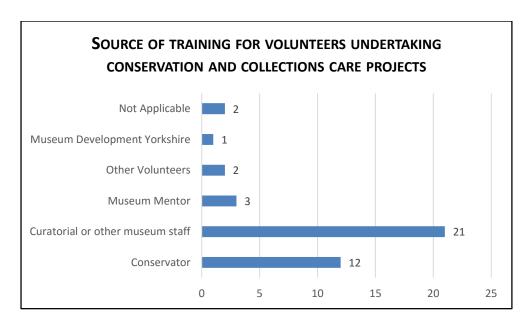
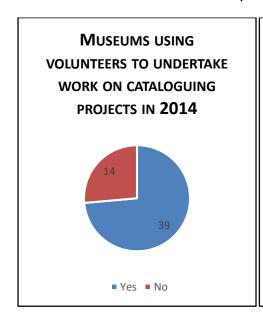


Chart 64 - n=41

39 of the 52 respondent museums utilised volunteers in the provision of conservation and collections care projects during 2014. Of these museums, only 40% reported using a conservator in the training of these volunteers. A further question was put to the museums in an effort to identify the provider of training to volunteers undertaking conservation and collections care projects. The responses were varied, with curatorial and other museum staff being the most likely providers of training to volunteers at 54%. The second most likely provider of conservation and collections care training to volunteers were conservators at 31%, and the remainder of training was reported as being provided by Museum Mentors, other volunteers and Museum Development Yorkshire.

Chart 66 - n=52



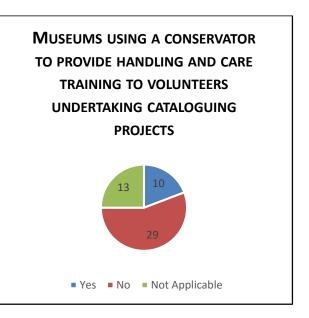
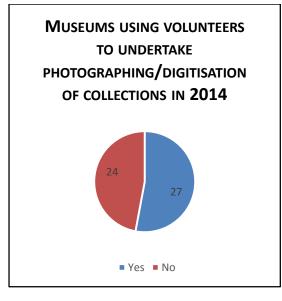


Chart 65 - n=53

Another project for which museums are using volunteers is in the undertaking of cataloguing of collections. In 2014, 74% of respondents used volunteers, but only 26% of these used conservators to train the volunteers in the work.



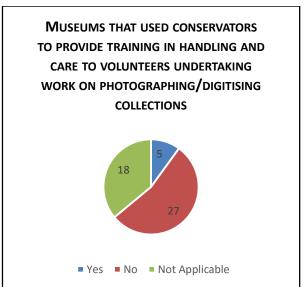


Chart 68 - n=51 Chart 69 - n=50

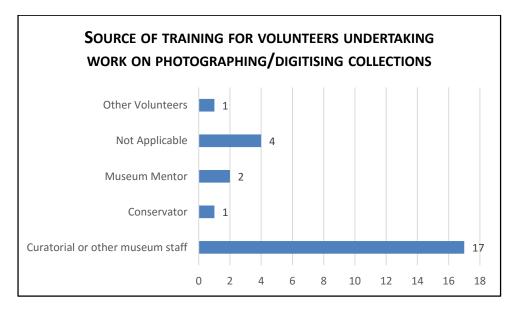
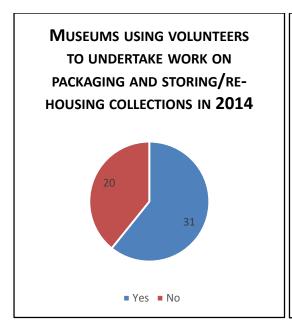


Chart 70 - n=27

Museums are also likely to use volunteers to undertake digitisation and photographing of collections work, though slightly less so than for the preceding tasks. In 2014, 53% of respondents used volunteers for these tasks. Only 16% of respondents reported using conservators in the training of volunteers undertaking digitisation and photographing of collections work.



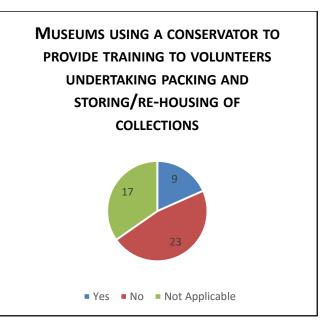


Chart 71 - n=51 Chart 72 - n=49

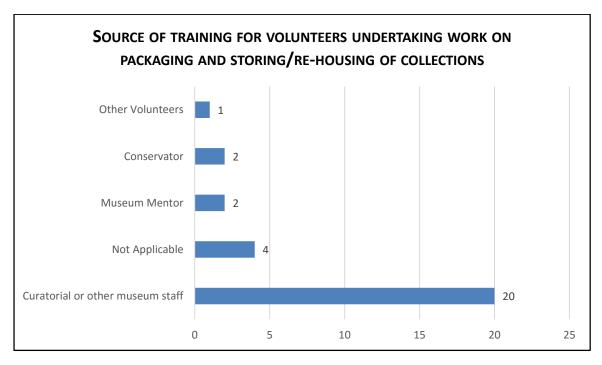


Chart 73 - n=30

In 2014, 61% of museum respondents reported using volunteers to undertake work in packaging and storing/rehousing collections. Of these, only 28% used conservators in the training of these volunteers. In the majority of cases, training to these volunteers was provided by curatorial or other members of museum staff.

