

IfA FINDS GROUP AGM

Wednesday 11 July 2012

York Archaeological Trust

47 Aldwark, York, North Yorkshire YO1 7BX

MINUTES

PRESENT:

Duncan Brown, Helen Parslow, Holly Duncan, Patrick Ottoway, Michael Lewis, Bone Jones, Stephen Moorhouse, Matt Parker, Joanne Gould, Alan West, Mags Felter (in parts)

STAFF in attendance:

Amanda Forster

- 1 **2011 AGM Minutes**
Minutes from the 2010 AGM were not available for circulation. AF to try and locate a copy and circulate. AF Circulate minutes if located.
- 2 **Chairs report**
Hon. Chair, Birgitta Hoffman, had resigned in April 2012. No report was available, but the issues which led to her resignation are on the agenda for discussion (item 7).
- 3 **Secretaries report**
Secretary was unable to make the AGM at short notice, and a report was unavailable.
 - a) AF reported that the current group member numbers were **now 731**, and significantly up from figures reported in previous years.
 - b) Budget – new proposals. New proposal for Groups have been circulated via Groups Forum. Running costs budgets will now be proposed on an annual basis as before, but events will be funded from a specific budget which can be applied to on a case by case basis. It is hoped this more flexible approach will help facilitate groups in the planning and running of events. AF will circulate more details as they come. AF circulate new budget proposals
- 4 **Treasurers report**
 - a) Current budget only takes into account the running costs which were requested from the groups – the current budget for 2011-2012 is £735
- 5 **Nominations**
 - a) Phil Mills, Chair – elected
 - b) Matt Parker, Secretary – elected
 - c) Bone Jones, Treasurer – elected
- 6 **Committee formed**

- a) Phil Mills
- b) Bone Jones
- c) Matt Parker
- d) Michael Lewis
- e) Stephen Brunning, Newsletter editor
- f) Archives representative – Duncan Brown

7 **Birgitta Hoffman resignation issues for discussion**

- a) **Budgets.** AF reported developments with new budget proposals which hope to address some of the issues which Birgitta had raised on resigning from Chair of the group. Budgets will have to be agreed on an annual basis for general costs, but hopefully the introduction of a new budget for events will help issues with planning for events.
- b) **Communications.** AF reported that a lot of problems had been identified with communications between Group committees and IfA staff. AF felt that these were being dealt with, and that having the new Groups Toolkit (see item 8) would help address some of these issues. Others would not change – all communications were still requested to come via IfA staff, specifically via AF as Promotions manager. This was as much to ensure communications were being sent to the right people as they were to ensure consistency, and that the correct information was being circulated.
- c) **Communication with Council.** AF reported that Council minutes should be circulated to all groups, and that she was following this up. She also reported that proposals for governance would mean a much more formal representation of groups on the proposed Advisory Council. AF also reported that she would clarify how groups can currently seek representation on Council via Hon Vice Chair (Outreach), Beverley Ballin Smith.

8 **Groups toolkit development**

AF reported on recent development of Groups Toolkit, an outline of which was circulated. The Toolkit will collate all relevant data for groups in one place, to be held on the website for access to Group Committee members via their login (eg you would only have to login once) . The toolkit is currently in preparation, and will be in place for December 2012.

9 **Relationship with other organisations**

FRG, ICON, RFRG, RPRG, AEA &etc

As a group which represents a diverse spectrum of specialists, there needs to be dialogue between the IfA Finds Group and other groups (such as those named above). Mags Felter attended the AGM as a representative from ICON Archaeology Group, and it might be useful to try and encourage other groups to attend. It would be useful to know what other groups might be represented within our own membership – perhaps something for the newsletter? Would be useful to run joint workshops, also with other IfA groups.

DB suggested that, while he was happy to represent the Finds Group on The Archives Forum, it would be good to have someone else willing to

AF/ SB Survey members of the group – what other, non-IfA finds groups are represented.

FG Comm.: to discuss at next committee meeting

take on this role.

10 Group aims and objectives

Discussion. The group discussed the role of the Finds Group, and what kind of strategic aims it should have, as well as the kind of activities and events it should be involved in. This included;

- A need to promote the Finds group as a group which covers all aspects of finds (artefacts, environmental, conservation), and not simply objects.
- A need to reassert the aims and objectives of the group, and update them to fit the profession in 2012.
- There is a need to review the whole of archaeological practice, recording systems, marking etc, which is currently locked into a 1983 model. EH guidelines are out of date, IfA S&g are out of date, practice papers are out of date. Finds group has an opportunity to review and work out what sensible practice is.
- Finds group is in a position to review the structures within which we all work, and everything has changed since formation. Re-establish the remit of the group.
- Formation of guidelines which are more dynamic and easily updateable
- IfA should expect its members to be aware of what the standards are, and make sure that members are aware of when those standards are not being hit, and what happens next.
- After S&g update, there is need to ensure that everyone knows about it! From practitioners to curators about finds as well. Run a join event with ALGAO?
- Archaeology has become a procedure, which is causing problems. It is unpredictable discipline.
- From a finds perspective, there is a need to get the expertise to places where it doesn't exist. Trying to establish a network of advice for finds (as well as archives).
- One project could be looking at the level of standards across commercial and research projects. Using a random sample of grey literature reports, we could evaluate standards of reporting against standards of practice.
- We should also look into how people get their training? Trying to promote within Universities and training courses, providing formalised.
- Establishment of PAS has been great for small finds, and has promoted new research in those areas. What else is out there?

FG Comm.: to discuss at next committee meeting, and define new aims/objectives

11 AOB

AF requested content for The Archaeologist.

Next meeting; Wednesday 12 September, British Museum, London.