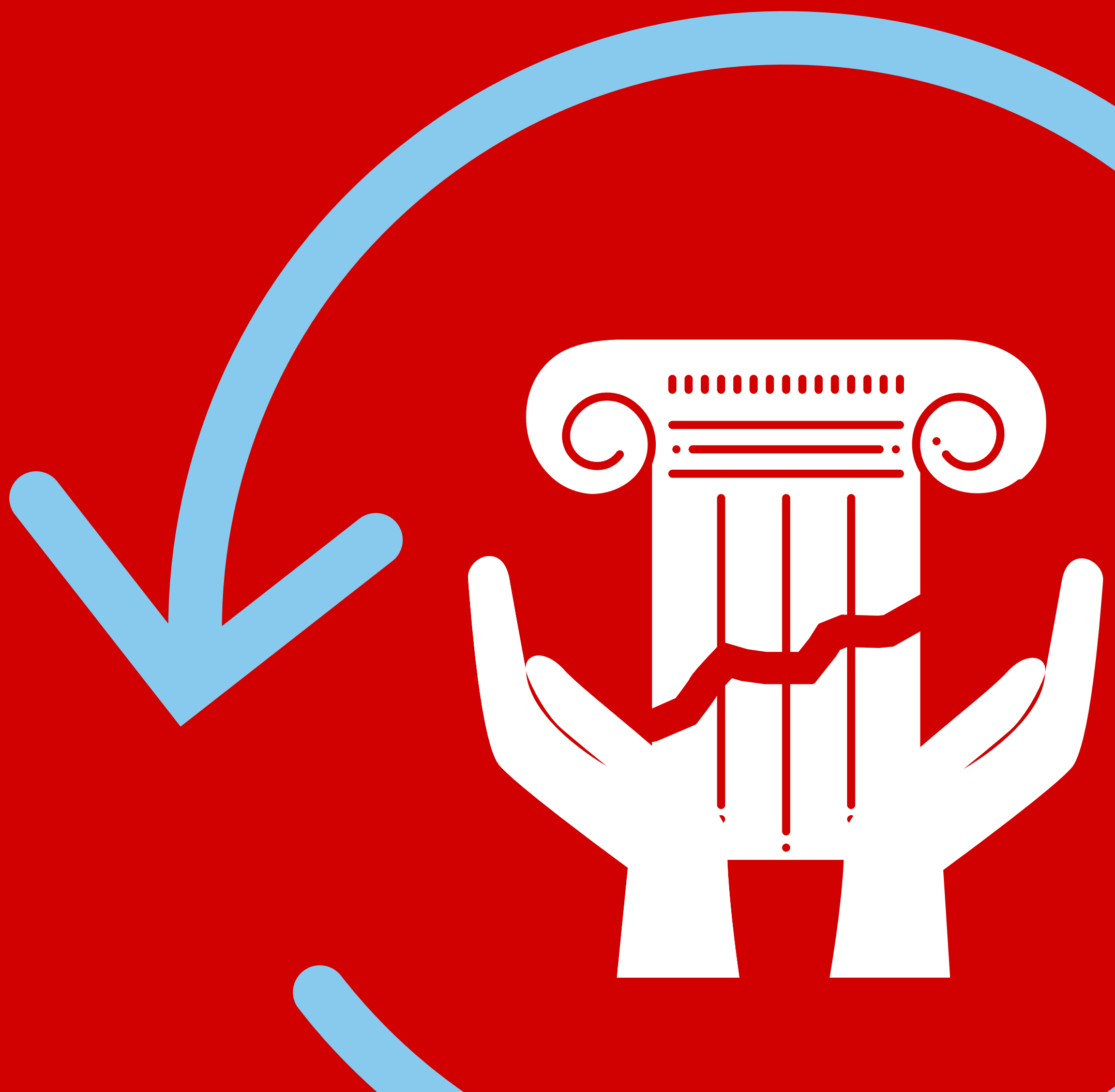


CONSERVATION RESTORES

Conservation doesn't just restore cultural heritage - it safeguards our nation's recovery.