#### 3.6 Factors Influencing the Use of Conservators

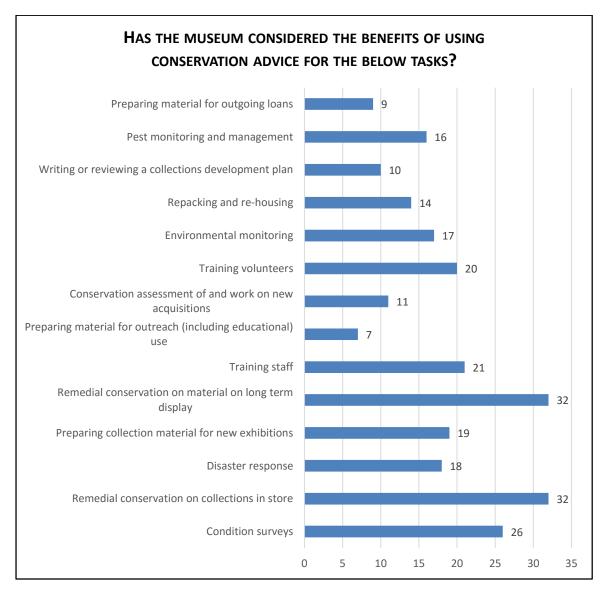


Chart 74 - n=47

Museums were asked to identify areas in which they had considered using conservator advice. The results showed that museums were overwhelmingly most likely to think of using a conservator when the objects in question required remedial conservation (practical work) at 68% of respondents. Other likely areas to inspire conservator usage were condition surveys at 55% and staff training at 45%. The least likely areas to inspire the consideration of using a conservator were preparing material for outreach at 15% of respondents, preparing material for outgoing loans at 19%, writing and reviewing a collections development plan at 21% and assessing and working on new acquisitions at 23% of respondents.

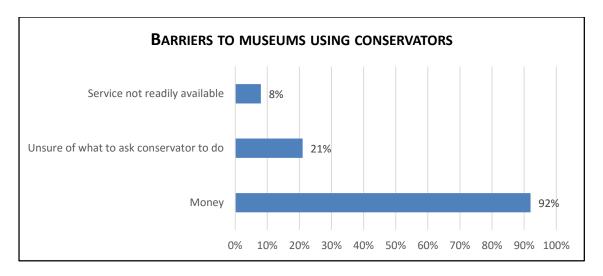


Chart 75 - n=38

Museums were asked to identify the main barriers to using conservators. The most popular answer was money at 92% of respondents. 21% of respondents identified a lack of confidence in identifying the jobs for the conservator. This question was an echo of that in the conservator's survey and the response data aligns. 8% of museum respondents claimed that the service needed was not readily available.

#### 4. Conclusions

The two surveys provided a wealth of data concerning the recent and current provision of conservation services in the Yorkshire and Humber regions, from the perspective of both the professional conservators providing the services and the museum professionals commissioning conservation and collections care work. The surveys have identified some trends that bear further examination.

#### **Matching Conservation Expertise to Museum Needs**

In the last three years (2012-2014), at least 49 professional conservators were providing services to the Yorkshire and Humber region. These conservators come from a very broad variety of specialisms and tended to be very experienced, yet when the museums were asked about barriers to employing conservators 8% claimed that the area of expertise needed was not available. As the survey revealed that there are at least two individual conservators practicing in the region in each specialism, this may indicate a lack of effective communication between museums and conservators regarding the commissioning of work and the sourcing of professionals to undertake the work. The emphasis for museums undergoing the accreditation process to commit to using conservators from the Conservation Register may unintentionally preclude experienced, Accredited conservators from being approached for work. The Conservation Register is an optional paid

advertising service provided by ICON and not all Accredited conservators choose to pay the listing fee. In the Conservator Survey data revealed that 71% of surveyed conservators are not listed.

Another issue in matching conservators with museum employment may be the apparent reluctance of some conservators to undertake Accreditation. Although 92% of conservators surveyed are members of ICON only 57% hold Accreditation (ACR) status.

These factors may have the effect of unnecessarily limiting the ability of conservators in the area to provide affordable and competitive services to museums and should be addressed.

The Conservator Survey also identified the work of conservators as being misunderstood frequently. This emphasises the need for conservators to better communicate their professional capabilities and the advantages of using conservation expertise in situations that are not limited to remedial practical conservation work on objects.

#### **Budgets**

Half of the museums surveyed do not have a dedicated budget for conservation and collections care work. Those without dedicated budgets identified most likely sources of funding for needed work to be other institutional budgets or grants. Without a dedicated budget for basic conservation and collections care museums may be opening their collections to risk and they cannot guarantee the future wellbeing or sustainability of the physical collections within the region.

The issue of the lack of budgetary provision for conservation is compounded by the apparent willingness of 89% of conservators surveyed to provide their services probono in an effort to educate other heritage professionals and volunteers and to support the condition of the objects within collections.

#### **Training and Volunteers**

The results of the Museum Survey had the unexpected outcome of highlighting the reliance of the region's museums on volunteer labour. A significant number of museums are either largely or entirely volunteer operated. All work within them is led by volunteers with possible guidance from a Museum Mentor. In many institutions, volunteers are undertaking work that traditionally rested with professional conservators. In 2014, 75% of respondent museums utilised volunteer labour to undertake work on self-identified conservation and collections care projects. In only 32% of these cases was a professional conservator brought in to provide training to the volunteers. The largest percentage of training (47%) was

provided by non-conservators, often members of curatorial staff. In many cases, the question of who is training the trainer is ambiguous. Roles for which a conservator is specifically trained are being assumed by other professionals or volunteers. The latter groups may have had some basic training provided by a conservator at some point but this does not always appear to be so, leading to potential inconsistencies in standards. The areas of conservation and collections care work identified by the museums for volunteer projects included photographing and digitisation of collections, packaging and storing/rehousing projects, cataloguing projects and condition reporting. All of these tasks require handling potentially delicate objects and the ability to make decisions on chemical and physical stability, yet all of these tasks had a less than 20% likelihood of being supervised or taught by a conservator. This represents an area for enhancing the skills of many who have responsibilities for the day-to-day care of collections but may also be seen as a significant potential risk to the long-term health and sustainability of the collections in the region.

