Forum Dispatch

Inform, debate, represent

Newsletter 9
Summer 2012

The newsletter of the Diggers' Forum

Chair's introduction

Gwyl Williams

It has been a busy year since the release of the Away Survey and the handover of the rolling chair. There have been some strong results and commendable successes, but, despite the good news, further unit closures and lay-offs have continued throughout the year. People's jobs are no more secure now than they were last year.

The Diggers' Forum has been very much involved in discussions for the implementation of the 5.2% rise in pay minima. The adoption of the minima by the IfA for their Registered Organisations and the implementation of some Away Survey recommendations by some employers is good news. David Connolly at BAJR has also adopted the advert recommendations, meaning that employers are having to consider the Away Survey whether they have read it – and replied to DF requests for comments – or not. Indeed, it is a bit sad that there have been few responses from members of FAME, but those who have contacted DF have been positive. This is important for us all: there are managers and employers who remember life before MIfA. David's valuable support ensures that non-IfA employers' T&C are comparable with IfA employers.

During this year's IfA conference in Oxford the DF sponsored the Thursday Social which was also the venue for the ATF 'Training in Archaeology Awards', won by Cotswold Archaeology and RCAHMS. We hope that the DF will have further opportunities such as this to raise its profile. It was a bit of a shame that take-up for the DF-dedicated tickets was so low. I, for one, would have loved to have had more site staff present, particularly since we were just round the corner from one of the largest units in the country.

Other good news includes the first DF/Finds Group session at the IfA conference in Oxford this year. This was an excellent example of different specialists bringing together the 'hands on' aspects of doing field archaeology and dealing with finds. Fewer and fewer specialists work in-house. As a result there is less contact between staff at the beginning of their career, who perhaps might wish to develop a specialist skill through practice (rather than further education), and more experienced and recognised practitioners. This has a bearing on us all: for the transfer of skills, for the ability to understand the significance of material we excavate, and for the development of specialisms. The DF is also planning a session at TAG this year on field archaeology: methods, practice, and implementation, including finds and enviro and PX. Chiz is looking for papers to be given. Later this month, on Tuesday 19th June there will be a conference in Winchester on the topic – 'Teaching, training and professional development' – which will start to address the issue. My only regret is that this is on a Tuesday, which is not very good for most field-staff.

All of these conferences and discussion forums tie in with a forthcoming survey on training. We have heard from Diggers that not everyone is getting access to the same quality of training and that even where people are doing their own CPD training, they feel that their employers are not supporting them. As with the Away Survey, getting some actual data rather than relying on hearsay is the next step. We shall be launching the survey later on in the year and I entreat you all to add your tuppence-worth, for good or for ill.

The current committee is also delighted to welcome Tom Elliot and Hayley McParland who have joined with specific responsibilities for digital media and for coordinating the CPD survey.

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Are your details up to date? We want to make sure you get this newsletter and other DF communications, so please let the IfA know if you change your postal or email address at: groups@archaeologists.net

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To view this newsletter as a pdf open it in Adobe Acrobat™, and go to **View<Page Display** and tick **Two-Up Continuous** and **Show Cover Page During Two-Up** and it will appear as intended.

To print the newsletter: if you only have an A4 printer it is easiest to print it double sided and staple down the spine to create a booklet format.

If you have access to an A3 printer then you can use booklet print: go to http://kb2.adobe.com/cps/897/cpsid_89736.html for details.

Diggers' Forum mission statement

The Diggers' Forum (DF) is committed to creating a positive, sustainable and financially viable career for all professional archaeologists at all points in their career. The DF is a Special Interest Group of the Institute for Archaeologists representing all archaeologists working out on site at whatever grade. Membership of the DF is open to all.

The DF was formed in 2004 to represent the views, aspirations and professional requirements of its members, in addition to campaigning for improvements in pay and conditions within the profession.

The views of those new to a career in archaeology, or who are employed at the lower rungs of the job, are under-represented in the industry. It is a key aim of the Diggers' Forum to redress this balance and keep the issues and welfare of its membership at the top of the IfA agenda and publicised to the world beyond.

The Diggers' Forum will serve as a platform to provide up to date news and information to its members, as well as actively encouraging debate and involvement within the DF and the IfA on the developing roles required of field-staff now and in the decades to come.

Join us in the Diggers' Forum and help make a positive difference to our profession: http://www.archaeologists.net/groups/diggers

Letter from the editor

Chiz Harward

There seems to be a bit of momentum building behind the Diggers' Forum at the moment, and this is hopefully reflected in your newsletter, with a wide range of articles from archaeologists who are all making a difference to their profession. We try and keep a balance between Diggers' Forum news, information on our latest campaigns and lobbying, and informative articles, new, reviews and training articles but its often hard to keep a balance. Putting together the newsletter is always a bit of a juggling act, with promised articles delayed, and new pieces arriving out of the blue. This issue of your newsletter has been slightly delayed - a combination of being on an away job, and having a good selection of articles to hold the publication for. I'd like to thank all the new contributors, and to continue to ask all DF members if they would like to contribute to their newsletter by submitting photos, articles, or news.

This issue we have a great piece on excavating human burials written by Natasha Powers, Head of Osteology at MoLA. Natasha has worked on many of the largest cemetery sites of recent years (including Spitalfields, and numerous Roman and post-medieval cemeteries in London) as well as research into tiny assemblages of redeposited bones, Natasha has packed her experience into a four page article for the DF. This article is the first in a series of DF handouts and technical papers which will cover a wide variety of subjects, from digging robber cuts to Roman drying ovens. If you have an area of specialism or interest and would like to contribute to a DF handout on it, please do get in touch, whether it is on post-medieval bricks, formation processes, clay pipes or burnt mounds.

We also bring you news of several conferences, both past and present, at which DF members have been active. This increasing activity reflects a new drive to put Diggers back into the heart of the profession. It has taken several years of hard work to gain the necessary momentum, but with your support we can hopefully keep that momentum going, and make a better profession for us all. This newsletter is a vital tool in communicating to you what fellow DF members are up to, and fulfilling our mission to inform, debate and represent all Diggers. I hope you find something of interest in this issue, and will consider contributing or commenting in future.

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Cotswold Outdoor Discount

Did you know that IfA members can get a 15% discount at Cotswold Outdoors? If you are into the outdoors, or just need some new socks for site then you could start making back your IfA subs whilst shopping for anything from fleeces to sleeping bags, tents to torches.

Quote 'Institute for Archaeologists' at the till and show your IfA membership card. IfA members of the DF should have been sent a discount code by email they can use. If you didn't receive it, let us know. You may need to speak to the manager as staff may not be immediately aware of the discount. The discount code is also valid for phone and online orders.

Please note this discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. If you have any difficulty using this offer please contact the IfA office (and let us know as well!).

If you would like to contribute to the Diggers' Forum Newsletter, or have a suggestion on a subject we should cover, please contact the editor by email:
chiz@urban-archaeology.com

Dates for the diary and details of events or news should be sent to Gwilym Williams by email:
gwilymwilliams70@yahoo.co.uk

DF Roundup and news

DF Committee news

There have been changes to the DF committee, with several long-serving members stepping down, and two new faces stepping up to the plate. The DF would like to thank Jez Taylor, Geoff Morley and Phil Richardson for all their hard work over the last few years, and to welcome Tom Elliot and Hayley MacParland onto committee. Tom will be looking after Digital Outreach, and Hayley will be in charge of Survey Outreach.

The last issue of the newsletter coincided with the publication of the DF report on away work and travel, and the report has now been downloaded over 1500 times. There's a short report in this issue on what has been happening since the report's publication, but rest assured that we are continuing to push for reaction and response to our report and its recommendations. If you have any thoughts or experiences to share, let us know.

There are plans for a new survey on CPD and training for Diggers, so watch this space. We are looking at whether we can deliver one major survey each year -but for this we could do with some more help from members!

The last issue of IfA magazine *The Archaeologist* included an 'Opinion' piece by DF member Chiz Harward which outlined some of the issues affecting commercial archaeology and archaeologists, especially the deskilling of field staff, and suggested ways to reverse the process. The article provoked some strong reactions, both in the response section of the TA piece, and by email to the author. Several emails expressed support and frustration at the current situation, whilst some senior voices were concerned that all the hard work of the past was being thrown away for commercial expediency. Chiz feels that it is important that we acknowledge what is wrong, before moving forward, he will be outlining further ways to reskill Diggers in talks at Winchester, FAME Forum and the DF/Prospect conferences (see conference announcements in later pages).

Diggers' Forum on Facebook

If you didn't already know, we're now active on Facebook and very recently on Twitter. The Diggers' Forum Facebook page is now 'liked' by over 140 people. You obviously don't have to be in the DF to read the page, or to 'like' it, and everyone is welcome, but we'd hope that once you see what we are trying to do for everyone out on site, that you might want to join and help us.

You can find the DF Facebook page at:
http://www.facebook.com/DiggersForum

and our Twitter feed at:
https://twitter.com/#!/DiggersForum

DF inclusion in working group on pay minima

The Diggers' Forum Committee continue to be heavily involved in establishing the IfA salary minima after our success last year with a rise of 5.2% across all corporate grades of membership.

This year we have been invited to sit on a Working Group to establish the terms of reference for the minima in 2013: basically deciding whether to use CPI or RPI and what other current economic issues need to be considered when setting the minima.

We will be looking at our comparators again; salaries for similar professions such as engineers and environmental scientists as well as current pay levels at commercial and public archaeological and heritage organisations. This usually involves an in-depth trawl through the IfA job sheets and BAJR jobs to establish where current salaries are for each IfA grade and whether a further rise could be borne by the employers. Opinions are sought from the DF, Prospect and FAME as employers with the aim of recommending a sensible and achievable rise in the minima. Well that's our aim anyway….

The minima for 2013 will be decided at the IfA Council meeting in November 2012 and the Working Group has been set up to present a report at that meeting to enable Council to have an informed (and hopefully non-confrontational!) discussion. Sadie and Chiz have volunteered to represent the DF Committee in the discussions and will be meeting with Nick Shepherd (as Vice Chair of the IfA and Chair of the Working Group) and a few other Council members in June. Prospect will also be invited along. We will keep you posted of developments but in the meantime rest assured that the salary issue remains at the top of our agenda and we will be doing our best for another good result come November.

It would greatly help the likelihood of getting a rise passed at the November Council meeting if DF members would stand for Council- the more supporters we have with a vote the greater the chance of getting the things we want voted through!

Pay check

Information received from DF members indicates a mixed bag in relation to pay. The IfA minima increase has caused some wages to rise, although others haven't. JMHS have awarded a 5.2% rise; Oxford Archaeology have also raised their wages -with greater increases for those on the least pay, whilst AOC have awarded a 3% increase, recognising the rise in the cost of living and need to keep up with industry standards on pay.

We URGENTLY need information from DF members whose wages are now below IfA minima - if you work for an IfA Registered Organisation and your wages are below the relevant minima then get in touch and we'll take up your case. In such cases there should be no need for any names or testimony -we can simply ask the IfA RO committee to look into wages.

Groups forum

Diggers' Forum is one of the IfA Special Interest Groups (SIGs) and representatives of all the SIGs meet on a regular basis to discuss various topics. Topics that are of particular interest to our members are always on the agenda, so please do inform us of the issues that affect you the most.

One of those of course is the process of IfA disciplinary procedures and SIG's role in the disciplinary process – how we can help. Some clarifications have been provided and more details are forthcoming. This discussion is ongoing. We aim to report further details in a subsequent edition of the DF Dispatch.

It is with regret that we inform you of the resignation of Birgitta Hoffmann, Honorary Chair of the Finds SIG. Birgitta informed the attendees of the Methods in our Madness Workshop of her reasons for resigning. Birgitta's resignation comes at a time when changes in the way SIGs operate within the IfA are changing and we will keep our DF Dispatch readers up do date on progress.

IfA Council elections

There are elections to IfA Council coming up, we have three sometime DF committee members on Council, we could always do with more like-minded Council members to help put site staff at the core of the IfA's business, so if you want to stand for election and want to know what it involves or how to go about it, then get in touch!

Inflation news

Latest inflation news is that the CPI is now down to 3% (April), and the RPI is at 3.5%. The Bank of England has said that CPI will stay above 2% 'for the next year or so' with worries over the Eurozone. The cost of rent, hotels and restaurants has gone up, but the cost of clothing and alcohol from off-licences is down (source: BBC news).

Jobscheck

As ever we check the **BAJR** website and every edition of the **IfA Jobs Information Service** for any job adverts which appear to pay below IfA minima or BAJR Grades, or equivalent freelance rates. Since your last newsletter the Diggers' Forum have complained about one advert on the JIS which was taken down from the list: the advert offered a lower wage than the same company was offering via BAJR, and was at 2011 minima rates, even though the advert was placed in March just before the minima were due to rise.

We've also checked with the IfA about what *they* are doing to prevent dodgy adverts from being run on the JIS in the first place -after all we believe we shouldn't have anything to complain about! There is a common perception that the IfA will run any advert in the JIS, however their answer suggests this isn't the case, so far this year they have:

•On two separate occasions queried the salary where it was advertised at a higher rate elsewhere and amended it on JIS to match
•
•Refused to run a training placement advertisement because it paid less than PIfA minima

•Queried on two separate occasions the level of responsibility for a role within a contracting organisation as the wages seemed low compared to the advert.