ICON.ORG.UK

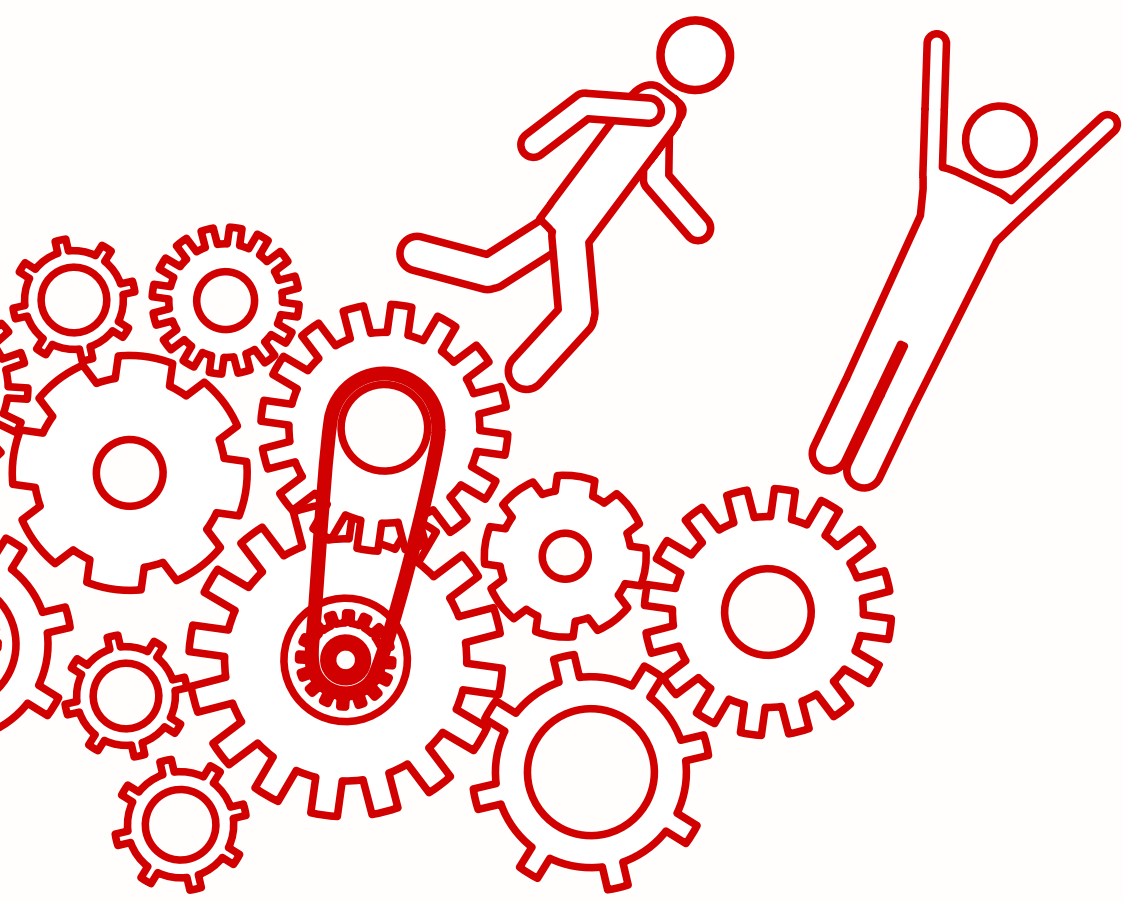


WE HAVE A LOT TO OFFER.

Cultural heritage is a national asset. It is vital to the economy, generating a total GVA of £31 billion and supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs. Core to the UK's brand, our iconic heritage draws millions of people from all over the world. It gives places their character and provides a basis for civic identity.

Conservation preserves this cultural heritage, facilitating public access and enjoyment and enabling heritage to maximise its economic and social value.





jobs and skills

Heritage employs over 460,000 people in England alone. These jobs are resistant to automation being based on a high level of professional training and creative and crafts skills.



levelling up economic opportunity

The heritage sector is a key source of economic growth with a total GVA of 31bn. For every £1 of GVA directly generated, an additional £1.21 of GVA is supported in the wider economy. Many conservation businesses are based in rural areas supporting regional museums and local attractions, which act as pull factors for investment.

