



## **IHBC Research Note 2013/1**

### **Loss of senior conservation staff and senior conservation posts in England: March 2011 – April 2012**

#### **Executive Summary**

In 2011 over a third of the 6% decline in conservation staff in England was amongst senior staff.

#### **Introduction**

Conservation staff in England fell in 2011 by 6%, according to the figures collected by The Institute of Historic Building Conservation (IHBC) and published in conjunction with English Heritage and ALGAO. But beneath the published headline figures for 2011 we have also examined the survey material to look at the impact of recent staff cuts on older staff at senior levels in local authorities. The senior staff referred to here are those at Principal level and above and mainly known to be over 55.

#### **Headline figures:**

Total number of conservation staff at end of 2011	568
Total loss of conservation staff for 2011	39
% loss of total conservation staff for 2011	6%
Total loss of senior staff for 2011	16.3
% loss of senior staff as percentage of all staff for 2011	2.6%

#### **Context**

In 2008 the IHBC survey of conservation staffing also took a snap shot survey of the age profiles of the staff. This showed that just over 30% of conservation staff were aged between 50 and 59. Some of these staff will clearly in the three years to 2011 have reached 60 and be looking towards retirement. Others may be hoping to continue working for some years more.

Loss of staff results from redundancy, either compulsory or personal choice, from staff leaving for unspecified reasons and from retirement, including early retirement.

A number of older staff have reduced hours which were not then backfilled with other staff leading to a decrease in general capacity and specifically a reduction in the experience of those over usually over 55. This is relatively common where staff approach retirement and phased retirement may be the chosen route by the current post-holder but once

they retire entirely it is possible that, if not lost completely, the post may be filled on the reduced hours. But not all reductions of senior staff hours have been the chosen path of postholders, some have been enforced by the local Authority as part of cuts.

Those who are senior, both in organizational status and in age, generally have more experience and knowledge both of the wider conservation role and of their geographical area of work and their loss to conservation services considerable. They often leave sometime before any replacement, if indeed one is made, is in place, leading to lack of continuity of knowledge and practice. Younger and more junior staff appointed after hiatus are not able to inherit the skills and knowledge from those with experience.

<b>Loss of senior staff (posts of principal or above)</b>	
Senior staff made redundant and not replaced (FTE)	2.5
Senior staff left voluntarily and not replaced (FTE)	1.6
Senior staff retired and not replaced (FTE)	4.7
Reduced hours of senior staff (FTE)	4
Total	<b>13.3</b>
<b>Loss of senior posts but retention of staffing levels,</b>	
Senior staff left and replaced by downgraded post, reduced experience post-holders or more junior staff (FTE)	<b>3</b>

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