

JOB DESCRIPTION



Supporting a thriving parliamentary democracy

Job title:	Collections Care Conservator: Heritage Collections Team
Campaign Type:	Concurrent
Payband:	B2
Pay range:	£30,985- £36,532 per annum
Team:	Heritage Collections
Section:	Participation
Reports to:	Collections Care Manager, Heritage Collections Team (HCT)
Number of posts:	1
Hours:	Full time 36 hours
Contract type/ duration:	18 months with possibility of extension
Issue date:	9 December 2019
Closing date:	5 January 2020 at 23:55 pm

The House of Commons

The House of Commons and the iconic Palace of Westminster are key elements of the UK's Parliaments. Around 2,500 staff work behind the scenes at the House of Commons, supporting the democratic process in many different ways. We are politically impartial and take great pride in the vision and values which guide our work.

It takes a huge range of skills and experience to keep the House of Commons running, and we all contribute to supporting a thriving parliamentary democracy.

Collection/Team information

The Collections Care Conservator for the Parliamentary Art Collection is based within the Heritage Collections Team (HCT) which is responsible for the professional management of three historic collections of national and international importance (*Historic Furniture and Decorative Arts, The Parliamentary Art Collection and the Architectural Fabric Collection*). This Team provides a bicameral service to the House of Commons and House of Lords for all aspects of collections management, care, conservation, documentation, loans and interpretation.

The *Parliamentary Art Collection* includes over 9000 artworks, the majority of which are on display across the Parliamentary Estate. It consists of wall paintings, easel paintings, sculpture, works on paper and other media ranging from ceramics to textiles, medals and political collectibles. The Collection chiefly documents the history and work of Parliament with new works commissioned and acquired.

The Parliamentary Art Collection has a small workshop/studio for general preventive and low-level conservation treatments, plus an adjacent room for art handling and short-term storage. Additionally, there are several small art stores at various locations on the Estate used for longer term storage of artwork and materials. Current facilities are limited, and the Northern Estates Programme is likely to further impact resources available

The *Historic Furniture and Decorative Arts* collection includes over 11,000 objects including historic furniture, clocks, silver and ceramics. It is a working collection with many objects in daily use across the Parliamentary Estate fulfilling the role for which they were designed and made. The Collection mainly comprises items designed in the gothic revival style by AWN Pugin for the new Palace of Westminster along with a large collection of items designed by Sir Giles Gilbert Scott for the House of Commons in 1950.

The *Architectural Fabric Collection* includes over 4,000 items which were commissioned for the Palace of Westminster but have been detached from the built fabric and historic interiors. Most of the collection dates from Charles Barry's Victorian Palace of Westminster

Job introduction

Over the next 10 to 15 years, planning for the Northern Estates Programme (NEP) and Restoration and Renewal (R&R) will have a big impact on the collections. In addition to supporting these major projects, the post holder will have the appropriate conservation and collections care qualifications and background, and the necessary management skills to support the Collections Care Manager (ICT) by undertaking the following core responsibilities for the Parliamentary Art Collection:

- **CONSERVATION DOCUMENTATION** - Manage the organisation of conservation documentation for the Parliamentary Art Collection, both hard copy and digital. Ensure all conservation documentation for the Parliamentary Art Collection is recorded on the collections management database, K-EMu, and address the current backlog of records waiting to be added to K-Emu, liaising with the Collections Information Manager and their team.
- **CONSERVATION AND COLLECTION CARE PROGRAMME** - Provide specialist support for the development of preventive care and conservation treatment programme working to the Collection Care Manager. This will include commissioning and review of condition surveys and remedial conservation, scheduling, project managing some of the work, appraisal of resource and budget requirements, and synchronizing this work with the R&R programme
- **HERITAGE CLEANING PROGRAMME** - Support the Heritage conservation maintenance and cleaning programmes run by the Works of Art team, calling on the Postholder's specialist conservation knowledge and practical skills. This may include designing and delivering training, condition checking and surface cleaning for a range of media including sculpture, textiles and framed paintings in the Parliamentary Art Collection and may involve working with external specialist conservators in a range of disciplines
- **PREVENTIVE CARE PROGRAMME**- Provide specialist support for environmental monitoring programmes run by the Works of Art team for the R&R programme, particularly their survey of agents of decay. Manage loggers and data download for relative humidity and temperature (RH&T), and light (Lux/UV) monitoring projects on the Parliamentary Estate. Manage and develop the IPM plan and coordinate specialist monitoring for dust/particulate matter and vibration projects. The Postholder will liaise with external specialist conservators as required
- **CONSERVATION STUDIO DEVELOPMENT AND MAINTENANCE**- Support the development and maintenance of the on-site and off-site (long-term/temporary) basic conservation studio facilities and the ongoing provision of specialist conservation and collections care equipment, materials, under the direction of the Collections Care Manager.
- **INCIDENT MANAGEMENT / DISASTER PLANNING & RECOVERY** - Provide salvage support in response to accidental damage to the collections and for disaster recovery following emergency incidents. Assist with regular review and updating of the salvage plan documentation for the Parliamentary Art Collection, as advised by the Heritage Resilience coordinator. Ensure PPE and materials supplies are kept stocked, attend and support the delivery of staff training and practice exercises when required

- DEVELOPMENT OF CONSERVATION AND COLLECTIONS CARE BEST PRACTICE GUIDELINES - With reference to published Collections Care Standards ensure that commissioned conservation, surveys and preventive care for the Parliamentary Art Collection follow best practice guidelines. The post holder will ensure compliance with Health & Safety guidelines and COSHH regulations
- CONTINUAL PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT (CPD) –The post holder is expected to develop and keep up to date with their CPD. This may include promoting the profile of the Palace of Westminster for conservation and collections care through presentations to professionals and non-specialist audiences. We will encourage and support working towards professional accreditation (ICON)

Key stakeholder relationships

Internal relationships

- Head of Heritage Collections
- Historic Furniture and Decorative Arts Collection team (HCT)
- Conservation Architects team including the Parliamentary Historian and Archivist (HCT)
- Parliamentary Archives Collections Care team
- Restoration and Renewal (R&R) and Northern Estate Programme (NEP) teams
- Project Leaders in Strategic Estates
- Lords Facilities Managers and Commons Accommodation Managers
- Departmental Heads (Catering, Broadcast, Governance Office etc)
- Members and staff of both Houses
- Finance staff, Procurement team, Security and police
- Black Rod and Serjeant-of-Arms teams
- Outreach and Engagement Service

External relationships

- Managers and conservators in allied organisations such as Historic Royal Palaces, English Heritage, National Trust, National Portrait Gallery, Westminster Abbey and historic houses and museums
- Specialist contractors and suppliers of goods and services
- ICON (The Institute of Conservation), IIC (International Institute for Conservation of Historic and Artistic works), ICOM-CC (International Council of Museums – Conservation Committee)

Management responsibility

- This post will be required to define tasks and oversee conservation and preventive care projects on the Parliamentary Estate
- Responsible for budgets as allocated

Location

This post will be located on the Parliamentary Estate, Westminster, London.

Security

Successful candidates will be required to complete pre-employment checks. This includes security vetting to Counter Terrorist Check (CTC) level unless otherwise specified. All successful candidates are required to pass these checks before an offer can be confirmed.

Applicants should be aware that if they have resided outside of the UK for a total of more than two of the last five years they are not eligible for vetting.

Please visit: <https://www.parliament.uk/documents/PSD-Security-Vetting-booklet.pdf> for further information.

Hours

Consideration will be given to candidates who wish to work part-time or as part of a job share. If you are selected for interview, please inform the panel of the days/hours you are available to work.

Net conditioned full-time working hours for staff of the House are usually 36 per week. This excludes daily meal breaks of one hour. The exact daily times of attendance will be agreed with line management.