#### **Future Initiatives**

These findings have identified the need for an urgent communication effort between professional conservators and the museums within the Yorkshire and Humber region. Plans are underway for a symposium day for museum professionals and conservators to be held in the region in the coming months and ICON will be informed of the survey findings.

#### 5. Works Cited

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ICON, 2015. Accreditation/CPD. (online) Available at: http://www.icon.org.uk/index.php?option=com\_content&task=view&id=773&Itemid =73 (Accessed 30 April 2015).

Nelles, M., 2014. ICON Membership and ACR numbers for Yorkshire. Email Message to A. Schmisseur. Sent 11 November 2014: 11:33.

#### 6. Appendices

#### **6.1 Conservator Survey Questions**

What is the purpose of the study?

This Museum Development Yorkshire (MDY) and York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship (YCCC) partnership project was created in an effort to understand how conservation and collections care is being provided in the museum and heritage sector in the region. This study will take the form of two pilot surveys that will examine the practice of conservation in museums, the current needs of the sector and the conservation skills that are available in the region. The first survey (January 2015) will be aimed at conservators who are either employed in museum or heritage services, or are self-employed. The second (February 2015) will be directed towards museums and those within them who make decisions about collections care and conservation. By undertaking two surveys we hope to get a better understanding of the views of the users of conservation services and providers.

Why is the study being done?

We hope that the survey will give us the significant data and feed-back necessary to be able to advocate for the sustainable care of the region's museum collections and wider heritage collections. It should also enable us to identify where additional support and advice may be required. The information supplied to us will be dealt with on a confidential basis and your responses will assist us in gaining an accurate understanding of the current situation for conservators working within Yorkshire. We hope to be able to publish the findings in the spring of 2015.

Why have I been asked to participate?

You have been asked to participate as you have been recognised as either a conservator or a museum or related heritage industry professional that currently works or provides services within Yorkshire.

Do I have to take part?

You do not have to take part unless you would like to participate in this research. We would encourage you to take part in this project.

What will happen if I do decide to take part?

You will answer a series of survey questions via a website called Survey Monkey on the internet. Your responses are completely anonymous.

What happens to the survey data?

When the surveys have been completed the data will be kept in locked files and password protected computer storage for at least 10 years after the end of the

study. All data will be treated in accordance with the Data Protection Act 1998. The data from the survey becomes the property of MDY(York Museums Trust) and the YCCC and will not be used in any way without permission from both parties. All survey responses are anonymous and will remain so.

How can I find out the results?

When the research has been completed it will be incorporated into a report. The results may also be publicised through conference proceedings and journal publications and other platforms. No names or other material for personal identification will be gathered in association with the survey responses and none will be publicised. In addition to the completely anonymous survey, we are also requesting case studies (which may be wholly or partly anonymised upon request). The case studies will be gathered via voluntary email submission and will not form a part of the survey responses.

Thank you for contributing to this project.

Alaina Schmisseur (Project Officer, Objects Conservator and Committee member of YCCC)

Susie Clark (ACR ICON, Paper and Photographic Conservator and Committee member of YCCC)

Dieter Hopkin (Museum Development Officer, Museum Development Yorkshire) January 2015

#### **Professional Status:**

This survey is intended to be answered by practicing professional conservators (those who are professionally trained and hold an educational or experience-based background that has or would in future enable them to apply for ICON Accredited Conservator status). The information supplied to us will be dealt with on a confidential basis and your responses will assist us in gaining an accurate understanding of the current situation for conservators working within Yorkshire. We hope to be able to publish the findings in the spring of 2015.

Please complete as much of the survey as possible. Don't worry if you are unable to answer all of the questions, as all information is valuable to the project. We request that each conservator working within an organisation completes the survey.

1. What is your conservation material specialism paintings, archaeology, objects, etc.)	n? (e.g. paper, photographs,
2.How long have you been working/practicing a	s a conservator?

3. Are you employed as a conservator on O Full Time	a full time or part time basis?
O Part Time	
Other (please specify)	
4. Are you primarily employed	
<ul> <li>□ As a sole practitioner or a practice owner</li> <li>□ By a conservation company</li> <li>□ Within a national (or otherwise DCMS funded) museum</li> <li>□ Within an archive</li> <li>□ Within a local authority museum Other (please specify)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>□ Within an independent museum or heritage organisation</li> <li>□ Within an university museum/library/archive</li> <li>□ National Trust</li> <li>□ English Heritage</li> <li>□ Within a religious organisation</li> </ul>
5. In total, how many conservators are e number of employees and full-time equiv	mployed by your organisation? (please giveralent posts)
6.Where is your primary office/laboratory or Post Code, e.g. LS24)	/studio location? (please type in your town
7. What percentage of your work is for Y institutions/individuals in the rest of the linput number without percentage sign, e	•
Yorkshire based clients %	
UK based clients %	
Internationally based clients %	
8. What percentage of your work comes percentage sign, ensuring that numbers	•
% Local Authority Museums	
% National Museums	

Heritage Organisations		
% University Archives/Libraries		
% University Museums		
% Private Clients		
% National Trust/English Heritage		
% Local Authority Archives/Libraries		
% Religious Organisations		
% Other		
9. Are you a member of ICON?  ☐Yes ☐No Comments	1	
10. Are you ICON accredited?  ☐Yes ☐No		
Comments	]	
11. Are you on the ICON Register?  □Yes □No Comments	]	
12. Is the organisation which employs Archive under the ACE and TNA scher OYes ONo ONot applicable Comments	d Museum or	Accredited
	J	