•Refused to run an advert for a MIfA responsibility post until the organisation had clarified the number of hours per week the (part-time) post was for.

•Refused to run an advert until the organisation advertising agreed to have their name associated with it.

•Asked a contracting organisation to amend a job description so that the person specification was in keeping with the salary offered (we then ran the advert).
•
So the IfA does pro-actively monitor the adverts submitted to the JIS, although the odd bad apple does still slip through. Over on the other channel there are also occasionally bad adverts on BAJR, with the DF challenging one advert where the pay was below the BAJR grades -this was due to the advertiser claiming a *pro-rata* rate as they only work a 37 hour week.

Earlier in the year David Connolly of BAJR announced his BAJR grades were going up by 2% *and* that he was implementing the DF recommendations on advertising jobs. He asked BAJR users to *'please keep an eye out for me, as I can miss things'* and we've been doing just that! We'd like to commend David for taking up the recommendations, however there have been inevitable teething troubles in getting all the information on the adverts or a related webpage. We hope that with the new focus on adverts from the away survey all advertisers and advertising media will work to ensure all their adverts are transparent and within the requisite minima.

As ever if you hear of any job that pays below the IfA rates then let us know and we'll see if there is anything we can do about it.

Upcoming DF lectures

DF member Tom Elliott gave a lecture on the realities of commercial archaeology at the Exeter University Archaeology Careers Fair on Friday 30th May. If you would be interested in presenting a similar talk at your old university and passing on invaluable advice to the Diggers of tomorrow then please get in touch, we have a Powerpoint slide show that you can adapt to form the basis of your talk.

DF member Chiz Harward has a busy summer on the lecture circuit: hot on the heels of his paper at the IfA conference he will be giving a follow-up paper on professional training at the Winchester Uni day conference followed by the FAME Forum on skills and employability in York on the 13th July. The next day he will be repeating the training paper and briefly talking on the DF Away survey at Prospect's conference -luckily also in York.

Prospect – Working for a Better Future for Archaeologists

Chris Clarke

Over the past few months Prospect's Archaeologists Branch have been concentrating on numerous issues. The most significant issues relates to working on the Branch's National Pay Bargaining programme which involves co-ordinating the pay negotiations occurring between employers and union representatives within Prospect recognised work places. All recognised work places agreed to push for a 5% pay rise in order to keep wages in-line with inflation. The results of this year's pay awards are currently being collated.

Further efforts have been put into raising the profile of the Branch by publishing articles in magazines such as The Archaeologist and RESCUE News, while the Prospect stand at this year's IfA Conference in Oxford, raised a lot of interest among delegates.

Over the next few months the Branch will be primarily focusing on putting the final touches to plans for the Prospect/DF Joint Day Conference 'Archaeology as a Career: The Way Forward', to be held at the Mansion House, York, on Saturday 14th July. For more details on the conference, and for news on other Archaeologists Branch activities, please go to the updated Branch website http://www.prospect.org.uk/members_areas/branch/181/public/p1

Chris Clarke (Acting Branch Chair)
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Interview with Pete Hinton, Chief Executive of the IfA

Next issue the Diggers' Forum will be publishing an interview with Pete Hinton, Chief Executive of the IfA. We'd like to hear what **you** want to ask Pete about the subjects that matter to you, whether that is pay, standards, representation, chartership, cronyism or what exactly the IfA has ever done for us Diggers.

This is your chance to put your questions, and to find out the other side to the story. Send us your questions!

Join us and make your voice heard!

The Diggers' Forum is the IfA Special Interest Group for field workers, that includes EVERYONE who primarily works at the sharp end of archaeology out on site.

The DF is open to all and represents field archaeologists at all levels -from a student considering professional archaeology to Project Officers running major excavations. The Diggers' Forum represents YOUR views on a wide variety of matters within and beyond the IfA, we are the second largest SIG within the IfA and the bigger we are the bigger our voice.

If you are a member of the IfA membership of the Diggers' Forum is FREE, for non-members there is a subscription of £10 a year. To join email: groups@archaeologists.net

Conference announcement

Prospect Archaeologist Branch and Diggers' Forum Joint Day Conference

Archaeology as a Career: The Way Forward

Prospect Archaeologists Branch and the Diggers' Forum have joined forces to organise a one day conference to explore the issue of professional archaeology as a meaningful career choice. The aim of the conference is to show professional archaeologists that archaeology can be a far more structured and long-term career choice than immediate appearances may suggest.

Through the use of presentations and discussion sessions a range of speakers from Prospect, Diggers' Forum and the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA) will present ways in which you can start to think differently about your career by identifying the range of options available to you, and more importantly, show you how you can help yourself to achieve more in your career.

To be held at:
Mansion House, York
Sat July 14th 2012 10am - 4.30pm

The conference is free to attend, but you will need to book a ticket in advanced to secure attendance. Please contact Chris Clarke at chrisclarke600@hotmail.co.uk to book your place. In your e-mail please note if you are a Prospect or Diggers' Forum member.

Financial assistance towards cost of travel for Prospect and Diggers' Forum members attending the conference is available. Please see website for more details.

For more conference information, programme details, and details of financial assistance please visit: http://www.prospect.org.uk/members_areas/branch/181/public/p3

SKILLS AND EMPLOYABILITY IN UK ARCHAEOLOGY

FIT FOR PURPOSE?

Friday 13 July 2012
Merchant Taylors Hall
Aldwark
York

A university degree has long been considered an essential requirement for a career in archaeology. However, there seems to be a growing gulf between what our universities provide and what archaeological employers need.

Rising tuition fees and competition among providers have led to a growing emphasis on employability, but research shows that the fieldwork component of university degrees - never high - is declining still further.

- How can we persuade the next generation that a career in archaeology is not just personally fulfilling but financially viable?
- Is it the job of our universities to produce employable archaeologists? And if not, what can employers offer to develop these skills?
- Can hard-pressed employers afford to provide structured work-based training?
- Can they afford not to – and risk creating a generation of field archaeologists disengaged from the analytical process?
- What can we learn from the work-based training provided by fellow employers?

This year's FAME Forum will be held in association with the Archaeology Training Forum, and will bring together a wide variety of practitioners to discuss what we can do, both to attract new entrants to the profession and to develop and retain those we already have.

IfA Annual Conference 2012:

Gwyl Williams

The theme for the 2012 IfA conference held at Oxford Town Hall was **'Partnership Working – creating effective networks throughout the historic, natural and built environments to maximise resources, increase public benefit and build a stronger sector'.** Gwyl Williams has reviewed some of the sessions:

Everything you wanted to know about geophys but were afraid to ask

I attended this session in order to increase my understanding of the practicalities of geophysical survey techniques and to ensure I remain up-to-date in my role as Senior Project Officer with responsibility for advising clients and/or commissioning geophysical survey on their behalf. The workshop described the arc from a broad background (Jimmy Adcock) through the commissioning of geophys (Paul & Neil Linford) to the actual fieldwork (Ken Hamilton) and subsequent processing (Claire Graham) and archiving (Ben Urmston).

All presentations did however address topics raised in the other presentations to a greater or lesser degree. Issues of Guidance and Standards (IfA), Guidelines (EH), and good practice (ADS) – given that anyone can call themself a geophysicist – were also addressed. Magnetic survey (single, dual and multi-sensor as well as magnetic susceptibility), resistance survey (frame and cart-mounted), and ground-penetrating radar were discussed in detail. Seismic reflection and electrical imaging were also mentioned.

The sessions dealt with the full range of the most commonly used techniques, their strengths and limitations, and provided a good introduction to the more common issues encountered in plots and interpretations. Furthermore, the details of the preparation of a specification when putting work out to tender was addressed, which included practical issues such as mapping (who provides?), geology (drift and deep), area size, known and unknown potential impact factors (site conditions, status, access, etc.), ownership and so forth. Equally, the projects aims and objectives as well as our expectations of the results were also significant issues, which ought to be transparent and made available to the contractor.

This enables one to decide on the appropriate technique(s) for the site in question, based on land-use, geology and previous use. The issue of sampling was addressed and a number of plots demonstrated the inherent liabilities of this approach.

Integrating the initial survey with subsequent work – both survey and intrusive – was also emphasised. Similarly, the need to provide feedback to the contractor was emphasised on several occasions in order for them to improve their interpretative skills. As part of this over-processed or poorly undertaken survey data was used in contrast with well-carried out survey to demonstrate both positive outcomes and how to question appropriately a contractor about the quality of their work if one feels there is a problem. Confidence levels, both in data-collection and interpretation, were also discussed.

The use of geophysical survey in standing buildings was presented. Archiving of geophysical investigative reports also formed a key element of a couple of the presentations: paper, metadata, digital; and whether these would be archived at the HER and/or ADS.

Forensic Archaeology: partners in crime

Having worked previously for the International Criminal Tribunal in the former Yugoslavia in 2000, it was a valuable lesson to revisit current trends in forensic archaeology. The presentations – which were advertised as a seminar, but were actually more a series of lectures – focussed on primarily on police work, and archaeological applications to the recovery of evidence within the context of the UK criminal justice system.

As with most of the sessions which I attended communication was a key element. John Hunter's presentation provided an overview of the discipline and the role of the forensic archaeologist within the team. He emphasised the need for archaeological skills to deal with archaeological problems so that appropriate evidential standards were maintained.

This was echoed at the end by Rob Janaway's warning of mission creep. There is a clear need for a high level of cooperation and integration when different specialists – entomologists, pathologists, animal behaviour experts, climatologists – to name but a few, become involved in forensic work, each needing to intervene at any given point in order to recover evidence.

Standards are crucial (Jennifer Miller – who was in court, and could not present in person) to ensure best practice, a point also echoed by other contributors, which are laid down in the IfA Standard and Guidance. However, the nature of forensic work is such that external constraints and legal requirements can take precedence over usual practice, and that there is no place as a result, in forensic archaeology for prima donnas.

Place was an important topic in Karl Harrison's and Gaille Mackinnon's presentation of forensic processes. This was particularly seen where the forensic techniques of 'search' and 'location' can draw heavily on traditional archaeological techniques such as landscape survey, map-based analysis (including that of geology/soil and historic mapping), geophysical interventions and ultimately controlled stripping of the topsoil etc., as part of the recovery of evidence. A clear understanding of the importance of the feedback loop of 'intelligence', 'assessment', 'actioning' and feeding back the 'outcome' is crucial in order to guide and assist in the forensic strategy.

Steve Litherland, Julie Roberts and Nicholas Márquez-Grant presented a range of case-studies to demonstrate the importance of integrating ecological data recovery with the archaeological investigation of the event and the physical anthropology. Here again Locard's Principle – that all contact leaves some trace – was discussed outside the more traditional realms of forensics. Similarly Rob Janaway's presentation at the end reiterated much that had been said, but one further aspect in his second case study. The success of the case prosecuted was actually on other evidential grounds rather than the forensic.

His first case was a lesson to non-forensic archaeologists. Development controlled building work in the grounds of Malton priory revealed skeletal material. The police were called – although why the attending archaeologist was not (there) was not clear. For approximately 24 hours it was a crime-scene, with all the costs that implies, whereas there were a minimum of seven individuals which were disturbed by post-medieval activity, 19th- or early 20th-century drainage as well as the recent excavation.

Madness in our Methods? The state of the art and intersections between excavation methods and recording systems

There was a shocking start to the DF/Finds Group session when prior to giving her paper Birgitta Hoffmann announced her resignation from Finds Group and the suspension of her membership of the IfA. There were a number of reasons which can be summarised as poor communication between the IfA and Finds Group committee and feeling that contact between Finds Group committee and members was being reduced, while greater demands – essentially the compilation of a directory of finds specialists – were being made on the committee at one and the same time. It was clearly not an easy decision and everyone felt the impact of her statement.

The session itself described an arc from pre-excavation, non-invasive investigation, through excavation both as methodology and technique, to post-excavation analysis and its management.

Her paper 'Geophysics, field walking, metal detecting – three surveys or one survey with three levels on information?' addressed the Roman Gask Project a long-term survey project in which she has been involved. The range of information acquired comprised all non-invasive forms of investigation as well as some excavation. The focus of the paper was on the outcomes of the three survey methods and how

to integrate the results successfully given the different approaches and expectations of the various practitioners and volunteers in the project.

The following paper – 'Touching the void: the gap between trowel and meaning' – which was to be given by Reuben Thorpe, ended up being read by Phil Mills at the last moment, as Reuben had missed the plane from Stockholm. This was rather unfortunate as the paper which was interesting surely would have generated much discussion. In the event, my understanding of the narrative was sharply curtailed. I look forward to hearing the paper another time given by the author.

Chiz Harward's paper – 'Reskilling the Diggers: handing over the means of interpretation' – was in part a reaffirmation of his article in The Archaeologist articulating the issues which many of us have experienced as diggers, supervisors and indeed as project officers. The expectations which we have of ourselves and of others are undermined by the current excavation methodologies which expect people to go in, bang a load of holes through stuff, and get off site with a coherent understanding of what has occurred: we can sort it out in PX, as the county Mountie probably didn't notice the panic-holes… Training of course costs and few are willing to be the ones to bear the cost.