We offer future-proof jobs, wellbeing opportunities, regional growth and globally in-demand expertise

supporting public services

Conservation saves the NHS money by supporting healthier and longer lives by facilitating meaningful engagement with cultural heritage.



strengthening the UK's place in the world

Heritage attracts millions of tourists each year. In 2019, 218.4 m visits were made with a tourist spend of £17 bn. Conservation ensures heritage assets can delight visitors for years to come.





prioritising jobs and skills

Conservation is a highly skilled and cross-disciplinary practice that delivers future-proof skills and drives innovation across sectors.

Cultural heritage is economically vital, supporting hundreds of thousands of jobs in conservation but also across tourism, archaeology, and construction.

An education in conservation contributes to a workforce that is resilient to automation through a high level of professional training and the delivery of creative and crafts skills. Conservation preserves the source material of our future artists and cultural professionals, driving innovation across the arts and creative industries. The creative industries contribute £111.7 billion GVA to the UK, which is greater than the automotive, aerospace, life sciences and oil and gas industries combined.

Conservation delivers competencies in maths and technical education, helping to address the national shortage of STEM skills. The sector's predominantly female workforce stands as an example for women in the sciences, encouraging greater gender parity within the field.

levelling up economic opportunity

Conservation is a source of economic prosperity and growth, contributing to business, industry and employment.

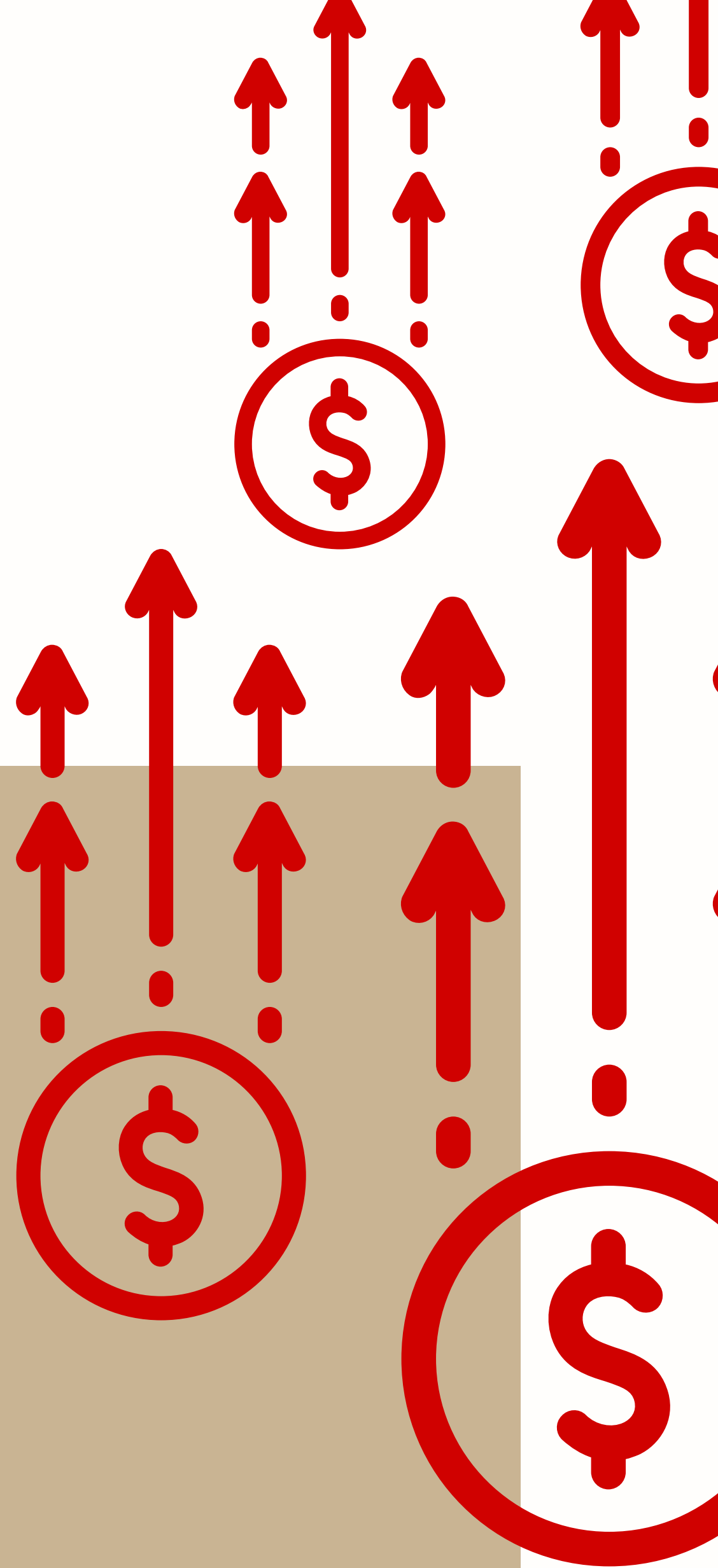
The heritage sector generates a total GVA of 31 billion. For every £1 of GVA directly generated, an extra £1.21 of GVA is supported in the wider economy.