#### **Economic Trends:**

13. If you own or work for an organisation offering conservation services, has the number of conservators in paid employment increased or decreased in the last year (2014)?
OConservators increased
OConservators decreased
OSame or Other (please feel free to provide additional detail)
ONot applicable
Comments
<u></u>
14. Has the number of conservators in paid employment at your organisation increased or decreased overall in the last three years (2012-2014)?  OConservators increased
OConservators decreased OSame or Other (please feel free to provide additional detail) ONot applicable
Comments
15. If you are in employment, has your actual salary increased or decreased since 2012?
OIncreased
ODecreased Color ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) ( ) (
OSame or Other (please feel free to provide additional detail) ONot Applicable
Comments
16. If you own or work for an organization offering conservation services, or are self-employed, did your work turnover go up or down in the last year (2014) compared to the previous year?  OTurnover increased OTurnover decreased OTurnover stayed the same ONot applicable
17. Overall, do you feel that your turnover has gone up or down since 2012 (over the last three years)?  OTurnover increased OTurnover decreased OTurnover stayed the same ONot applicable

18. By what percentage has your turnover increased or decreased in the last year?  % Increased % Decreased Stayed the same Not applicable
19. If you work for an institution, does it have a dedicated conservation budget?  OYes  ONo  ONot applicable  Comments
20. If you work for an institution, has the budget for conservation gone up or down in the last year compared to the previous year?  OIncreased  ODecreased  ONot applicable  Comments
21. If you work for an institution, by what percentage has your conservation budget increased or decreased in the last year as opposed to the previous year?  % Increased  % Decreased  Other (please specify if no change or write 'not applicable')
22. If you work for an institution, has its conservation budget gone up or down in the last three years (since 2012)?  OIncreased  ODecreased  OStayed the same  ONot applicable Other (please specify)
23. If you work for an institution, by what percentage has your conservation budget increased or decreased in the last three years (since 2012)?  % Increased  % Decreased  Other (please specify if no

24. If you work for an institution which does not have a	dedicated conservation
budget how is conservation work paid for?	
□Other operational budgets	
□External grants/funding	
□Support from Friends organisation	
□Public appeals	
□Private philanthropy	
Other (please specify)	
(pieuse specify)	
25. If you or your organisation undertakes work internall	v what was the
approximate value of this work for your organisation in t	• •
consider dedicated salaries and revenue budget/spend)	ne last year: (piease
OUnder £10K	
O£10 – 25K	
O£25 - £50K	
O£50 - £100K	
OOver £100K	
ONot applicable	
26. If you or your organisation primarily undertakes inter	rnal work but also
undertakes some work for external clients, what is the a	
external work for 2014?	Sproximate value of this
OUnder £10K	
O£10 – 25K	
O£25 - £50K	
O£50 - £100K	
OOver £100K	
ONot applicable	
Time Allegations	
Time Allocation:	uing2 (by 0/) (places input
27. How much of your time is spent on each of the follow	- , , , ,
number without a percentage sign, ensuring that number	rs total 100%)
Condition Surveys%	
Practical Treatments on general collections%	
Disaster Response %	
Total time spent on new Exhibitions (including practical t	reatment
And administration) %	
Total time spent on loans (including practical treatment a	and
administration)%	
Training volunteers %	
Lecturing %	
Training staff %	
Environmental monitoring/IPM %	
Repackaging %	
Other %	
e errer (*	

28. When working for an institution, how much of your spent on general collections and how much is spent on specific exhibitions? (please input number without a penumbers total 100%)	preparing material for
% of time spent conducting practical treatments on	
general collections in store	·
% of time spent conducting practical treatments on iter	ns on
routine display % of time spent conducting practical treatments for specific exhibitions/loans	
Please enter '100' in this space if this question does not apply to you	
29. If you provide services for an institution that carries copying of objects or collections for public access (such conservation advice?  OYes ONo Comments	
	]
30. If you provide services for an institution that carries copying of objects or collections for public access (such carry out practical treatments?  OYes ONo	
Comments	
	1
31. If you provide services for an institution that carries copying of objects or collections for public access (such assistance with repackaging?  OYes  ONo  Comments	
	7
Publicity and Understanding: 32. If your conservation services and expertise are avai organization, how do people find out about you? (pleas percentage sign, ensuring that numbers total 100%) % Personal Recommendation % ICON Conservation Register	
% Linked In	
% Personal Website % Other	
Please enter '100' in this space if this question does	

not apply to you

33. When you are approached about conservation work by outside organizations, do you generally find the commission:
□ Is clearly expressed
□Can clearly be understood after further discussion
□ Is difficult to understand and needs significant clarification
□Indicates a significant lack of understanding of the conservator's work
□Not Applicable
Other (please specify)
24 Milest according to the control of the control o
34. What percentage of your work income is from tendered projects as opposed to a single direct approach?
(please input number without percentage sign, ensuring that numbers total 100%)
% Tendered
% Single approach
Please enter '100' in this space if this question
Does not apply to you
35. If your conservation work has included work other than practical treatment (such
as condition surveys and training of volunteers) do you normally continue to provide
some pro bono advice to ensure work is carried out to the appropriate standards?
OYes
ONo
Comments
36. Are you ever approached to provide free advice by organizations for which you
have not carried out paid work?
OYes
ONo
Comments
37. Are you ever approached to provide free advice by individuals for whom you
have not carried out paid work?
OYes
ONo
Comments
38. Are there any instances in which you believe your services (or those of other
conservation practitioners) should be used and are not?

39. What do you perceive as being or those of other conservation pra-	 (s) to the use of your services
·	
40. Would you like to make any cocollections care in the Yorkshire aranonymous.	

After the survey we will be publishing a report. Although the survey results will be completely anonymised, we would like to collect a few case studies of successful conservation projects carried out in Yorkshire which may be used within the report. If you are willing to provide a case study, please contact Alaina Schmisseur at aschmiss@gmail.com .Your case study will not be in any way tied to your survey responses.