Following Chiz, Tim Darvill's paper – 'Down, Down, Deeper, and Down: Matching excavation methods and recording systems in commercial and research investigations' – was presented by his colleague Paul Cheetham, as some wag pointed out, because Darvill was in the Deep South no doubt giving the same paper in the warm sun, rather than the Oxford rain. The paper, which was accompanied by lots of graphics, failed to grip me, I'm afraid.

Phil Mills gave a detailed description of the process of preparing a specialist report – in his case Roman pottery and ceramic building materials. 'Assessing and reporting CBM and Pottery', which was methodologically detailed, was a handy reminder for the site-worker that good record-keeping extends beyond putting the right number on the context sheet or plan. Moreover, finds have a life beyond spot-dating, as well as an afterlife, either dignified or not depending as much on the quality of their recovery as on their intrinsic uniqueness.

Beth Werrett's paper – 'The Highworth ceramic: a demonstration of the benefits of best practice and communication in archaeological conservation projects' – continued this message with an interesting presentation of the post-excavation treatment of a rather splendid Roman storage jar and its use-life which had involved repair and re-use. It was interesting to note that it was only when the county archaeological service got involved was it selected as a special object; during excavation and the early phase of post-excavation it appears to have been treated as 'just another pot'.

The final paper by Mary Neale was an attempt to wrestle such relationships into a more harmonious state. Mary's paper 'Clarity in communicating methods to ensure research questions are addressed' was a discussion of the need to ensure an integrated approach to post-excavation analysis in which dialogue between the excavator, the specialists and the monitoring archaeological body assures the most effective outcome from a project. In some ways this paper described an idealistic position, yet a position which in various ways was articulated throughout the session.

The 'finds' papers both intimated and expressed the need for good communication and the ensuring that field-staff understand the need for good record-keeping and the more 'sitey' papers re-iterated the need for good training and mentoring with a view to career development. But to me it is clear that the need to train staff is mine as much as theirs, in order that their record-keeping and interpretation and knowledge is up to the task in hand, so that they can ask the right questions at the right time and of the right people. The art of asking the right questions lies in knowing the difference between which questions to be asking and which to be biting your tongue on.

The National Planning Policy Framework

Mary Neale

The planning system is in operation in England to ensure that development and the use of land is in the public interest. This new framework replaces previous Planning Policy Statement 5 (PPS5) and all other policy so that it is more concise to read. All the heritage principles remain in place and are all now encapsulated under the umbrella of sustainable development. So conservation of heritage has an equal footing with ecology etc. and the document requires that all impacts must be considered jointly and simultaneously with more detailed guidance on weighting given in each section of the document. There is a presumption in favour of permission for all development that is wholly sustainable as appropriate to its weighting in terms of public benefit.

It also caters for current government thinking including supporting regeneration, providing affordable housing, enhancing the character of historic areas, or sustaining it where appropriate, and preventing development that would cause environmental damage. NPPF was introduced to assist local planning, weighing up its economic, environmental and social benefits and drawbacks. Planning applications for permission must be determined in accordance with local plans that adhere to the principles enshrined in the NPPF. Together with Neighbourhood Plans, this framework is more focused on local communities finding ways of meeting local needs that are to the public benefit in terms of social, economic and environmental sustainability.

We've provided a flow chart of the structure of the new policy for reference. The only aspect of change in the upper tiers of policy is the removal of Regional Plans. Beneath Local Plans, which are the Local Authorities' responsibility, are optional plans. Other plans are the responsibility of the local community, including Neighbourhood Plans (NP) and Neighbourhood Development Orders (NDO). All neighbourhood plans and orders are subject to examination and support via a local referendum and testing by the local authority before they can be implemented.

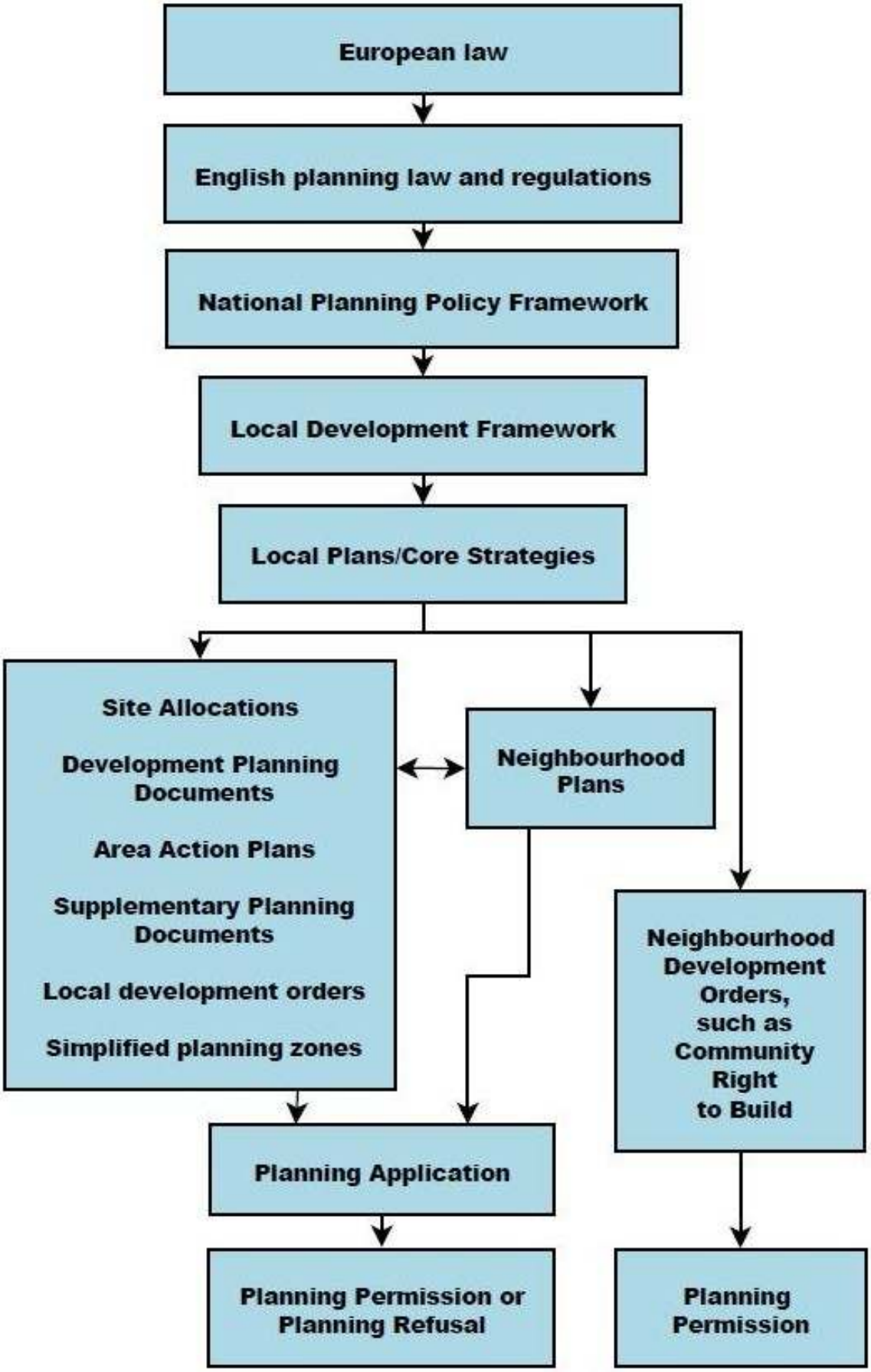
A Neighbourhood Development Order (NDO) is now considered a specific type of planning permission. It must be in compliance with and tested against Neighbourhood Plans (NP) and the Local Plan (Core Strategy). Applicants will now submit applications with due regard to the Local Plan and the Planning and Supplementary Documents (SPDs) relating to it and will also respect the details of Neighbourhood Plans (NP) where they have been produced.

The tests for NDOs and NPs are based on on strategic policies only. And include whether the proposals are sustainable. Where appropriate changes can be made including the enhancement heritage. Heritage assets are identified by the local planning authority. Anything of heritage interest is a valued component of the historic environment as is its significance which includes its archaeological, architectural, artistic and historic interest. Where these concepts are not defined in the dictionary, they will be defined in guidance. There is a specific acknowledgement that the significance of heritage to this and future generations is its heritage interest.

Professionally-led and community-led decisions

Currently, we work within a system where the local heritage services provide impartial advise that is delivered through the Historic Environment Record (HER). It is impartial from the point of view that archaeology officers do not make profit from their advice when archaeological investigation is recommended. Local heritage services do not aim to make a profit but sometimes charge nominal fees to generate enough income to run the service. And as employees of local government we need to ensure that the advice we provide responds adequately to the NPPF in terms of proportionality and weighting.

The responsibility for balancing the concerns of various consultees and for decision-making rests


European law
English planning law and regulations
National Planning Policy Framework
Local Development Framework
Local Plans/Core Strategies
Site Allocations
Development Planning Documents
Area Action Plans
Supplementary Planning Documents
Local development orders
Simplified planning zones
Neighbourhood Plans
Neighbourhood Development Orders, such as Community Right to Build
Planning Application
Planning Permission or Planning Refusal
Planning Permission

firmly with the Local Planning Authority, who decide whether to attach heritage recommendations to permissions as conditions. Finding the balance between sustainable development, including heritage, and local needs is the responsibility of the local planning authorities. Local heritage services provide advice, the planning authority makes the decision that is balanced against other issues and this is the ethical approach of curatorial advice and management of historic assets within the planning context. Beyond that decision-making, some changes have been introduced that are community-based.

Community led heritage-related decision making

While this professionally-led advice is anticipated to continue, community-led decision-making will become more common place. Heritage advice from local heritage services is not required as part of community-based plans but Neighbourhood Plans will be tested against the local plan which should include a discussion on local heritage.

The level of understanding of the vulnerability of buried archaeology in the face of development varies within and across communities. While advice on planning applications and pre-application advice for specific proposals will be led by local heritage services through the planning application system, community-based decision-making will be required of Neighbourhood Plans and Development Orders. There are difficulties in defining the potential significance of buried archaeology prior to investigation. Front loading that includes investigation at plan-making stage is likely to be problematic. What other aspects of the framework differs from previous planning policy?

How the NPPF differs from PPS5

While PPS5 was a stand-alone document, NPPF is more integrated. So the relative importance of weighting of different types of constraints and opportunities can be read and cross-referenced across the document. Importantly the historic environment is a local amenity.

The document is to be applied as a guide showing how to cross-reference levels of importance and harm. Differentiation is made between 'substantial harm' and 'less than substantial harm', for example. This differentiation tests the difference between harm to the heart of why a heritage assets is important – 'substantial harm' against harm to ancillary aspects of the heritage assets that add to its character but are not essential to it such as railings surrounding a heritage asset - 'less than substantial harm'.

However, this does not scale up. Greater harm requires justification. For example, you cannot compare this with the demolition of one property within a conservation area as this one property is part of a whole. The whole being a heritage asset. So sound professional judgement is assumed.

There are sections within NPPF that are relevant to heritage beyond the heritage section (126-141). This flexibility is well illustrated by paragraphs:

Paragraphs	Of direct relevance to heritage in decision-making
192	Pre-application assessment
7, 9, 17	Protecting, enhancing, improving and conserving heritage assets
169	Evidence base
126	Provision for Heritage in Local Plans
203	Application of conditions

Our understanding of the interpretation of NPPF in relation to specific site issues will develop over time. English Heritage's guide for PPS5 is still in force until the new practice guide for NPPF is published and is currently being drafted by the Historic Environment Forum. In the meantime, let's look at some initial curatorial and commercial perspectives of the NPPF.

Early intervention

From a curatorial perspective early intervention involves applicants consulting with local heritage services regarding front-loading of applications. Front-loading is encouraged in the NPPF as it aims to resolve as many issues prior to the application and decision-taking as possible so that permission can be granted in all cases where the development is found to be sustainable.

Providing sufficient evidence for decision-taking regarding buried archaeology may involve archaeology impact assessments, archaeology desk-based assessments and application of field techniques, most frequently initial field investigation via trial trenching and geophysical survey. The results from the reports and a professional opinion of the significance can then need to be submitted with the planning application.

As the NPPF states this early engagement will

improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the planning application system. All planning authorities offer pre-application services so that planning issues can be resolved at this stage. This ensures that a proposal will be acceptable in principle which is the first step in gaining planning permission.

From a commercial perspective ...

Designated and non-designated heritage assets

Paragraph 14 states that there is a presumption in favour of sustainable development in plan-making and decision-taking and note 9 of that paragraph states an exception - except where assets are protected due to their designated status or they are deemed of equal significance.

There is a clear legal distinction between designated and schedulable heritage assets. All buildings are automatically listed but all schedulable monuments are not necessarily scheduled because some are considered to be better protected through the planning system. Therefore, the weighting tests throughout the NPPPF apply to schedulable archaeology.

Damage to such heritage requires 'clear and convincing justification' (not just an assertion – the applicant needs to explain why the heritage asset cannot be conserved) where assessment and/or investigation has demonstrated that level of significance (including their setting). On the grounds that the harm is necessary to deliver public benefits that outweigh that harm, heritage assets need to be preserved by record but the ability to record does not militate against its preservation *in situ* where preservation *in situ* is feasible.