Conservation contributes to varied and dispersed employment, distributing the value of skills, investment and innovation across sectors and the UK.

Conservation fosters a diverse business environment through its division of employment between medium, small and micro-sized businesses.

Conservation supports local business and investment by preserving heritage assets that act as key “pull” factors to places and catalysts for economic revival. The conservation and enhancement of heritage assets supports and promotes heritage tourism, a leading contributor to economic growth.

Many conservation businesses are based in rural areas supporting regional museums and local visitor attractions. These businesses generate employment and income across the UK and sometimes in fragile rural economies where there are few alternative sources of economic activity. Over 300 cultural venues and buildings are located in unemployment hotspots in England.



supporting public services

Conservation helps save money in health services by supporting healthier and longer lives

Visiting heritage sites is estimated to save the NHS over £193.2 m by reducing demand for GP visits and psychotherapy. Conservation facilitates meaningful engagement with heritage, offering cost-saving activities for social prescription schemes.

Conservation enables cultural heritage to enrich the lives of individuals by nurturing a sense of identity and promoting a positive connection to a shared past. Research from Age UK reveals that creative and cultural participation is the greatest contributor to wellbeing in older age.

Participation in conservation can help individuals build confidence, self-esteem and future employability through the acquisition of new skills and knowledge.

Conservation supports healthy communities by preserving cultural heritage, which gives places their character, brings communities together and fosters pride of place.