#### **Appendix 6.2 Museum Survey Questions**

This survey is intended to be completed by museum professionals who have oversight of and management responsibility for their museum's collections and who are working in museums in the Yorkshire and Humber region. The information supplied to us will be dealt with on a confidential basis and your responses will assist us in gaining an accurate understanding of the current situation. We hope to be able to publish the findings in the spring of 2015. Please complete as much of the survey as possible. Don't worry if you are unable to answer all of the questions, as all information is valuable to the project. If you pass the survey link to a colleague please ensure that only one response is received from your museum. Throughout the survey the word "museum" should be read as applying to museums, galleries and historic sites with museum collections.

1.Please identify the institutional type of the museum OLocal Authority ONational Museum OIndependent Charitable Trust ONational Trust OEnglish Heritage OHE Sector OOther (please specify)
<ul><li>2. What is the ACE Accreditation status of the museum?</li><li>OFull Accreditation</li><li>OProvisional Accreditation</li><li>OWorking Towards Accreditation</li><li>ONot Accredited</li></ul>
<ul><li>3. Does the museum have a dedicated conservation or collections care budget?</li><li>Yes</li><li>No</li><li>Comments</li></ul>
4. What is the approximate amount of the museum's annual budget/spend on conservation and collections care?  OUnder £5K  O£5 - £10K  O£10 - £25K  O£25 - £50K  O£50 - £100K  OVer £100K  ONot Applicable

5. If the museum has a dedicated conservation or collections care budget, has it gone up or down in the last three years (2012-2014)?  OIncreased since 2012  ODecreased since 2012  OStayed the same since 2012  ONot Applicable
6. If the museum has a dedicated conservation or collections care budget, has it gone up or down in the last year (2014)?  OIncreased in 2014  ODecreased in 2014  OStayed the same for 2013 and 2014  ONot Applicable
7. By what percentage has the dedicated conservation or collections care budget decreased or increased in 2014?  Percentage Increased  Percentage Decreased  Stayed the same (please write in 'yes')  Not Applicable (please write in 'yes')
8. If the museum does not have a dedicated conservation or collections care budget, how is this work paid for?  OFrom other operational budgets OExternal grants/funding OSupport from Friends organisation OPublic appeals OPrivate philanthropy OOther (please specify)
9. Does the museum use conservation expertise in managing its collections?  OYes  ONo  Comments
10. Does the museum employ an in house conservator?  Yes  No  Comments?
11. How many in house conservators are employed by the museum?

12. What are the specialisms of in house conservators employed by the museum? Please list (e.g. paper, photographs, paintings, textiles, metals).
13. Does the museum provide conservation advice or services to other museums within Yorkshire?  OYes  ONo
14. If the museum provides conservation advice or services to other museums within Yorkshire, what form does this take?  □Remedial Conservation □Training □Advice □Other (please specify)
15. If the museum provides conservation advice or services to other museums within Yorkshire, on what basis is this provided?  □Contract charged for full-cost recovery □Contract discounted rate □Pro bono Comments (or further detail)
16. Does the museum use contract conservators for advice and/or remedial conservation work?  OYes  ONo  Comments
17. If the museum does not use in house or contract conservators, from where does it get conservation advice?  □Conservation staff at other museums □Museum Development Yorkshire □Pro bono from conservation specialists □Museum Mentor □We don't use specialist advice Comments

18. Are the contract conservators used by the museum ICON accredited?  OYes  ONo ONot sure ONot applicable (we don't use contract conservators)
19. What are the specialisms of contract conservators used by the museum? Please list (e.g. paper, photographs, paintings, textiles, metals).
20. Are the contract conservators that the museum primarily uses from within or outside Yorkshire?  OWithin Yorkshire  Outside Yorkshire  ONot applicable (we don't use contract conservators)
21. What is the office base location of the contract conservators used by the museum? (Enter town or first section of Post Code e.g. LS24 or Not Applicable)
22. How did the museum find out about the contract or freelance conservator that it used?  □From other museum professionals  □Internet ICON Conservation Register  □Museum Mentor  □Museum Development Yorkshire  □York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship (YCCC)  □Other (please specify)
23. In the two years (2012-2014) has the museum used conservators to carry out remedial conservation work for the following?  New exhibitions  Loans out  Collections in store  Collections on long-term display  Other (please specify)

•	on of the approximate cash value of this work in the
, , , , ,	(Please answer in round figures)
New exhibitions £	
Loans out £	
Collections in store £	
Collections on long term	
display £	
Other £	
25. In the two years (2012-2013 conservators to carry out collection of the collecti	·
Circi (picase provide brief detail	
26. In the last year (2014), has to collection condition surveys?  ☐Yes ☐No	the museum used conservators to carry out
Other (please provide brief detai	ils)
27. In the two years (2012-2013 conservators to carry out training OYes ONo	B) preceding last year, has the museum used g of staff?
Other (please provide brief detai	ils)
(ровое рознае виск веза	
28. In the last year (2014), has to of staff?  OYes  ONo	the museum used conservators to carry out training
Other (please provide brief detai	ils)
	,
conservators to assist in the prep OYes	3) preceding last year, has the museum used paration of its disaster plan?
ONO Other (please provide brief detail	ilo)
Other (please provide brief detai	<u>  S)</u>

30. In the last year (2014), has the museum used conservators to assist in the preparation of disaster plans?
OYes
ONo
Other (please provide brief details)
31. In the two years (2012-2013) preceding last year, has the museum used conservators for advice on care and handling for digitization projects?  OYes ONo Other (please provide brief details)
32. In the last year (2014), has the museum used conservators for advice on care and handling for digitization projects?  OYes ONo
Other (please provide brief details)
33. In the last year (2014) have volunteers worked on conservation and collections care projects?  OYes  ONo  Comments
34. When volunteers worked on conservation and collections care projects, did a conservator provide training?  OYes ONo ONot applicable Comments
35. Who provided training for volunteers undertaking conservation and collections care projects?