Non-designated heritage assets are protected through Local Plans. Paragraph 126 states that local policies should support heritage assets most at risk. Buried archaeology often lies undiscovered until investigation is undertaken. The risk to buried archaeology needs to be investigated and understood before decision-taking as permitted development will destroy undiscovered archaeological remains unless preservation (*in situ* or by record) is undertaken. Destruction of heritage assets is unacceptable as each site is unique and, as such, adds another dimension to the understanding of the character of local places, helping to build a picture of the long-term development of the area.

Following on from 126, paragraph 128 requires the profession to ascribe significance to heritage remains (including their setting). Therefore, assessments and investigations need to be sufficient to establish the nature, extent and character of the remains, as set out in paragraph 129. Depending on the scale and scope of works and the sensitivity of the heritage of the area, there may be an archaeological recommendation to attach a condition to any permission granted as a balanced professional judgement regarding harm or loss of any heritage assets on the site. The condition will be measurable and enforceable.

Setting

The definition of setting has not altered since PPS5. Issues relating to setting have not changed but there is no separate section on setting in the NPPF. However setting is stated as a key component in the value of heritage assets. Harm to the setting of a heritage asset is the same as harm to the heritage asset itself. Therefore, setting is subject to the same tests – 'substantial harm' and 'less than substantial harm'.

The policy approach to harm is that same as harm to the heritage asset itself. An applicant can cause substantial harm only if it is to a greater public benefit and the applicant has to quantify the degree of public benefit and how long that benefit will last. From the heritage professional's point of view we must articulate what benefit the heritage asset has to the public – the context that demonstrates why that asset is important, it's an opinion not academically factual.

And the setting should allow the public to appreciate the heritage asset. Aspects of setting include the ability to appreciate the attributes of the asset and thus it's significance. Therefore, any improvements to setting is considered positive. Optimum viable use is considered a reasonable response to sustainable development requirements.

When considering setting, many paragraphs that are not specific to heritage refer to setting – this is often in the sense of towns, street-scape and green spaces. Reading those paragraphs may help elucidate specific issues relating to setting, in additon to those paragraphs directly relate to heritage. In paragraphs 128, 129, 132 and 137 of the NPPF specifically refers to setting and the part it plays in understanding significance. These paragraphs identify the settings of heritage assets as a key criterion, having weight in decision-making within the planning system.

The contribution, positive, neutral or negative, of development on a heritage asset depends on our professional understanding of it. Part of our professional understanding is provided by the evidence of the use of sites and how their setting changed over the centuries, so the extent of setting is not fixed and is dependant on the evolution of the heritage asset.

An assessment of heritage assets and associated settings should be taken into account by local planning authorities when considering the impact of any proposal on heritage assets. As paragraph 137 states that it the assessment should include 'the significance of any heritage assets affected, including any contribution made by their setting'. The value of setting lies in its association with one or more heritage assets and may be categorised as archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic or all of the above. Setting may be altered so that it improves the protection and enhancement of heritage assets through high quality design.

The roles of local heritage advisors and commercially-based consultants

Where requested, archaeology officers and conservation officers will consider proposals at pre-application stage and provide advice on:

- evidence for heritage potential
- ways of minimising impact on heritage assets
- the information that needs to be supplied with the application to assist with decision-making
- the conditions that are likely to be recommended should permission be granted, so that costs can be estimated

As the majority of archaeology sites are buried and thus undiscovered, all planning proposals are screened in order to judge if the proposals are likely to impact on archaeological sites. It enables:

- proportionate response in relation to local context – for example, local Research Frameworks, rarity of the heritage and completeness of understanding for a particular period within a defined area

- consistent decisions made regarding proposals of a similar scale and scope and similar circumstances within the wider area whilst being in accordance with local plans informed by evidence from the Historic Environment Record (HER), assessments and field investigation by commercial contractors and consultants

- timely advice in terms of project planning but also in terms of sites newly discovered in the area and changes in approach as a result

In summary, NPPF differs from PPS5 in the following ways:

- There is more emphasises on local communities and their needs. These are independently assessed and local plans must be up-to-date with the assessment needs as part of the requirements in the NPPF. In areas where this is not the case then appeals will frequently be used to decide the outcome of applications. This may be a potential threat to the historic environment as objectively assessed needs must be met (number of houses needed etc).

- Significance is defined as the value of a heritage asset to this and future generations because of its heritage interest. That may be archaeological, architectural, artistic or historic and derives not only from its physical presence but also from its setting.

- Not only is the HER (Historic Environment Record) considered the main evidence-base for decision-making but the local planning authorities are required to add information to the HER that has been gained through the planning process.

- A heritage asset recorded on the HER isn't automatically recognised as a material consideration. The assets must be recognised by the local planning authority so that the intervention by the planning authority is justifiable.

- Many of the definitions and examples in previous policies have been deleted as these definitions can be found in the dictionary.

- All weighting relates back to sustainable development. And it is focused on the needs of society, not the needs of the developer and not on what the economy can deliver. There is a presumption that any proposals that meets the NPPF tests on sustainable development will be granted permission as it will be to the public benefit.

- Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders are subject to limited tests and the NPPF paragraphs on decision-taking. The reason why these proposals are subject to limited tests is because they are required to adhere to the Local Plan provided by the local planning authority, which adheres to the NPPF.

Useful links

http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/tag/nppf/

http://www.archaeologists.net/news/120327-ifa-responds-publication-national-planning-policy-framework-nppf

http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about/multimedia-library/corporate-plan/

Tax relief on professional subscriptions?

***Roy Stephenson** outlines how to get tax back on your professional subscriptions:*

What is this all about? Her Majesty's Revenue and Customs (HMRC) hold a list of organisations whose Subscriptions and Professional Fees they recognise as potentially being necessary to do your job. As such you should have to pay tax on the money you earned to pay these fees and can claim tax back on the subscription or fee.

If you go to
http://www.hmrc.gov.uk/list3/index.htm
You will find a 132 page PDF of 'Deduction for fees and subscriptions paid to professional bodies or learned societies': Section 344 ITEPA 2003 (formerly Section 201 ICTA 1988).

Buried deep with this list is the IfA, it is listed as **'Field Archaeologist Inst. of'**. If you fill in a self assessment form, enter what you have paid to IfA in the relevant tax year. Do not lie they will find out. If you are in a PAYE system you will need to write to your tax office (your tax office should be on your pay slip or your annual notice of coding) telling them about 'list 3'. Tell them you are member of the IfA, and how much you have paid in which tax year. The HMRC seem to be disarray but hopefully they will alter your tax coding to allow for your IfA subscription.

Do not forget, if your enlightened employer is paying your IfA subscriptions you cannot claim against tax. If you pay a portion of your subscription, you can only claim against the portion you pay.

Another way of doing this is get somebody else to do it for you, if you are a member of Prospect, there is a tax code checking service. This is done by a third party outside of Prospect, and they get 40% of what they can claw back now and for previous years. They also do not tell HMRC if you are not paying enough tax, that is your responsibility. This might be an option to take if you are short of time or have other tax issues such as uniforms or work wear issued to you by your employer.

http://www.prospect.org.uk/advice_and_services/financial/tax?_ts=1

It might pay you to check the list for other subscriptions, a quick search revealed:

•The Society for Medieval Archaeology
•The Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology
•The Society for Promotion of Roman Studies
•The Museums Association
•The Society of Antiquaries of Newcastle
•The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland
•The Society of Antiquaries of London (they do ask Fellows to sign a gift aid form, and you cannot donate your tax relief as gift aid **and** claim it back against professional fees)

•There are also some county societies including Kent, Sussex and Yorkshire.

Think carefully about your membership of a geographical society, you may be a member out of interest but this has to be about your job. In addition you may have already entered into a gift aid arrangement with the society if it is a charity.

This advice is not prepared by a tax professional but based on the author's own experience.

As Roy's article states, you can claim back the taxable element of many of your professional subs, but only if they are necessary for your job. That may include several institutes and societies in addition to the IfA, however you can't claim back the tax AND give it to the society in Gift Aid, so you have a hard decision: take the tax back for yourself, or let the society have it to invest in their activities for the good of all.

The DF is investigating other tax rebates and allowances, and will be bringing you more information on these in forthcoming newsletters.

Local authority archaeology services and heritage protection 2012 – take action!

Mary Neale

'While English Heritage, the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation do not consider that there is excess staffing which can be reduced, it is most important to note that any reduction in staffing to come will be on top of previous reductions. The current state of the historic environment staffing resource in local authorities is one of a general decline since 2006 and one which is currently accelerating.'
(ALGAO 2010)

The economic downturn has led to job cuts in commercial and local government services. What is the impact of cuts to local authority archaeology services on Diggers' Forum members? And what, if anything, can we do about it?

To answer these questions I will first look at local heritage services: their roles and responsibilities, the continuing and accelerating pressures on the services, and the consequences of further reductions. I will then provide tips and arguments to enable us to fight to save services.

Heritage-related curatorial roles and responsibilities

Archaeology services offer local authorities advice on the management and protection of 95% of all archaeology. The services include feeding into, and advice on, policy, field investigation and archive management.

As the majority of archaeology sites are buried and undiscovered, all planning proposals need to be screened in order to judge whether the proposals are likely to impact on archaeological remains. This system enables proportionate, consistent, informed, impartial and timely advice on archaeology under threat. In effect, the majority of archaeological sites are excavated and recorded prior to their destruction by development as a result of advice from archaeologically qualified officers working in local authorities. This work is the main income stream for commercial contractors and consultants.

© Berkshire Archaeology

The work involved in a dedicated advisory service

Continuing pressures on local authority archaeology services

There has been a notable reduction in the numbers of all local authority archaeology staff over the past decade. Taking 2003 figures as a baseline, cuts to staffing reached 17% by March 2012. A cause for concern is the notably steep reduction of 2% between January and March 2012 (Stewart Bryant's debate session at the IfA conference). Financial cuts have been greater and, in addition, cuts to local authority back-room staff mean that heritage staff now deal with additional financial and other administrative tasks. The time available to concentrate on heritage duties has therefore decreased significantly. With an increase in the number of cases, the profession will notice a curatorial sector under a great deal of work pressure. Unfortunately, this pattern is likely to continue: forecasts of progressive cuts are projected until 2015, further cuts will result in substantial reductions in the capacity and the provision of historic environment advisory and HER services.

Consequences of reductions to services

In the past, where local authority archaeology advisers have not been available to screen planning proposals a concurrent drop in archaeological discoveries has resulted. However, it has proved to be almost impossible to determine the impact of a lack of monitoring on the archaeological resource as archaeology officers are the only professionals who monitor outcomes from archaeological advice. The loss of heritage is most often noted by local people when they witness archaeological remains being destroyed during development. The drop in archaeological discoveries has had a knock-on effect on employment in the heritage sector, with job losses accelerating due to the lack of field investigation required by conditions and pre-application consultations.

In the past, where local authority archaeology advisers were not available to advise, field investigation recommended by planning officers most frequently required watching briefs. This was considered a safe option. However, we know from experience that watching briefs on large-scale sites often causes extreme commercial and professional pressure on those working on site. And without monitoring by a local archaeology officer it is unlikely that the archaeologists' objections would be heard by those who made those decisions.

© Berkshire Archaeology

One example of many that shows the need for monitoring

Remember the weight of developers' opinions: the developers are seen as delivering housing and infrastructure needs for the local community and supporting economic growth. Archaeology also needs a voice, and that is often provided as part of the local archaeology officer's job. The profession needs to work together to achieve sustainable growth. That includes adequate provision for heritage by putting minor criticisms of local heritage services, disproportionally damaging to reputations, to one side and supporting an ethically-based system that has and continues to serve heritage well.

Take action

Given the impacts of cuts on local authority archaeology services and the knock-on effects on archaeological discoveries and employment, we need to take action. Support local heritage services under threat by speaking out against the closure of departments and job cuts. A complete lack of understanding of the impacts of cuts by those making them is evident. For example, a representative of Sandwell Metropolitan Borough stated recently that 'archaeology is a statutory duty – not a statutory post, and therefore archaeology services will be bought in by developers as and when it is needed'. Who will be deciding when it is needed? The developer!

Threatened closures -ACT NOW

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough threatens to cut both Archaeological Officer and HER posts

North East Lincolnshire will have no advisory provision or HER post if proposed cuts go ahead

Two of the four authorities funding Tees Archaeology are set to pull out at the end of March

So please take the time to e-mail the councillors or the leader of the council responsible for proposed cuts. Other contacts in local government include the Chief Executive, committees and sub-committees responsible for the heritage service, and Heritage Champions (where this post exists) - you will be able to find details in the organisation chart on the council's web site. Local newspapers are a way of getting your views aired. In areas where closures have already occurred, keep in touch with the local residents who are 'in the know' as it is their witnessing of the destruction of archaeological remains that can reverse a closure. Always use your professional judgement in your correspondence and be polite, confident and knowledgeable of the current situation.

In relation to planning matters, you can contact your local MP or MEP, as Britain has obligations under European Community regulations and directives in respect of the historic environment and planning. You may wish to copy in the Ministers for the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) and the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS). The Culture, Media and Sport committee is the principal House of Commons committee that deals with the historic environment. Some hope remains! As a result of campaigning a number of services have been saved, though still suffering cuts. Campaigning works!

