

## DCMS Heritage Statement 2017 Icon Statement

January 2018

Former Heritage Minister John Glen launched a new strategy for the sector in his Heritage Statement on 5 December 2017.

It is excellent to see the conservation of our cultural heritage being identified as a priority in the Heritage Statement. The Institute of Conservation (Icon) warmly welcomes the strategy and its many proposals, which resonate with our work.

Icon supports the Statement's emphasis on partnerships, and, in particular, the establishment of a new Heritage Council. The Council seeks to "ensure greater co-ordination and a strong voice for heritage within government" by including both representatives from the heritage sector and senior figures from other governmental departments. This is an important recognition of how policies from across government create opportunities and challenges for our sector.

We strongly agree with the Statement's core belief that heritage belongs to everyone. Through our five-year strategy, Icon will extend opportunities for engagement with conservation from youth to retirement. We support the proposed efforts to strengthen routes into heritage careers and to address skills shortages. Icon is already actively working on developing standards for sector apprenticeships but recognises that there is more to be done.

I recently participated in a Cultural Heritage Roundtable as a part of the UK-China People to People Dialogue. The Chinese interest in our expertise confirmed the high regard in which our conservation field is held internationally and the role that conservation can play in ensuring our cultural exports continue to tell the United Kingdom's story around the world. Accordingly, the Statement's pledge to consider our interests in Brexit negotiations is commendable. Leaving the European Union may affect the sector's ability to retain and recruit EU talent. We are planning to undertake research on the UK conservation workforce's EU nationals to better understand Brexit's impact on our labour market.

We wait in anticipation for the DCMS's action plan and look forward to collaborating with government and sector partners in taking forward its measures.

Alison Richmond, Icon Chief Executive