36. In the last year (2014) have volunteers undertaken work on cataloguing projects?
OYes
ONo .
Comments
37. When volunteers worked on cataloguing projects, did a conservator provide training in handling and care?  OYes  ONo ONot Applicable
Comments
Comments
38. Who provided training to volunteers undertaking conservation and collections care projects?
39. In the last year (2014) have volunteers undertaken work photographing/digitizing collections?  OYes
ONo
Comments
40. When volunteers did work on photographing/digitizing collections, did a conservator provide training in handling and care?  OYes  ONo Not Applicable Comments
41. Who provided training to volunteers undertaking work on photographing/digitizing of collections?
42. In the last year (2014) did volunteers undertake work on packaging and storing/re-housing collections?  OYes  ONo Comments

g and storing/re-housing collections, did a
re?
ning to volunteers undertaking the
illy to volunteers undertaking the
ts of using conservation advice on the
□Conservation assessments of and
work on new acquisitions
□Training volunteers
<u> </u>
□Environmental monitoring
□Repacking and re-housing
□Writing or reviewing a collections
development plan
□Pest Monitoring and management
□ Preparing material for outgoing loans
g conservators but did not do so in the
0
e the museum needs that is not readily
ır thoughts about any other issues

# Appendix 6.3 The Museum Development Yorkshire response to the *Strategies for Sustainability* report research

Collections are fundamental to any museum and caring for and making them available to all requires the contribution of a number of professional skills which are key within the heritage sector. Two professional roles core to managing and caring for collections are those of the curator and conservator. In an ideal world the two have complementary skills and share the tasks of caring for the material cultural heritage housed in the nation's museums and each has an understanding of the role of the other.

However, in the museum and wider heritage world what may have been regarded as ideal ways of working are being challenged. Two key agents are the growing acknowledgement of sector standards, public accountability and a greater focus on ethical practice on one front and on the other pressures on public sector finances on the other. These are resulting in changing priorities and a requirement for greater flexibility in working. The reduction in budgets has also impacted on collections care and conservation in particular. In Yorkshire there is also a strong tradition of museums managed and operated on an independent voluntary basis which employ few, if any, paid staff and which call on conservators and curators to advise and support their work from time to time. These organisations are also experiencing the drive to improve standards of operation through such measures as the now well established Museum Accreditation scheme at the same time as a reduction in public sector financial support.

All museums have collections on display and in store and while the public face of museums is generally maintained, the work "back of house" on collections and storage areas may not be given such priority. Museums, including those responding to the legacy of enthusiastic collecting by their founding fathers or mothers and others that are dealing with the legacies of past museums' ambitious plans than can now not be sustained, are recognising the challenges that they face. There is a high likelihood of a backlog in collections management, care and conservation. For many museums, the challenges of managing tight budgets mean that essential collections care work is being reduced which, while pragmatic in the short-term, this is probably unsustainable in the longer term.

Conservators have voiced concern over what appeared to be a loss of public sector specialist posts and what might be perceived as lack of engagement from museums in seeking their support to address longer-term collections care issues rather than *ad hoc* and project-based work on individual objects. They also felt that work on collections care is being undertaken without the involvement of conservators.

In undertaking this project with YCCC, Museum Development Yorkshire sought to enhance its understanding of the interaction between those responsible for managing the care of museum collections and conservators. There is a dearth of data in this area which is puzzling given the fundamental importance of collections in the region's museums. Some years ago conservation services were provided by the then museum regional agencies funded as part of national support for regional museums. Conservation health checks on museum collections also provided at least

some base-line data for museums managing their collections. However, the national and regional sector landscape has seen radical changes and there is a related lack of collections management data. This project aimed to address at least some aspects of this and to take at least take the first steps in addressing this deficit.

The two surveys were intended to mirror each other but were individually tailored to address slightly different approaches from museums and conservators. For the purposes of the survey a wider sample was sought beyond those museums which the Arts Council England (ACE) expects to be supported with its regional Museum Development support funding. Specifically we included the national and nationally funded museums which receive monies from DCMS and the Major Partner Museums which receive significant ACE funding. Both DCMS and ACE have an expectation that the organisations which they fund will share their specialist skills and knowledge with the wider museum sector in the region. While some of these bodies are clearly playing this role (such as Leeds Museums and Galleries which shares its conservation team's expertise with other local museums) it was perhaps disappointing that there was such a low level of response from the national museums in the region which could have given whatever work that they undertake in this field to be identified and recognised.

To some extent the survey results confirmed what the MDY team had seen evidenced of in working with many museums across the Yorkshire region. However, it has been useful to gather actual data from the participating museums and conservators. This survey was an exploratory exercise intended to provide base-line data. As a result, it has not been possible to interrogate the data in detail or to identify what lies behind some of the responses. Similarly, it has not been possible to challenge what may appear to be anomalies resulting from uneven sampling, especially amongst the museums' responses.

There is some strong positive data about the sustained levels of expenditure on collections management and conservation across the region with major investment in new storage facilities at several institutions. It is also clear that the investment in this area for many museums is largely reactive or on a project basis. Funding for conservation is often available as part of a re-development, a new gallery or an external loan but the evidence for expenditure on routine collections management activities resulting in broad improvements in storage on the long-term preventative conservation of collections is limited. In practice many curators and collections managers aspire to and work hard to raise standards but are hampered by lack of resources. Some of the survey findings appear to indicate that conservators are not perhaps always aware of the pressures that many museum curators, collections managers and volunteers face today in trying to deliver services for the communities that they serve.