Closures Averted!

Gloucester City Council has combined the position of HER and Archaeology Officer

South Yorkshire Archaeology Service has been saved from a 50% cut but faces cuts of 15%

More information and sample letters are available on the Rescue website. You may wish to use the

following points regarding the impacts of cuts and closures that public representatives and officers, working for local residents, are likely to appreciate.

Defend against reductions in service provision by outlining the economic and public benefits of heritage

1. Use published figures. Detailed accounts relating to economic regeneration, the social benefits of the historic environment and the economic benefit of heritage activities are published by Heritage Counts and the Heritage Lottery Fund.

2. You could add that beyond the economic and social benefits that heritage brings to this country, cuts to local heritage services will only led to a further decline in employment in the commercial heritage sector.

3. Highlight the public benefit of local and national distinctiveness and comment on the increasing numbers of people visiting heritage sites and enjoying heritage-related activities and the popularity of heritage-related television programmes.

4. Make the point that local heritage services provide extra value for public money by organising outreach activities. Although the extent of provision varies between services as resources vary, this extra sphere of work fills in gaps caused by cuts in other departments. It is this added value and direct public benefit that is most under threat from budget and service reductions.

5. Local heritage services have been required to add yet another area to their already hectic work schedules: working with local communities compiling local lists and 'heritage wardens'.Bit clunky? This work is best undertaken in partnership with professional heritage services. Finding the time and resources to do this work becomes increasingly difficult with each cut made.

The impact of reductions in service provision on planning authorities

6. Make the point that in addition to planning casework and HER provision, local heritage services provide advice and information relating to environment schemes and conservation of heritage assets such as earthworks and monuments. They provide specialist advice to secure funding, widening access to archaeological sites and improving understanding of heritage assets.

7. Acknowledge that archaeology advisers facilitate the management of heritage within developments. Cuts to archaeology advisory roles will increase the pressure on planning officers where there is a need to investigate and intervene during development projects. This adds additional pressure on an already taxed planning system and will cause difficulty in delivering sustainable development and supporting economic growth.

An HER fit for purpose requires regular updating

8. Archaeological advisers are the only professionals in planning who track archaeological planning casework, monitor the outcomes and report back to the Local Planning Authorities to enable them to include heritage in their monitoring reports. 'Significant additional resource input would be required by Local Planning Authorities to undertake this work, even to a bare minimum level' (ALGAO 2010). In addition, where cuts have been severe there will be extra costs of recreating the service. This will include working through backlogs and responding to any complaints, appeals and inquiries that have arisen during the intervening time.

9. Refer to past experience where closures have occurred. You could use Northamptonshire between 2006 and 2009, for example, where local authority archaeological advisers were not available to screen planning proposals. Anecdotal information (reports from the public, developers and the profession) demonstrates that the loss of heritage assets was high. This was due to the lack of initial investigation and mitigation and there were cases where these were lacking even though required by European or national law.

Reductions in service provision and the risk of judicial reviews and cases for compensation

10.. Indicate that where planning officers or committees decide to include provision for archaeology they often refer to watching briefs where archaeological implications are known to be high. They are unaware that such provision substantially increases the risk of additional costs and delay to the development from unexpected archaeological discoveries. Compensation claims

can be made by developers where the risk of discovering archaeology of national importance could have been reasonably predicted by the local authority.

11. Highlight additional risks. For example, there is a risk of judicial review if the archaeological potential is not adequately provided for. Heritage services have professional indemnity insurance and advice can be carried to appeal and judicial inquiry as required. A curatorial approach of assessment, evaluation and mitigation has been established since the introduction of PPG16 and the heritage profession supports this approach as cost-effective, time-efficient and good risk management. The screening process and the phased approach to work reduces the risk of unexpected archaeological discoveries that are potentially nationally significant. Such discoveries cause risks to development, increasing its costs and attracting public objections.

12. Complaints and a case for compensation can be made by developers and landowners if conditions are inconsistently applied to adjacent sites for proposals of similar scale and scope.

13. For this reason, heritage-related curatorial input into Local Plans is essentially the first step of assessment.

14. 'Lastly, it should be stressed that archaeology is a finite and non-renewable resource and the responsibility for its conservation lies overwhelmingly with local authorities through their roles in the planning system, in economic development, and their interfaces with local communities.' (ALGAO 2010).

The future of heritage protection?

The pattern we see emerging is that the number of historic environment staff in local authorities continues to fall, and it is likely that the rate of decline will increase in future. With less professionally-led advice and greater community-led protection being hailed as the way forward, what does the future hold for archaeology in England?

If you know of other cuts and closures threatening services, please email heritage@maryneale.co.uk and I will keep you all posted of the latest news.

Sources and further information

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http://hc.english-heritage.org.uk/Previous-Reports/HC-Economic-Impact/

http://www.hlf.org.uk/aboutus/howwework/Documents/HLF_Tourism_Impact_single.pdf

Diggers' Forum Report on Away work and Travel in UK Commercial Archaeology

Chiz Harward

The Diggers' Forum Away Survey was published at the end of January, it was the end product of two detailed surveys into the current state of play of away working, subs, double rent, travelling and other related issues. It was the first time anyone had looked at the issues in any detail and we asked a range of questions to make sure we could tell if our sample was representative.

The employee survey was completed over 250 times, which is around 8% of the working site archaeologists in the UK. Not bad considering it was a very lengthy survey, asking for detailed answers on a wide range of subjects. The response to the employer survey was less good, but we still had useful data from a range of different employers.

It was important to get good, representative data as we wanted to make sure that we were really capturing what was going on out on sites across the country. No-one knew what the situation was beyond anecdotes and personal experience, that was the whole point of the survey. We really didn't know what the results would be when we started out, and tried to be as comprehensive as possible, rather than ask leading questions. We wanted the data -and you- to speak for itself.

Once we had the results of the surveys back in the work really began, all that data had to be cleaned up and put into a spreadsheet, and then it all had to be crunched. The initial results showed us that our sample was in line with the known data from Profiling the Profession - except our sample was older, it appeared that the recession had aged the profession by a couple of years by blocking new entrants.

The results of the data had to be tabulated and written up, and only then could we start to interpret the surveys. The results were fairly shocking -employees were getting wildly varying Terms and Conditions and clearly a lot of them didn't know what others were getting at other firms. We designed a simple spreadsheet to illustrate a range of 'scenarios' of income and expense. We looked at whether it was actually more expensive to work in London, and who were the winners and who were the losers (see following pages for scenarios).

The most striking thing in the scenarios was the effect on income of different T&C relating to travel and subs. We all kind of knew it from experience, but to see in black and white was compelling. The difference in actual income between two Diggers doing the same work but in different circumstances was absolutely staggering.

We are investigating whether we can design and build an online expense calculator spreadsheet so that everyone can really understand what they get in real terms, and can compare employers simply and easily. If you'd like to help either design or beta test the comparison spreadsheet please get in touch.

And aside from the hard data there was also the personal testimony of employees and employers on the issues. Archaeologists telling us exactly how they felt about the issues that effect them. Powerful stories, hard to quantify and express in graphs, but with a clear series of messages.

The recommendations were carefully chosen in response to the data and testimony we'd gathered. Some recommendations were simple and could be implemented overnight, others we knew would require co-operation between employers and the establishment of national standards. All the recommendations were intended to provoke debate and response and get feedback. The report itself will achieve little, it is what we do with the results that matters. The next step was consultation, and that was always going to be the tricky part.

Once the report was published we spread the word as widely as possible, and it seemed to have worked in getting people looking at the report. The report has been downloaded from the IfA website over **1500** times, and that's not including views of the summary that were posted on Facebook and other internet sites. There has been the usual low level of response from DF members and the wider archaeological profession, although most feedback was positive, with the only negative comments being on the length of the survey and the length of the report. There is still time for you to let us know what you think of the survey, whether you agree with its results, and whether you agree with the recommendations. Any consultation is only as good as the responses it gains, and we are not psychic.

The DF have contacted many archaeological organisations and companies asking for feedback, so far feedback to the DF indicates that at least two employers have used the survey report to help them in rewriting their terms and conditions for away work and travel, whilst other senior archaeologists have commended the report, one describing it as being *'thorough and balanced'.*

The Away survey was favourably mentioned on Heritage Business Journal and has been discussed at the IfA's Professional Development and Practice Committee meeting. The PD&P Committee welcomed the report with committee members supporting the spirit of all the DF recommendations. The committee recommended to Council that the recommendations regarding clarity of T&C in job adverts be implemented via JIS. It also recommendeds that terms and conditions for away work form an explicit part of the RO monitoring process at application.
It was also recommended that Council be asked to consider whether the IfA might be able to make recommendations on minimum terms and conditions. The survey and the PD&P recommendations will be discussed at IfA Council at the end of June. We'll be pushing for as many recommendations to be taken up as possible, and we'll keep the pressure on to get decent and transparent T&C for all archaeologists.

Leading the adoption of the report has been BAJR, where all the recommendations on advertising were adopted *en bloc*. There have been teething problems with implementing the recommendations, but it's a great step forward. When you think there may be a difference of several thousand pounds a year in actual income dependant on what you get paid for in your T&C, you can see why we want them stated up front.

At least two employers have already used the report to identify issues and potential solutions in reviews of their T&C which have led to improved conditions for their staff. It is to be hoped that more employers will follow suit and improve their T&C, and make it easier for potential employees to establish what they will, and what they won't get paid for.

The situation is not simple, with a myriad of different factors at work in each company and for each person. But, as an absolute minimum, transparency will allow us all to make a judgement about who to work for. Because of course its actually down to all of us to ask for the T&C, to put the bad employers on the spot and tell them that we won't travel for 3 hours a day unpaid, and that £5 a night is not a good sub. We all need to check what we are getting into in a job, and not accept poor conditions.

It is hoped that this report will highlight the role of away work, travel and subs in archaeology, and the impact it has on careers and individuals. In the coming months we will continue to push for responses and for the recommendations to be implemented as widely as possible.

The full report can be downloaded from the IfA website here:

http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/awaysurveyreport.pdf

If you haven't read it please do read at least the recommendations, and let us know what you think.

The DF is already planning its next survey, on CPD and training for site workers.

Employee Scenarios

extract from DF Away Survey report

In order to compare the different approaches to paying –or not paying- and compensating for travel and away work we have created a series of 'typical examples'. These are based on common scenarios representative of our sample. No attempt has been made to quantify how many archaeologists are within each scenario within our sample.

To keep things simple the scenarios are all of Site Assistants earning £15,836.80 (£304.55 per week, £8.12 per hour) based on the IfA minima for PIfA level work which comes into force in April 2012. This is for working a 37.5 hour week with 20 days paid holiday plus 8 bank holidays. Scenarios are based on two fictional employers, both paying the same basic wage and subsistence payment, but one paying all travel time, the other paying none. A single example of a London based Site Assistant on a wage of £17,500 is given for comparison.

Fuel costs have been estimated, and will obviously vary depending on actual distances from work, and economy of vehicle. For those that own a car additional costs of tax, MOT, insurance, repairs and depreciation have to be taken from the final figure (see below for details). These costs are not normally incurred by archaeologists based in London.

Figures have been adjusted to show no commute times/costs on holidays or bank holidays. If travel time is accrued as Time Off In Lieu, then there may be additional savings in transport costs.
It has not been possible to cover every permutation of payment and circumstance, but the scenarios give good examples of the range of common experience. For variable rates of travel pay or away sub the figures can be adjusted up or down, in addition the proportional value of away subs and travel rises according to actual pay rate, contractual hours and other variables. In addition those who do not manage to be employed for the full year will obviously receive less.

Scenario A
Amy works in London, she is paid £17,500 to include an element of London Weighting (£335.25 per week, £8.94 per hour). She travels direct to site by tube and bus which takes 45 minutes and costs £34.20 a week. Her total work-related hours are 37.5 hours a week. Amy does not usually do away work, and has not done any in the last 12 months. She is home by 5pm most nights.
Amy does not need to run a car, and does not, so her disposable income is higher than appears at first glance in comparison with the other workers. Amy can also usually rely on being able to get home by 5pm each night unless working on the other side of town.

Scenario B
Bill works in the southwest, he earns £15,836.80 and he has done no away work this year and is not paid for the ten hours a week he travels to and from site. He lives 15 miles away from the office and commutes each day by car, taking 30 minutes each way which costs £25 a week in fuel.
Bill's wage is the basic salary, he hasn't had any of the benefits of away work, but doesn't have any of the costs or inconvenience. However there is no guarantee that Bill will not be sent on an away job next week for the rest of the year.

Scenario C
Bill's colleague, **Charlie** does exactly the same job, and lives the same distance from the office. He also doesn't get paid for travel, but he did work away from home for 7 weeks on a site with a 2 hour drive on Monday and Friday, and an hours driving each day to and from accommodation. He received a nightly sub of £15 whilst working away.
Charlie's apparent income is increased by his away subs and his costs were reduced whilst working away as he did not have to commute each day. However if Charlie is put up in a B&B his subs may well all be used in buying food –which is what they are intended for after all. If his company paid less than £15 then any money would be almost certainly used up and Charlie may be in deficit from the away stay.