strengthening the UK's place in the world

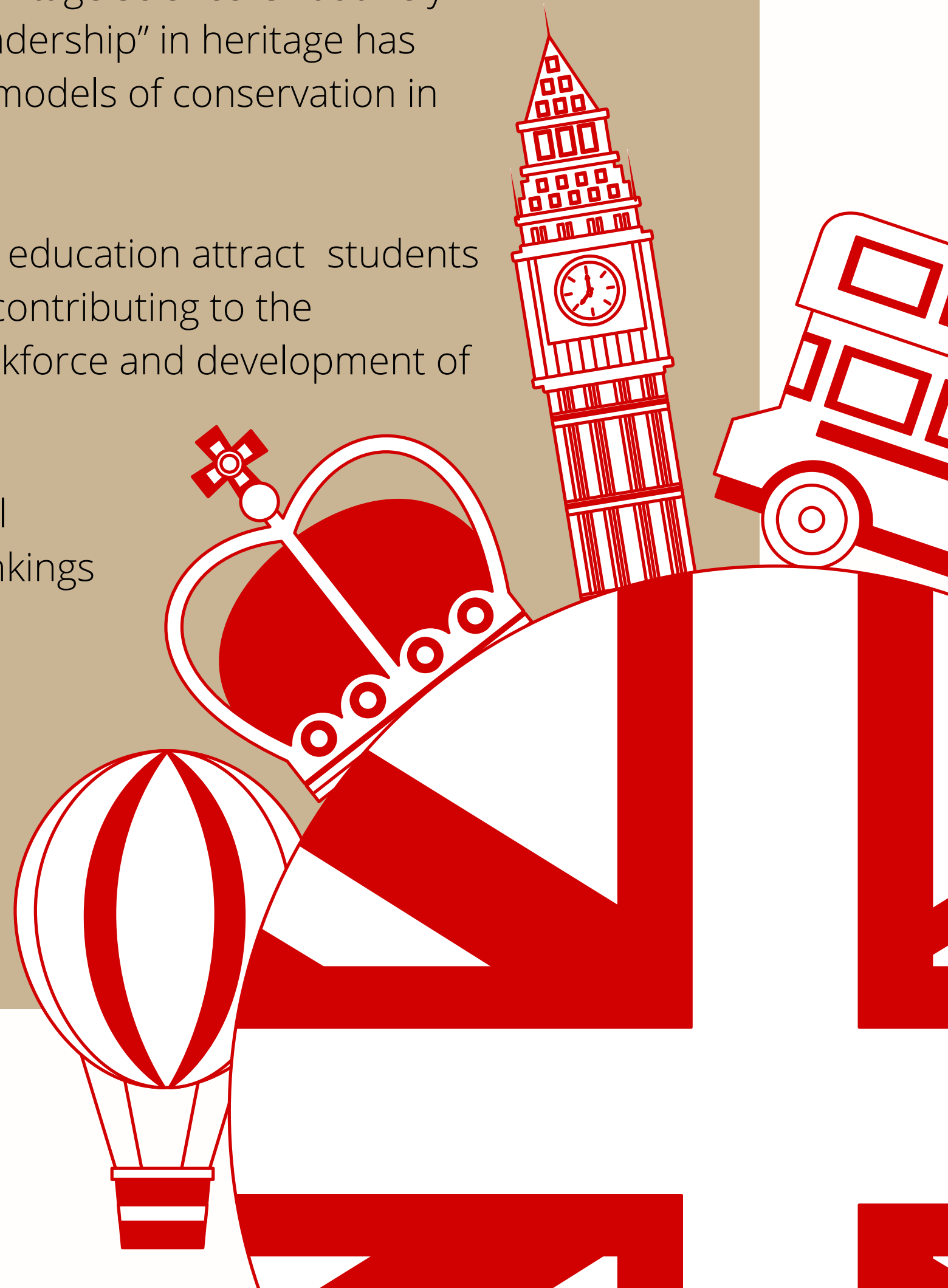
The conservation sector underpins industries vital to the UK's global reputation, including heritage, tourism and the creative industries

Heritage is an integral part of the UK brand, driving millions of international visits each year. Conservation enables access to heritage by ensuring the survival of cultural heritage assets.

The UK's expertise in conservation and heritage science is routinely sought internationally. The UK's "world leadership" in heritage has been linked to its museums "pioneering" models of conservation in art, artefacts and heritage sites.

The UK's leading centres for conservation education attract students and researchers from around the world, contributing to the education of the domestic and global workforce and development of the subject.

Conservation organisations within the civil society sector add value to soft power rankings through their independent networks.



OUR RECOMMENDATIONS

Investment in cultural heritage and conservation is vital for economic growth, the wellbeing of people and the UK's international competitiveness.

As the leading charity for cultural heritage conservation, Icon calls on Government to:

- Invest in our cultural institutions with ring-fenced funding for essential collections care and conservation work.
- Invest in a resilience fund for cultural heritage enterprises to support freelance conservators and small and micro businesses.
- Invest in creative education and training to encourage people from a diverse range of backgrounds into future-proof cultural jobs in the creative industries.
- Fund cultural heritage wellbeing programs to help deliver the NHS Long Term Plan.
- Invest in distributed research and innovation infrastructure for heritage science.
- Use cultural heritage to deliver the Soft Power Strategy and strengthen the UK's international standing.



THE INSTITUTE OF CONSERVATION

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. We are the authoritative source of information on conservation practice, policy and the profession.

From the Magna Carta to your grandmother's jewellery to a rare first edition of your favourite book - we aim to preserve the items that matter most, and to advance public understanding of conservation.

Find out more about Icon's [impact](#).