The strategic management of collections is a key issue for all museums ranging from the largest to the smallest. While there are significant areas of good practice which can provide exemplars of what can be achieved, it would appear that this is not universal. For some reason the effective management of the collections has perhaps been the Cinderella of museum work and been neglected historically. There remain collections management, collections care and conservation backlogs in many museums. Collecting has, in many cases, been reactive (in some cases unavoidably so as with museums' responses to radical change e.g. de-industrialisation of the region's key manufacturing areas) with the expectation that the resources to deal with the collected material would be available in due course. It is also clear that the rate of past collections growth was not sustainably managed and future resource demands not perhaps fully recognised.

What is surprising to-day is that a significant proportion of museums still lack effective management information to effectively plan for the future of their collections. Key data for this fundamental area of museum operation appears to be lacking. This may be another reason for the lack of prioritization and allocated funding for collections care work. What appears to be needed is a regular structured periodic review of collections in each institution. The principle of Quinquennial Reviews is well established in other areas of the charity and built heritage sectors and could provide a useful framework for adapting the long-term health of museum collections. It might also be useful to incorporate this kind of longer-term planning in standards like Museum Accreditation.

This might also assist with what is the, perhaps surprising, survey evidence that a significant number of museums lack clearly identified budgets for collections care and conservation. This is despite Museum Accreditation guidelines which indicate that "Museums will have a planned programme to institute improvements in collection care, ensuring that necessary improvements are made over time, on the basis of priority." (Section 2.6 b.) Furthermore, it recommends that: "The museum should receive regular advice from a conservator or collection care adviser, or other appropriately qualified/experienced person on the museum's approach to collection care activities. Remedial conservation work should be carried out by or under the supervision of a conservator." (Section 2.4g). This lack of strategic management of the unique resources held by museums could put some of the region's important collections at risk.

One of the professional areas of concern is the level of knowledge and experience of some of those museum managers and workers who have responsibility for the care of collections either as employees or volunteers. An understanding of preventative conservation and of the materials in museum collections and the key agents for deterioration are essential requirements for the effective management of museum collections. This cannot now be always taken as a given. Some key individuals who are responsible for overseeing the care of and management of collections, sometimes lack understanding, experience or confidence to make key decisions about managing collections. There is also an apparent lack of understanding of the roles that conservators can play in supporting the management of collections with a significant proportion of museums not seeking conservator advice on condition checking, re-housing, digitization and disaster planning.

The numbers employed by many larger museums in specialist curatorial roles has been significantly reduced in past years. Many with a specialist background are now required to be responsible for a wide variety of collections and materials which may not include their former discipline. It would appear that this is not the case with

conservation practitioners who seem to develop and stay within specialist subject or materials niches. It may be perceived that there is a gap between what museums may want to procure from conservators and what conservation practitioners are currently able to supply.

What many museums, especially those smaller institutions, appear to want and need is support and guidance on general collections care and diverse materials. A number of museums reported that when they needed general conservation advice and while some museums receive this as part of the "pastoral support" provided by larger services for other local museums, it was difficult for a significant number of them to find a practitioner who could provide that service. As a result they approach their Museum Mentors or Museum Development Yorkshire for, at least, initial advice. What MDY can do in this area is limited as its funding does not allow for the provision of a dedicated regional conservation advisor without a significant reallocation of priorities or additional resources.

It would appear from the survey that non-conservation museum professionals and volunteers have infrequent contact or dialogue with conservators. Similarly, conservators fed back in the survey that there were significant communication issues between museums as commissioners of work and conservation suppliers with clear specifications for work required identified as a significant element needing further attention. However, there appears to be no readily available template document for a specification for conservation work which would assist in addressing this area.

The strength of specialist expertise across the region is attested by this survey. There appear, however, to be barriers to museums contacting and using conservators. Many reported a word of mouth referral system or informal networks. There is currently no easily available comprehensive resource listing the conservation skills within the region. The YCCC Skills Directory (<a href="http://www.conservationyork.org.uk/skills-directory.aspx">http://www.conservationyork.org.uk/skills-directory.aspx</a> ) provides a listing of its own members but is not regional in its coverage. The ICON Register to which Accredited Museums are steered "Any conservator or conservation practice that is contracted to provide advice or services should be included on the Conservation Register operated by the Institute of Conservation (ICON) " (Guidelines 2.4h) is however only a partial listing of professionally qualified conservators which is not widely understood within the museum sector."

The interaction between conservators, curators and the wider museum sector has been revealed to be somewhat limited and there is a clear need to increase the understanding and communication between these two key groups within the heritage professions. It is perhaps time to get back to basics and ensure that all collections, as a priority, have good levels of preventative care in place. With this reenforced we may work on how these two professional disciplines can work realistically and creatively towards a more permanent solutions. Working with conservator colleagues on this project has been a learning and enriching experience for us all and has provided a useful opportunity to share opinions and challenges

which we need to take forward from this project to help to secure the long-term care of the region's museum collections.

**Dieter Hopkin for Museum Development Yorkshire, 18/8/2015** 

# Appendix 6.4 The York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship response to the *Strategies for Sustainability* report research

Conservators make a vital contribution to the sustainability of our cultural heritage and its part in society. When this survey was proposed, it was believed that there was a need for an overview of the state of conservation in the region which would provide for an effective and sustainable conservation profession in the future. The YCCC has been overwhelmed by the response to the survey from conservators which means that we can have great confidence in its results. These have shown that there are conservators working in many disciplines in the region and most of these have very many years of experience.

The purpose of conservation is ultimately to provide access to collections, both now and in the future. Yet clearly conservators are not being employed as effectively as they might be and there is an urgent need for this to be improved. There is inadequate communication between conservation professionals and museum professionals from the national level to the local level which is hindering the employment of conservators and the use of conservation. This represents a significant potential risk for the sustainability of our collections if it is not addressed.