Scenario D
Bill and Charlie's friend **Dawn** works for a different company but is paid the same as them in basic pay, but she is paid all her travel time at Time, which averages out at 10 hours per week over the year. Her costs are the same as Bill and Charlie. Dawn has done no away work this year.
Dawn's travel hours are paid for, and this means her income is greater than those at the other unit, however there is no guarantee that she will continue to get the amount of travel time she currently does, and she may have a month or two where a conveniently sited job means she has considerably less income from travel time. The extra money cannot be relied upon.

Scenario E
Emily works with Dawn, she has the same travel costs. Emily has done 7 weeks of away work, also with a 2 hour drive on Monday and Friday, and an hours driving each day to and from accommodation. Emily is paid less travel time whilst working away, but the combination of subs and some travel pay from the reduced commute means she still earns more money than when on a home job.

Scenario F
Fred works for the same company as Bill and Charlie, but does not live in the local area as he has been on short term contracts for the last year. Fred pays rent in his home town. He commutes from

	Basic income per week	Commute time (hours per week)	Commute costs (per week)	Second accommodation costs (per week)	Work related travel time (hours)	Work related travel pay (per week)	Away subs (per week)	Weekly income after additions	Weekly income after additions and costs	Total additions per year	Total pay	Total costs per year	Total annual income after travel additions and costs but before tax and NI deducted
Amy	£336.54	7.5	£34.20	0	0	0	0	£336.54	£302.34	0	£17,500	£1,586.88	£15,913.12
Bill (home)	£304.55	5	£25	0	10	0	0	£304.55	£279.55	0	£15,836.80	£1160	£14,676.80
Charlie (away weeks)	£304.55	1	£5	0	8	0	£60*	£364.55	£359.55	£420	£16,256.80	£1,020	£15,236.80
Dawn (home)	£304.55	5	£25	0	10	£81.20	0	£385.75	£360.75	£3,767.68	£19,604.48	£1,160	£18,444.48
Emily (away weeks)	£304.55	1	£5	0	8	£64.96	£60*	£429.51	£424.51	£4,074	£19,910.80	£1,020	£18,890.8
Fred (home)	£304.55	8	£28	£50	10	0	0	£304.55	£226.55	0	£15,836.80	£3,899.20	£11,937.60
Gary (home)	£304.55	8	£28	£50	10	£81.20	0	£385.75	£307.75	£3,767.68	£19,604.48	£3,899.20	£15,705.28
Howard (away weeks)	£304.55	1	£5	0	8	0	£60*	£364.55	£374.55	£1,440	£17,276.80	£680	£16,596.80
Ivor (away weeks)	£304.55	1	£5	0	8	£64.96	£60*	£429.55	£374.55	£4,817.92	£20,654.52	£680	£19,974.52
Johanna (away weeks)	£304.55	3	£40.50	0	4	0	£60*	£364.55	£309.05	£2,544	£18,380.80	£1,939.50	£16,441.30
Kevin (away weeks)	£304.55	4	£40.50	0	4	£32.48	£60*	£397.03	£341.53	£4,245.95	£20,082.75	£1,939.50	£18,143.25

*Actual value of away subs is greater as they are untaxed

home for the weekends which takes 2 hours each way and costs £20 a week in fuel. Fred pays for digs near the office which cost £50 a week and must be paid during holidays. He has an additional daily commute of 5 miles each way which takes 15 minutes and costs £2 in fuel a day. Fred has not done any away work for the company this year. Fred's extra accommodation costs penalise him heavily. If he didn't have to pay for his digs whilst on holiday he would save some money, but would still be significantly worse off than colleagues. There may be many other reasons why he would need to keep his home in addition to the succession of short contracts, such as family commitments, partner or children.

Scenario G

Gary works for the same company as Dawn and Emily but is in the same situation as Fred. Gary has not done any away work for the company this year. Because Gary gets paid travel time his extra accommodation costs are covered by his travel costs, meaning that he is effectively back at square one income wise.

Scenario H

Howard works for Bill and Charlie's employers but has worked away for 24 weeks this year on a site with a 2 hour drive on Monday and Friday, and an hours driving each day to and from accommodation. He received a nightly sub of £15 whilst working away. The extra subs mean Howard earns slightly more, but may pay this out in extra food costs and he has been away for 6 months.

Scenario I

Ivor works with Dawn and Emily, but in the same situation as Howard, working away for 24 weeks over the last year. Ivor's away work and travel pay makes him the best paid worker, however he does work away for 6 months of the year.

Scenario J

Johanna works with Bill and Charlie, but is usually on away jobs as she lives 100 miles away from the office. Johanna was recruited to work on a major road scheme and each week she commutes by train to the site which takes 2 hours, being picked up from the nearest station by colleagues. Johanna has only worked from the office for 4 weeks over the last year, when she had to travel there by train (taking 1 hour) and had to sleep on colleagues' sofas, giving them £10 a week towards bills. When working from the office the sites were one hour travel each way. The train fare to the site pick up costs £40.50 each week, the fare to the office costs £39.50 in order to be able to leave for site at 7am.

Johanna pays more for her weekly commute as she travels by train, however she does not have to pay for a car so should be better off. If she could not rely on colleagues to put her up when working at the office she may have greatly increased costs. Even when working away Johanna may occasionally also have to pay for taxis to get to sites, or leave the night before and pay for B&B accommodation.

Scenario K

Kevin works for the same company as Dawn and Emily and is in exactly the same situation as Johanna, working alongside her on the same Joint Venture road scheme.

The payment of travel increases Kevin's income, even though he still has to pay heavily for his commute.

Diggers' Forum training pages

Excavating and recording burials

Natasha Powers (with thanks to Melissa Melikian and Lucy Sibun)

This article is intended to give some practical advice for working on site. Remember that the osteologist is there to help and should be happy to provide you with feedback about particular features or skeletons.

Before you start

Human remains must be treated with respect and dignity at all times. Read the IfA guidance on the excavation of human remains (McKinley and Roberts 1993). If you have any questions, ask the supervising staff. On site you should find a copy of any relevant exhumation licence and, as with any other site, the risk assessment (RA) and method statement. Read and ensure you understand the provisions they outline.

If remains are found unexpectedly, an application for a licence should be made immediately, though in some circumstances the Ministry of Justice may then conclude that no licence is needed. A faculty is required for the excavation of Church of England burial grounds where immediate re-interment will occur in consecrated ground. Some excavations and removal to unconsecrated ground will require both a Bishop's Faculty and a licence (see: http://www.justice.gov.uk/downloads/burials-and-coroners/exhuming-human-remains-faq.pdf).

Health and safety

Your welfare is paramount. In general the risks associated with excavating human remains are low but be sensible (eg wash your hands before eating). The RA will identify the appropriate level of PPE. It is rare to find soft tissue remaining in shrouded burials or wooden coffins, though adipocere (a waxy substance which forms as body fats degrade) is more common. In recent remains or under unusual preservation conditions, soft tissue, hair and/or nails may remain. Refer to your site specific RA and raise any concerns with the supervising staff immediately. Sealed lead coffins of post-medieval date should not be opened and should only be handled by appropriately trained and vaccinated staff. Here, the risks (notably smallpox), out-weigh the archaeological benefits. Horsehair stuffing used in coffins also carries a potential health risk (HSE 2005). An appropriate sampling policy for sampling hair and nails can ensure they are collected in a safe and scientifically useful manner (e.g. Wilson and Cadwallader in Connell and Miles 2010).

Careful excavation of the burial of a priest buried with a chalice and patten, © MoLA

Excavating inhumations

Familiarise yourself with the articulated skeleton and you will understand how the body may have moved and fallen apart. Remember you carry your own reference skeleton with you!

Disarticulated and redeposited bone has helped us to learn about prehistoric burial practices, the distribution of burials in early Roman London and the management of cemeteries. Assume everything is to be retained, unless told otherwise. When excavating intensively used cemeteries, disarticulated bone may be reburied without further study so that resources can be focused on the remains which will provide the most information and because it originates from the individuals in extant graves and cannot be feasibly reunited.

In acidic soil, bone may degrade completely, sometimes leaving a 'shadow' such as those at Sutton Hoo. The primary fill of any apparently 'empty' grave should be bulk sampled as teeth or tooth crowns may remain. This method located definitive evidence of an occupant in the richly furnished Saxon grave at Prittlewell (MoLAS 2004).

Recording

Single context recording is the ideal system for cemeteries. Context pro-forma vary but you should be able to record the direction the head faces, the position of the limbs (are the arms crossed over the body for example) and whether the body was placed on its back (supine), front (prone) or crouched on its side. Note anything unusual and record the stratigraphic relationships. Use a diagram to record the bones present as you lift them. A sketch plan should show orientation, position, grave goods, clothing, coffin, coffin nails etc.

Photographs (digital or transparencies) should be taken of each burial and of particular features within them. Include a scale, direction arrows and a label so that you can easily differentiate between skeletons - they tend to look pretty similar! Images are invaluable during analysis and provide an important record in support of context sheets and plans. Get publication quality images of unusual types or positions of burial, grave goods and obvious pathological changes. Where vertical photographs are taken for rectification, two points should be included and planned.

Hand drawn **plans** should be at a scale of 1:10 with levels taken at the head and foot. Digital survey techniques can be effectively used for rapid recording and transferring data to GIS. Total station survey equipment was used at St Mary Spital and Towton (Fiorato et al 2000); Archaeology South East recently used a similar method to record skeletons and coffins at a cemetery in Chichester and AOC Archaeology used a combination of EDM survey and digital photography during their excavations at St John's, Bethnal Green. Although particularly useful for intensively used medieval and post-medieval sites, L-P Archaeology used a combination of digital survey and photographs to present the results of their excavations in the Eastern Roman cemetery (http://www.lparchaeology.com/prescot/). Even where digital survey methods are used, hand-drawn plans may still be extremely useful for selected burials.

Lifting and packaging

It is often easier to remove the limbs and skull before lifting the torso and pelvis, though this will depend on the position of the body. It is also easier and quicker to block-lift each hand or foot, neonates and young infants. Watch for loose teeth, the tiny ear ossicles and the hyoid (horseshoe-shaped bone beneath the chin). In subadults, the ends of the long bones (epiphyses) will be separate. These are small and irregular with a surface a bit like cork. The vertebrae, skull, sternum and pelvis also start as several separate parts. You may also discover foetal remains within the pelvic cavity of the mother; calcified soft tissue, cysts or 'stones'; pathology resulting in abnormally shaped bones, fused joints or unusual burial positions so if skeletal elements will not separate do not force them.

No remains should be left exposed overnight, particularly in extremes of temperature: once a skeleton is started it should be lifted the same day. If this is not possible, it should be carefully covered and left only if the site can be guaranteed secure.

To aid analysis and protect the bones during transit, keep arms, legs, hands, feet, torso and skull separate and separate hands and feet into right and left sides. Make sure that everything is clearly labelled and place all the remains from one burial into a large, labelled bag or similar container. Do not stack bagged remains and keep infants and neonates in a separate container to prevent damage. Fragile pathological bone should also be carefully packaged.

Post-medieval burial grounds

Generally speaking these burials will be E-W orientated and supine, though non-conformist burials may be aligned N-S (e.g. see Cherryson et al 2012). The common practice of filling deep graves with stacked coffins often results in unusual burial positions as the coffins rot and the stacks collapse. The uppermost burials are often those of infants and younger children. As post-medieval burial grounds were often intensively used, there may be a great deal of disturbed bone which can be tricky to interpret. If in doubt, seek advice and keep additional elements labelled as 'possibly associated with context…'. Record photographs and good sketch plans can be invaluable.

Excavation of a post-medieval burial ground may have additional hazards, © MoLA

In 19th century burial grounds it is not unusual to find individuals who underwent autopsy: usually a craniotomy (horizontal cut through the skull) and cuts through the ribs and the clavicles (collar bone) or through the sternum (breastbone). Pelvic and vertebral cuts may also be seen. Dentures and bridgework of gold, ivory, porcelain or other materials may be present. Do not attempt to remove any which remain within the mouth and package the bone appropriately for the artefact. Similarly, do not try to remove any metal from coffin fittings or artefacts adhering to the remains.

Cremation burials

Human bone is just one strand of evidence, together with charcoal and other botanical remains, animal bone and artefacts. Cremated bone is very fragile, so excavate using hand tools and handle the bone as little as possible. Cremation burials should be photographed and bulk sampled.

When analysing a cremation, the osteologist will be interested in the size and colour of the fragments and the area of the body from which they come. Demographic and pathological information can be obtained from even the most fragmentary remains. Excavate and sample by context and include information on the level of truncation. Ensure that you have planned the burial feature at 1:10. This is particularly important to establish the relative position of the burnt bone, vessels and any grave goods or offerings. If you're not sure whether bone is human and no specialist is available, simply describe as 'burnt bone', and sample as a possible cremation.

Large spreads containing a significant quantity of burnt bone and possible pyre sites (with in-situ burning, burnt bone and charcoal) may be divided into spits and/or quadrants, the aim being to record any distribution patterns within the deposit. The depth of the spits used will vary depending on feature type and dimension but should be consistent within each feature. Dispersed fragments of burnt bone should be hand-collected: do not 100% sample a large feature such as a ditch fill simply because it contains a few fragments of burnt bone.

