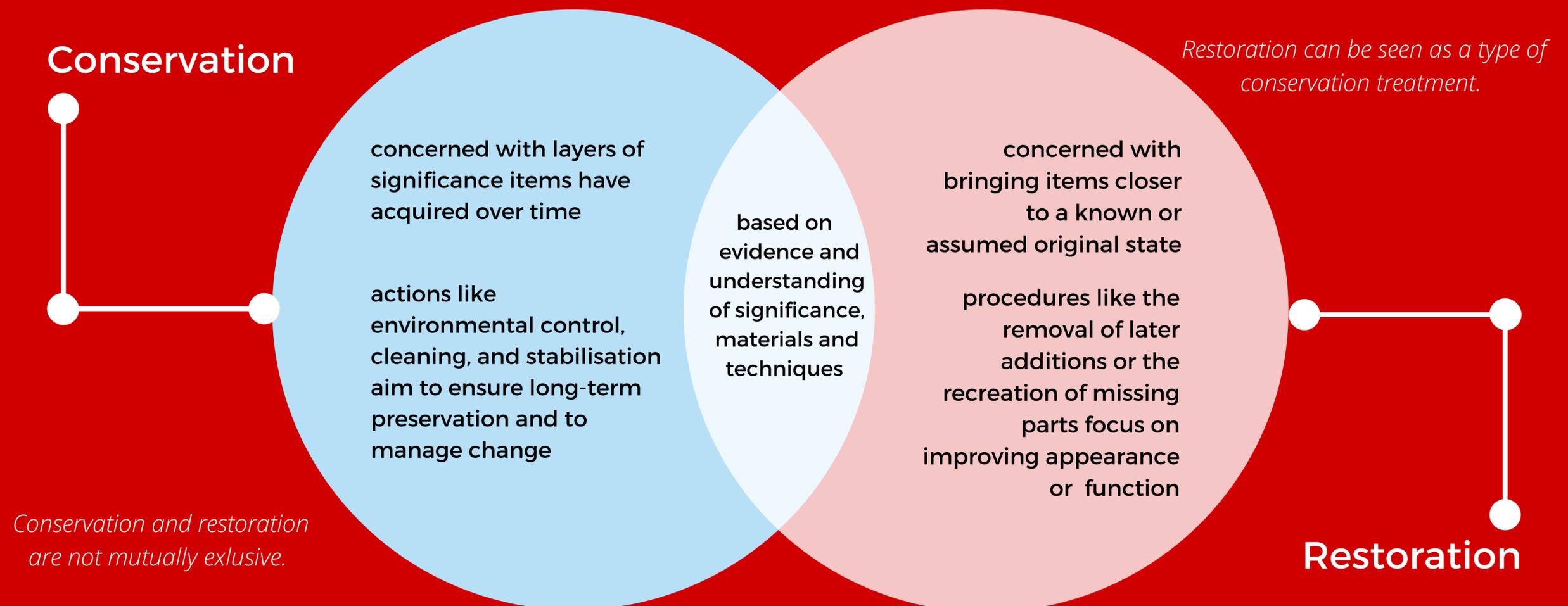


# Conservation or restoration?

The terms "conservation" and "restoration" are often used interchangeably  
It's important to know the difference as the two practices can have different outcomes.



Check out the following pages for real life examples of conservation and restoration from around the world!

# CONSERVATION

## Staffordshire Hoard

In 2009, a metal detectorist discovered the largest hoard of Anglo-Saxon gold and silver metalwork yet found. A conservation and research project into the Staffordshire Hoard was launched by Birmingham Museum Trust and completed in 2016.

When the Hoard arrived at the museum, the pieces were covered in soil from the field where they were found. The first and most important step was to conserve every one of the 4,000 objects to make the Hoard materially stable.

The initial phase of the project focused on cleaning and cataloguing. X-rays were taken and conservators cleaned the pieces carefully and recorded technical information. A second phase concentrated on joining together broken objects, further scientific analysis and typological study.