It is important for the future that the conservation profession is engaged in the most effective way possible. The survey shows that the issue of accreditation is important. At the present time, a significant number of conservators in the region who could be accredited, and therefore on the Conservation Register, are not. Of these, a considerable proportion do not perceive sufficient benefit for the costs involved. This means that the benefits need to be more clearly explained or they need to be more comprehensive. For those outside the profession, the lack of a clear outward facing informative source of experienced conservators in one place causes many problems when trying to locate a suitable experienced conservator. This makes the conservation profession appear remote and inaccessible. The lack of a "one stop shop" is clearly hindering the employment of conservators. It is in the interests of the conservation profession to provide a clear hierarchy and also publicise the work of its freelance members in a comprehensive way. Clearly the issue of accreditation and the Conservation Register needs to be addressed by ICON and the conservation profession.

The inclusion of the recommendation to use accredited conservators in the Museum Accreditation guidelines is a good principle and should be feasible. However, many individuals in museums believe that the Conservation Register is a list of all accredited conservators and that they have no other means of locating accredited conservators generally. This is not helped by the Museums Accreditation guidelines advocating the use of conservators "on the Conservation Register.... and where

available a professionally qualified accredited conservator should be used". This is also misleading regarding the role of accreditation and the Register.

Despite the Museum Accreditation Standard Guidelines stating that where a museum employs a professional conservator their policies should refer to how their skills are utilised, many respondents expressed a lack of confidence in identifying the jobs for the conservator. Conservators have also identified what they perceive as a lack of basic understanding from a significant number of museums and those working within them of what the role of a conservator entails and in what ways conservators might provide useful services. This perhaps indicates a lack of education within museums or on museums training courses, but also perhaps a lack of good communication on the part of conservators. More direct and clearer communication between the conservation profession and substantial client groups needs to be established.

Whilst the role of the conservator was at one time more clearly defined to include preservation and therefore collection care as a part of their overall professional training, the boundaries outside conservation seem to have become more blurred. It should be clear that someone who has a degree in conservation or equivalent, plus many years of experience solely in the area of conservation with its understanding of how materials behave, is much better able to provide information, advice and practical support for the care of collections. However, in many cases, roles for which a conservator is specifically trained are being assumed by other professionals or volunteers. Organisations appear to be carrying out work that would normally be, or should be, within the remit of conservators. In part, this again appears to be caused by a lack of understanding the role of the conservator. However, the introduction of Museums Accreditation, while an admirable effort to increase standards, seems to have encouraged some to think that by completing the sections on collection care, that collection care and probably conservation (apart from occasional practical remedial treatments) were largely "done". This was not the intention of accreditation, but reinforces the need for education about the role of conservation.

Most collection care projects are identified by museum staff other than conservators. Conservation advice is often sought from either museum staff or other volunteers who are not conservators. Collection care is also frequently being carried out by people at several generations removed from any original conservation guidance or training. The question of who is training the trainer is ambiguous. This means that advice may be out of date or misinformation may have been introduced when advice has been passed on. Without detailed knowledge, practices such as repackaging and digitisation can be much less cost effective and can inadvertently cause damage. The Museum Accreditation guidelines state that "The museum should receive regular advice from a conservator or collection care adviser, or other appropriately qualified/experienced person on the museum's approach to collection care

activities". The term "appropriately qualified/experienced person" also allows for considerable ambiguity.

Clearly, conservation and collection care budgets are often quite small in many of the regions' museums and financial pressures mean that conservators cannot be on the staff of all museums with collections. In the current economic climate museums are relying increasingly on the goodwill and ability of volunteers in many areas of their operation. Therefore a basic level of day to day care and supervision may often need to be provided in small institutions by on site staff and volunteers. Tasks which might seem simple, such as repackaging and photography are likely to require handling potentially delicate objects and the ability to make decisions on chemical and physical stability. Yet the survey shows that all of these tasks had a less than 20% likelihood of being supervised or taught by a conservator. However, in organisations without a conservator, the use of a conservator is vital in providing an overview and ensuring practice and an assessment of the condition of collections are up to date. This is essential for a Collections Development and Management Plan. The relatively low level of collection condition surveys carried out implies a lack of knowledge about the state of collections in many cases and a lack of awareness that the nature and condition of collections continues to evolve. Whilst the pressure on institutional resources is great, the use of conservators at key points is vital in enabling the care to be provided in the most effective way.

The financial climate, as indicated by the increasing loss of conservation posts together with plans for more cuts, is imposing increasing pressures. Not every cut can be averted but a sustainable path needs to be found for collections and their care. The survey indicates that the importance of conservation needs to be reinforced. Cutbacks and retirement will mean that in a few years there may well be a significant shortage in conservation expertise if no action is taken to prevent this. There needs to be a critical mass of conservators to ensure that the cultural heritage of the region can be sustained. To do this it is necessary to have viable national professional courses and a healthy employment market. Traditionally many conservators have gained experience in the public sector which may be later used in the private sector. Given that many conservators are dependent on local authority funding in one form or another, cuts to local authority funding risk a considerable difficulty for the private sector as well as the public sector. It is vital in the future that the conservation profession is as effective as possible in its work, communication and advocacy. Conservation is an important occupation in this region. The employment of conservators both nationally and internationally indicates the high regard with which many of our conservators are viewed.

The YCCC has already made a considerable effort to improve the skills and support the development of the conservation profession in this region, in particular with its Bursary programme which has now distributed over £120,000. This survey was

another step in taking this work further and ensuring the sustainability of conservation in the region. The YCCC has taken on board the results of the survey and is making plans to address some of the issues raised and continue its work for sustainable conservation and collections. Plans are underway for a symposium day for museum professionals and conservators to be held in the region in the coming months and ICON will be informed of the survey findings.

Martin Stancliffe for The York Consortium for Conservation and Craftsmanship, 26/6/2015

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