Cremation **urns** should be recorded, photographed and lifted intact. Place the urn inside a sample bucket or similar container in the orientation in which it was found. If necessary, wrap in bandages. If unusually large or covered by another vessel, the urn should be fully supported within a suitably sized crate to prevent movement during transportation. The vessel contents will be excavated by the osteologist who will be able to establish the distribution of bone. Excavation must take

place as soon as possible after lifting as once a vessel has dried out, it may be extremely difficult. Seek the advice of a conservator if a vessel is particularly fragile or when dealing with prehistoric ceramics.

Some cremation burials, particularly those of Roman date, may be accompanied by ceramic grave goods. If you are unsure whether you are excavating a burial urn or an accessory vessel, err on the side of caution.

The bustum is a rectangular pit above which the pyre was constructed. During cremation, everything on the pyre and the pyre material itself, collapses into the pit, though some bone may be separately collected and placed in vessels. The location and distribution of human and animal bone and artefacts within the pit enables interpretation of the feature and therefore bustum burials must be excavated in horizontal spits and with division along the short access of the pit, with each area taken as a separate sample.

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Excavation of a burial within a stone sarcophagus, © MoLA

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Alchemy in Archaeology

…sondry vessels maad of erthe and glas
Oure urynales and oure descensories,
Violes, crosletz and sublymatories,
Cucurbites and alambikes eek…

(Chaucer, The Canon Yeoman's Tale)

Gwilym Williams

Archaeological interventions at Christ Church, Oxford, between 2005 and 2006 (Chadwick *et al* 2012) revealed evidence of the possible existence of an alchemical laboratory in Vine Hall north of the now long-forgotten Shitebarne Lane, just to the east of Fish St (now St. Aldates), located south of the Town Hall where the IfA 2012 Conference took place. In this short note I will use the word alchemy as an alternative to enumerating the various scientific techniques which are encompassed by the practice, despite the preferences of some researchers to avoid using the word due to its association with hermetical, astrological and other unscientific practices.

The alchemical workshop within the grounds of Christ Church was unfortunately not found; rather a dump of skillets, alembics and other apparatus was recovered from the upper fill of a stone-lined latrine. No laboratory has as yet been investigated, but there are many illustrations in the historic literature (Fig. 1).

In this article, I shall sketch out a short history of alchemy and the associated early scientific processes, followed by a brief enumeration of sites where significant assemblages of alchemical apparatus has been recovered, concluding with a description of the sort of apparatus typically found on alchemical sites, drawing largely on the Christ Church evidence. Recent valuable work cited below on the subject includes studies of glasswork by Rachael Tyson (2000, 168-78) and Thilo Rehren and Marcos-Martinon-Torres (2005), as well as the much earlier work by Stephen Moorhouse and others (1972).

Alchemy in the middle ages, and indeed before, was a catch-all for the scientific method. It encompassed techniques, equipment and even beliefs which would endure until after the Enlightenment, and formed the root of practice - testable hypotheses and experimental science - still in use today. The word, deriving from the Arabic *al-kimiya* which either derives in turn from the Greek *chimiya* meaning 'smelting' or 'infusion' or perhaps from the Arabic *ilm al-kammiya*: 'the art of quantities' (Al-Khalili 2010, 55), is often used pejoratively. What it is perhaps best characterised as is a holistic protochemistry in which God is immanent. Indeed, all forms of science - that is knowledge - at this point in time might be best seen as revealing the hand of the deity; such an understanding of the world operated at least into the early 18th century when Newton still explained optics in terms of 'transmutation', as for metals (Indiana 2005-12).

Fig.1 Laboratory and apparatus for assay (Lazarus Ercker's *Treatise of Ores and Assaying*, 1580)

It must be remembered that alchemy was practiced in a world with an ontological and cosmological interpretative framework far from our own (Rehren and Martinon Torres 2005; Chadwick *et al* 2012). Furthermore, the crossover between alchemy, chemistry, metallurgy, pharmacology and other early forms of scientific investigation was such, that there was an inevitable flow of ideas and techniques between the various disciplines. It was indeed the work carried out by Arabic scholars in Baghdad, capital of the Abbasid caliphate, which defined the shape of European alchemy, and in turn scientific research into chemistry, alongside other disciplines. Jabir Ibn Hayyan was a key figure who due to the range of his interests and skills, laid the ground for chemistry, metallurgy, pharmacology, distillation and indeed experimental science; that is to say to work from testable hypotheses, rather than from assumed *a priori* knowledge (Al-Khalili 2010, 52 ff).

Galen taught that medicine was predicated on the inter-relationships of the four humours (warm, cold,

wet and dry), and illness was an imbalance of these humours. Similarly Jabir Ibn Hayyan – or Geber as he was known in Europe – explained that the transmutation of lead into gold relied on the exchange of their proportions of sulphur (for its hot and dry properties) and mercury (for its cold and wet). The common proportional properties of metals is of course how later it became that these proportions could be altered to change lead (externally cold and dry but internally hot and moist) to gold (externally hot and moist but internally cold and dry); to transmute was therefore a relatively simple process of exchanging a metal's external and internal properties for it to change its nature. To differentiate between the philosophical underpinnings of medicine, metallurgy, protochemistry, pharmacology, alchemy or alcohol-distillation is to misunderstand the medieval scientific mind.

Investigations during the 1960s at St John's Priory,Pontefract and Selborne Abbeys were amongst the first to identify good assemblages of alchemical apparatus (Moorhouse *et al* 1972). Here the assemblages dated from the late and middle 15th century. Previous excavations – such as More, Rickmansworth (Biddle *et al* 1959) – where such material had been found had not fully realised the potential of the finds. Monasteries were important for the development of the skills required, as the monks could read the various tracts recently translated from Arabic into Latin, had access to the necessary finance to fund the production of the apparatus, and were – as at St Mary Spital, London (C. Harward pers comm) – involved in pharmacological work as part of their role as physicians, regulating the humours of the ill.

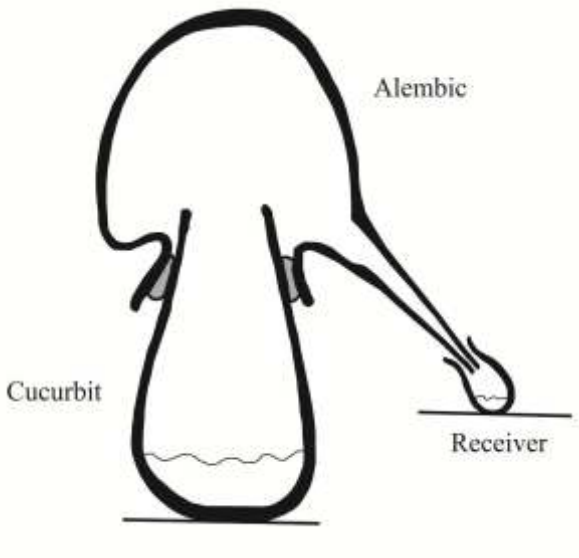


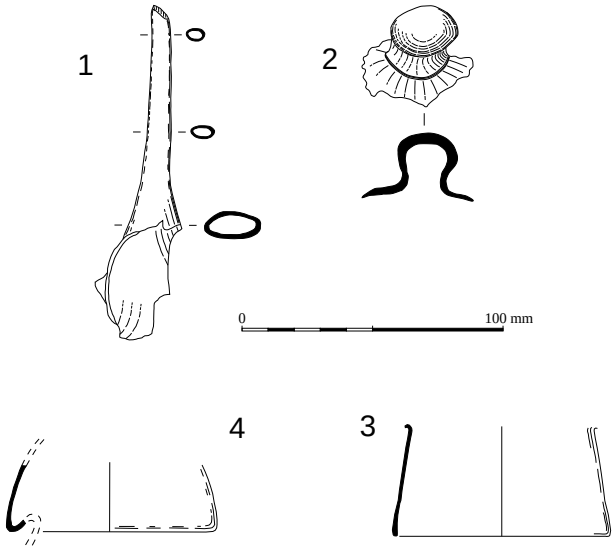
Fig. 2 The distilling set (after Moore in Moorhouse *et al.* 1972, 88, fig. 25)

The laboratory apparatus used comprised both glass and pottery stills, which were used for both medical and assaying purposes (Greenaway 1972, 79-81). The still comprised the base, or cucurbit, which was heated to evaporate the liquid, which condensed on the domed internal surface of the alembic, where it ran down to a collecting channel into a spout, which emptied into a receiver (Fig. 2). Other still-heads were designed to collect the heated substance as a solid. There were also glass vessels such as urinals and flasks for storing liquids, which were used for collecting liquids both prior to and after distilling. Other vessels, which were ceramic, include crucibles, shallow dish-like bowls, pear-shaped vessels in addition to jugs. Many of these vessels have evidenced residues and deposits associated with the distilling process. The medical uses for distilling include the preparation of essences, flavours, remedies and alcohol; whereas uses in assaying would comprise the production of acids, such as *aqua regia* for dissolving silver where it was combined with gold.

Other examples of still equipment have been found at the secular glasshouse site at Knightons, Surrey (Wood 1965, 32), although as Rachel Tyson points out much distilling apparatus has, unsurprisingly, been found on monastic sites (Tyson 2000, 169), although several castles have also evidenced good assemblages *(ibid.)*. Perhaps the finest assemblage to date was excavated from the sacristy of the manor-house chapel at Oberstockstall, Austria (von Osten 1998), although there have also been similar finds from Weyerstraβe, Cologne. A series of named priests at Oberstockstall can be associated with the period from which the assemblage comes. There were approximately 1000 items, including alembics and cucurbits, receivers, retorts, crucibles, scorifers, cupels, phials and muffles evidencing a range of alchemical and industrial activities related to protochemistry.

Fig. 3 Ceramic assemblage, showing acid-damaged skillet, corked ceramic bottles and possible scorifers and cupel-type vessels (© JMHS)

The pit investigated at Christ Church did not yield as much as Oberstockstall, but after St John's Priory appears to be the largest assemblage to date in Britain. The garderobe, which measured 0.7m x 1.4m and was excavated to a depth of 0.45m (although it was not emptied), yielded in the uppermost fill three assemblages associated with alchemy: glass (Tyson, 2012), pottery (Blinkhorn 2012) and fired clay (Williams 2012) (Fig. 3).

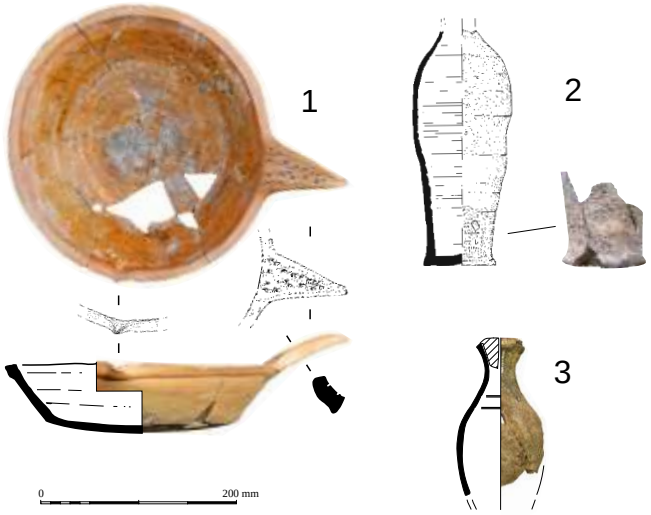


1 Alembic tubing, 2 Hollow finial, 3 Rim from an alembic with trace of curve to collection channel, 4 Collecting channel from an alembic

Fig. 4 Glass (© JMHS)

The glass consisted of a number of technical vessels including fragments of alembics and alembic spouts, and is the second largest such assemblage found in Britain yet. Only the excavations at St John's, Pontefract yielded a (marginally) larger group of material. Still fragments including the remains of at least two alembics were recovered, comprising the collecting channel and tube to the receiver; the dome is not easily recognised, as being so fragile is easily broken, and the convex dome easily resembles the convex base of a flask when broken (Fig. 4). A large number of domed convex fragments were also excavated – but these 48 bases cannot unfortunately be specifically associated with any alembic, cucurbit, urinal, flask or larger receiver. There were at least six in-turned rim fragments, which are associated, though not exclusively, with the cucurbit. There were two distinct types of flask – thick-walled vessels, and thinner-walled urinals. Urine was held to be diagnostic of illnesses, and so fine-blown clear glass was vital to ensure examination and a correct diagnosis. Narrow-necked, frequently smaller vessels represent the receivers, which held the distillate, although these are a type of vessel that are poorly represented archaeologically and indeed, any vessel that came to hand might be employed. The blown finial of a lid or alembic was also recovered.

The pottery was local Brill/Boarstall ware, which dominates the Oxford assemblages. Brill and Boarstall are located 15 miles east by northeast of Oxford in Buckinghamshire. The assemblage comprised six bottles – two with *in situ* clay plugs – and five of which partially or extensively vitrified; 'cruets', bowls (reworked from larger vessels), pipkins, jars and partially deglazed skillets (Fig. 5). Residues and vitrification were visible on many of the vessels, giving them a white coat in the case of the former, and a green glassy appearance in the latter. The skillets, which had been heated, showed a bubbly and damaged appearance on the upper face. There was no ceramic distillation equipment – such as at St John's Priory, where there were ceramic cucurbits and 'dippers' (Moorhouse *et al* 1972, 96; Fig 28) – which was somewhat unusual.