The conservation work ensured the pieces of treasure were physically and chemically stable and that all the surviving surface detail was revealed, allowing scientists, archaeologists and historians to study the material.

The conservation and research teams were also able to digitally reconstruct some of the key objects, including a high status helmet, to show how they would have looked.

*all about stabilisation  
to allow research*



*focus on  
recreating the  
original*

Following the devastation of the 17th century National Trust property Uppark Park in a fire in 1989, the decision was taken to restore the house to its previous state "in so far as that is practicable."

Over 6 years, more than a thousand skilled craftsmen and women pieced together countless fragments of carved woodwork, ceiling plaster, glass and metalwork, re-acquiring and re-learning many lost craft skills.

Where oak and Delabole slate were used in the original roof, they were used again, while chemical analysis confirmed the exact make-up of the plasterwork so that it could be faithfully reproduced. Even the paint for the window frames was analysed so that it could be carefully colour-matched.

The restoration was the largest and most ambitious project ever undertaken by the National Trust, enabling the beautiful house and its historically significant collection to be enjoyed by the public again.

Uppark Park

# RESTORATION



*prioritising monitoring & environmental control*

Ötzi is a Copper Age glacier mummy from the who was discovered accidentally by hikers in 1991, together with his clothing and equipment, on the Schnalstal/Val Senales Valley glacier.

Upon discovery, the mummy's age was promptly estimated to be "at least 4000 years old". As the corpse had already started to decompose, it was placed in a cold cell that simulated glacier conditions.

Since 1998, the mummy has been housed in a specially devised cold cell in the South Tyrol Museum of Archaeology in Bolzano. It lies on precision scales at -6°C and 99% humidity and is visible to the public through a small window. The mummy is regularly sprayed with sterile water to prevent loss of its natural moisture.

The Ötzi's rarity and extreme popularity made finding a compromise between public access and conservation a vital task. Technical and financial considerations all weighed into finding a balance between conflicting needs to keep him publicly viewable while minimising risk of damage and decay.

## The Iceman

# CONSERVATION

# RESTORATION

## Stari Most Bridge

The Stari Most bridge stood in the historic town of Mostar in Bosnia and Herzegovina for 427 years, until it was destroyed in 1993 in the Croat-Bosniak War. A project was set in motion to reconstruct the 16th century arch bridge and the surrounding Old Town.

The reconstruction of the Old Bridge was based on thorough and detailed analyses, and relied on high-quality documentation. The reconstruction was not hidden or disguised leaving the use of authentic materials and techniques fully recognizable. Remaining original material was preserved in a museum, becoming an inseparable part of the reconstruction.

The project works of the Old Bridge complex aimed to restore the 'expression' of the Old City of Mostar. This was achieved by following the pre-war appearance and features of the structures to maintain vertical and horizontal dimensions, forms and scale.

The physical reconstruction of the bridge should be seen as the background to the restoration of the intangible dimensions of the Old City. Mostar preserved its coherence as a whole with recognizable features and portions of the old townscape without introducing alterations in the form of new or inappropriately renewed structures.

*recreating an overall appearance*



# Similar terms

You may also hear people referring to these words when talking about conservation and restoration:

## Repair

Actions designed and applied directly to an object aiming to recover its form or its function.

## Preservation

Activities that aim to minimize deterioration and damage and prolong the life of an item.

## Preventive conservation

Activities applied indirectly to an object to prevent or minimise damage or deterioration.

## Maintenance

Measures to keep an item's condition as stable as its current condition and composition allow.

## Stabilisation

Treatment actions to temporarily halt decay and to minimize deterioration.

## Remedial conservation

Actions applied directly to an object to arrest deterioration and/or to limit damage.

The Institute of Conservation is a charity and the professional body representing and supporting the practice and profession of conservation.

Icon champions excellence in conservation and promotes the value of caring for heritage.