For further information:

Candidates should refer to the House of Commons careers website

<https://www.parliament.uk/about/working/jobs/> or contact recruitment@parliament.uk or 020 7219 6011

Application and selection process

We will conduct a sift based on the criteria set out in the skills and experience section and successful candidates will be invited to attend a competency-based interview.

Key responsibilities

Priorities and planning

- Assist the Collections Care Manager with setting and managing the programme of condition survey and assessment for the Parliamentary Art Collection
- Working with the Collections Care Manager set the prioritised programme of work, to include both conservation and preventive maintenance treatment, and the needs of the R&R programme, such as the agents of decay survey.
- Liaise with the relevant stakeholders, contractors and staff, attend meetings as required
- Liaise with other teams and groups in connection with surveys and works
- Raise the necessary requests for object moves, security forms and other steps required to facilitate the necessary enabling works for conservation projects
- Ensure all conservation documentation has been provided by the specialist conservators and saved on the Collections Management Database, K-EMu

Quality assurance

- Ensure that good conservation and collection care practices are recognised and adhered to using recognized standards such as PAS 197:2009 Code of practice for cultural collections management; BS EN 16893:2018 Conservation of Cultural Heritage; Benchmarks in Collection Care and SPECTRUM documentation standards, Collections Trust; and conservation ethical and best practices as laid down by leading bodies such as IIC, ICOM-CC and ICON
- Undertake inspections of contractors work premises and working practices, carrying out inductions for specialist contractors working in situ, to ensure expected standards are met

Budgets and procurement

- Manage the delegated budgets responsibly in compliance with all relevant legislation and House standards
- Ensure that contracts are specified, tendered and let in accordance with the organisation's Procurement Policy
- Source and manage specialist services brought in as required from the approved supplier list or

framework, or from newly sourced companies and specialists

Health and safety

- Have good working knowledge of relevant health and safety and COSHH legislation
- Manage all conservation work within their control, ensuring efficient and economical use of resources whilst observing health and safety regulations

Staff management

- Oversee contractors working on the Parliamentary Estate
- Agree and oversee relevant collections care and audit workstreams carried out by NEP and R&R teams which relate directly to the Parliamentary Art Collection

Other

- Attend relevant meetings/briefings with other stakeholders in order to plan and report on scheduled works
- To assist with the salvage procedures of the Heritage Collections and other collections as required in the event of an incident
- Other duties as directed by the Line Manager

The House Service are proud of our organisational Values, which will deliver our strategy. We are looking for people who can bring these values to life:

Inclusive: We value everyone equally; We respect each other; We all have a voice
Courageous: We try new things; We own our actions and decisions; We learn from our mistakes
Trusted: We trust each other to do a good job; We are impartial; We build confidence in Parliament through our integrity
Collaborative: We share our knowledge and experience; We work towards a shared vision; We know we work better in a partnership

Qualifications:

Essential

- Degree in the conservation of cultural heritage, including preventive conservation and collections care, or equivalent professional qualification or vocational training
- Applications from specialist fine art conservators are welcomed, but will require evidence of good working knowledge and experience of Preventive Conservation and Collections Care

Desirable

- ICON accreditation or evidence of working towards professional accreditation

SKILLS AND EXPERIENCE	APPLICATION FORM	TEST / EXERCISE	INTERVIEW
CRITERIA 1 Must have a proven and high level of knowledge and practical experience in the field of fine art conservation and collections care	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERIA 2 Significant experience of working with historic collections within a museum, art gallery or historic building environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERIA 3 Excellent planning, organisational and prioritisation skills and the ability to take initiative of planning own workload and that of others to achieve demanding tasks and deadlines	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
CRITERIA 4 Good inter-personal and customer service skills with the ability to deal tactfully and confidently with people at all levels upholding the principles of equality, diversity and inclusion at all times	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

CRITERIA 5 Able to demonstrate effective written and oral communication and have competent IT skills plus the capability to acquire new IT skills	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
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