1 Skillet with traces of acid damage, 2 Jar with acid damage, 3 Jar with clay stopper

Fig. 5 Pottery (© JMHS)

The fired clay, which consisted of 48 fragments of fired clay, weighing 2139g, was a biscuity orange fabric, with few if any inclusions, which was occasionally more grey in colour due to the reducing atmosphere of the furnace. The fragments had at least one face, usually two, although no fragment had both an internal and external face. There were a number of gently curved fragments, indicating that the fired clay was from some form of portable furnace – usually identifed as sublimatory, distillatory, descensory or fusion furnaces, dependant on their function: their forms differed little. Holes, believed to have been for tuyères, were also observed on a number of the fragments. It is unlikely that they were for escaping flue gases as these appear to have been

often harnessed for heating crucibles and distilling apparatus. The furnaces were both rounded and square as can be seen to the front of the Lazarus Ecker etching (Fig. 1), which was clear from the burnt clay recovered (Fig. 6)..

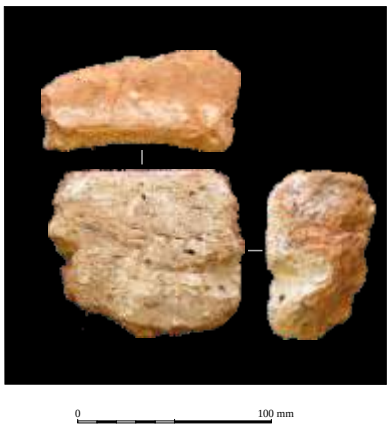


Fig. 6 Fired clay (© JMHS)

The results of the watching brief were extremely exciting and are of great importance for the practical implications of alchemy. The scientific work carried out by Roger Bacon – who had died only shortly before the assemblage from the garderobe at Christ Church would have been produced – was vital for the development of chemistry and the other sciences. At the time, the alchemical method – the practice of fire assay for establishing the purity of metals, and the distillation of precious oils for combatting illnesses, and the analysis of urine for diagnosis – was science. The scientific process and many of the key tenets were elaborated through the alchemical method. It is often tempting to scoff at the superstitious medieval mind in thrall to the Church, while pining for a prehistory of ritualised landscapes and animistic spirituality. However, the alchemical method shows us the continuum between prehistory and the medieval world in which matter and spirit - both as mind and soul - were engaged in dance of complex steps, in which each was a direct correlation of the other. How we recognise the material culture of this practice is not always easy, but in the archaeology of alchemy we touch a different ritual archaeology to the usual medieval ritual archaeologies of Church and State.

Thanks to Adrian Chadwick who asked me to look at the fired clay and from whose work I have drawn much of the detail of the Oxford finds

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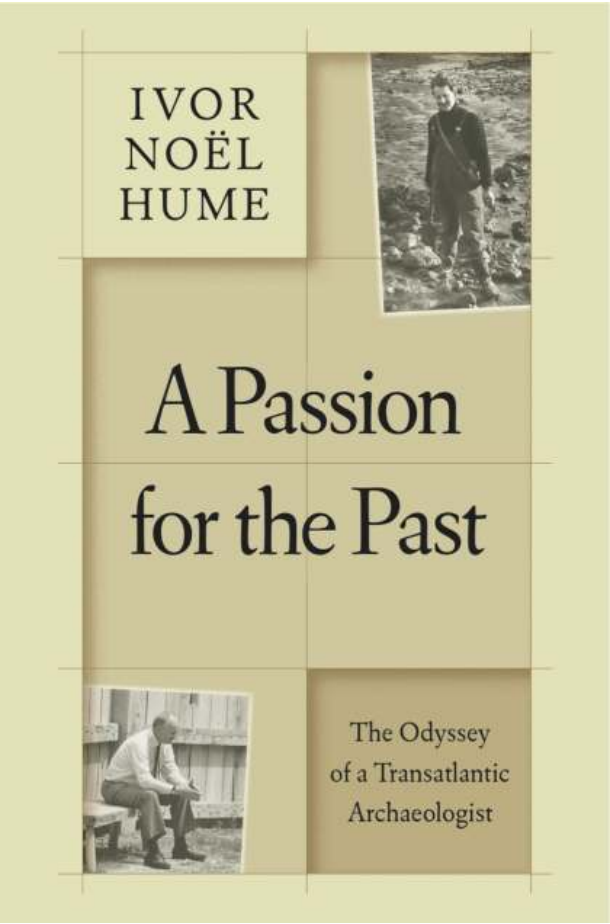
An accidental archaeologist?

Review: A Passion for the Past: the Odyssey of a Transatlantic Archaeologist by Ivor Noël Hume

Chiz Harward



reprinted from A PASSION FOR THE PAST by Ivor Noël Hume by permission of the University of Virginia Press

Ivor Noël Hume is probably not a name familiar to many professional British archaeologists, however he worked in the City of London at a key moment in the development of post-war salvage archaeology and was a key figure in the study of post-medieval remains in the UK. His subsequent move to Virginia USA to work on the Colonial Williamsburg site put him at the centre of the emerging discipline of American historical archaeology. Noël Hume has set out his life in his auto-biography, adding a personal perspective to events which are better known from the formal reports and from legends passed from site hut to site hut.

Noël Hume's early life is chronicled in the first third of the book, an account of an unsettled and rather complicated childhood before and during the war which is written with a dry wit reminiscent of Eric Newby. Passing comments reveal a nascent interest in matters archaeological although most interesting is his honest recollection of a childhood visit to the excavations at Sutton Hoo: *'In hazy retrospect I like to think of this...as my initiation into the world of professional archaeology, though at the time it made little impression. On the contrary, nothing much seemed to be going on, prompting the conclusion that if this was what archaeology was all about, it was slightly less exciting than watching apples grow.'* Still, archaeology must have made some impression as when asked aged 16½ what career he wanted to pursue, he replied *"I want to be an archaeologist, sir"* to which his 'Uncle' John snapped *"I'm not asking you to choose a hobby. Young man, archaeology's a vocation, not a profession!"*

The young Noël Hume (INH) was in fact rather more interested in the theatre, and his early 'career' was as an actor, stage manager and playwright, rather than archaeologist. His itinerant and poorly paid acting life would have given him the life skills needed to be a modern-day circuit digger, but more importantly it gave him an ability to communicate, to tell a story, and to build props. The life of an aspiring actor did not however pay well and a penniless INH wandered the streets of London, watching trials at the Old Bailey and, inspired by a talk on the radio, he drifted into mudlarking, the searching out of artefacts from the Thames foreshore. An additional bonus of mudlarking were the finds of forged coins –not Roman or medieval forgeries, but half crowns, shillings and sixpences which could be palmed off on harassed bus drivers and laundered into real currency to pay for food.

INH's progress from mudlarking to *bona fide* archaeologist came from wanting to know what his mudlarked treasures were, with Adrian Oswald at the Guildhall Museum filling the role of the Finds Liaison Officer. Oswald clearly had an effect on Noël Hume as he spent more and more time in the Guildhall Museum, and less time trying for jobs in the theatre. Oswald also clearly taught Noel Hume well; INH obviously had an aptitude for archaeology for despite having no formal training in archaeology he clearly picked up the principles and application of stratigraphy, typology and excavation techniques, although there was little opportunity for formal excavation and much of his work was purely artefact retrieval. INH's future wife, Audrey, also worked at the Guildhall Museum, where she was

one of three female 'Guildhall Irregulars'. Audrey made her own career alongside INH in the UK and US and was a talented archaeologist in her own right.

Construction work and archaeological recording at Walbrook House, 1949

The early development of archaeological research in the City of London has been well-documented, but INH's book gives a more personal account of the period when the era of collecting artefacts from workmen was moving towards more archaeological work on their context. The redevelopment of the blitzed City meant that there were huge potential opportunities for research, but limited funds, equipment or personnel (and the rivalries between the two museums collecting in the City, the Guildhall Museum and the London Museum) meant that little was saved. INH's personal memories of these rivalries are fascinating and shed light on aspects only briefly touched on in more academic papers. There were rivalries and stresses too within the Guildhall Museum team, most famously over the exhibiting of some unconserved Roman goat-skin 'Bikini trunks' on the TV quiz show *Animal, Vegetable, Minera*l which indirectly led to INH and Audrey leaving for the US.

For the past 40 years London archaeologists have been revisiting the sites visited by INH and his team, and by other relatively unsung archaeologists: Norman and Reader (who coined the term 'Dark Earth'), Oswald, Lambert, Cottrill, Waddington, and later Merrifield and Marsden. Where we now have the opportunity to record the full sequence, the early archaeologists could only pick at the sides of the trenches, grabbing artefacts and sketching sequences and taking the odd photo. What is perhaps most striking is the stratigraphic rigour with which Noël Hume worked despite the circumstances. Although he had only limited archaeological training (and there are few details here on any further training received or self-taught), he clearly had a grasp of sequence, or what was important and what was not.

INH does not dwell on the subsequent development of Rescue archaeology and commercial archaeology in the UK, it would be very interesting to know Noël Hume's views on the major archaeological excavations of the last 40 years in the City and on what may have been lost back in the post-war reconstruction boom. Today when every development in the City is considered for its archaeological impact, it is hard to really understand what it was like back then, hauling sacks of finds back to the Guildhall (including on one occasion tramping up the Lord Mayor's red carpet). We have come a long way in some areas, but still owe a massive debt to all those archaeologists, not just INH, who paved the way.

The third part of the book deals with INH's career with Audrey following his move to America to the historical site of Colonial Williamsburg in Virginia. Here almost his first action was to build a model of stratigraphy, and to try and move on from the 'wall-chasing' of the existing archaeologists. INH had a varied and illustrious career in Virginia, with the odd theatrical show, and made a valuable contribution to museum studies, although it is clear that in later years both changing priorities and administrations took their toll on his work and his job satisfaction.

This book should be of interest to everyone interested in the story of the archaeology of London, and in the history of the period when modern archaeology really emerged in this country. It is refreshing that INH brings a personal view to the often personal relationships between the names that are now better known through their academic books. His accounts of digging in the City are a useful reminder of how much was done with so little, and that personalities –then as now- can interfere with the pursuit of archaeological research. The book is very much a personal tale, rather than a summary of professional achievements; a narrative of an unintended life in archaeology.

A Passion for the Past: the Odyssey of a Transatlantic Archaeologist, by Ivor Noël Hume, University of Virginia Press

ISBN 978-0-8139-2977-4

Is It Getting Better? Pay for Field Crews

Doug Rocks-Macqueen

Landward Research Ltd, University of Edinburgh

The Jobs in British Archaeology series of articles (Aitchison & Anderson 1995; Tuner 1996-1999; Malcolm 2000-2001; Drummond-Murray 2002-2008; Rocks-Macqueen 2011, forthcoming) have established a robust dataset of yearly pay for archaeologists for almost two decades now. It shows that there has been a steady increase in field crew pay over that time. The most common complaint about this trend is that while wages have gone up so has the cost of living and that actually the cost of living have gone up more than wages. It is not uncommon to hear a particularly experienced field crew member say, “I made more as a digger in 1996 than I do now because of inflation” or some variation of that statement.

With a fairly accurate dataset of pay it is possible to test this assumption by looking at pay increases against inflation. There are two measures of inflation in the United Kingdom, the Retail Price Index (RPI) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI). The RPI is based on the Living Costs and Food Survey which samples approximately 6,000 responding households per year. The households are visited by an interviewer, and information is collected about income and regular expenditure, such as household bills and mortgage payments. A set of weights are then calculated, based on the relative importance of the items in the average family budget, and applied to each item to get an overall rate.

The CPI on the other hand calculates inflation based on the average price increase for a basket of 600 different goods and services. Around the middle of each month it collects information on prices of these commodities from 120,000 different retailing outlets. A difference in how the average for a good is calculated between the CPI and RPI tends to result in slightly different calculations of inflation.

Table 1 represents the different increase in wages and inflation measurements since the beginning of the Jobs in British Archaeology papers. (See past issues of the JBA for definitions of what each position is). Table 2 shows the difference between current average advertised wages and wages if they had followed inflation forward from a given year. For example if you started as an excavator in 1994 you would have started with £8,741 annual wage. If wages had followed inflation you would now make between £12,500- 14,275 while the actual pay, average advertised wage, is now currently £16,600, a gain of £2-4000 over inflation. Likewise if you had started as a field officer in 2008 you should make around £23,200-400 now, assuming pay follows inflation, but the actual average advertised pay is £21,800, roughly a loss of 1500 pounds in wages.

Position	1994	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	2001
Excavator	£ 8,741	£ 8,597	£ 10,024	£ 9,880	£ 10,314	£ 11,311	£ 12,024	£ 12,378
		-2%	17%	-1%	4%	10%	6%	3%
Supervisor	£ 10,766	£ 11,911	£ 11,645	£ 12,029	£ 12,732	£ 12,700	£ 12,868	£ 12,741
		11%	-2%	3%	6%	0%	1%	-1%
Field Officer	£ 13,637	£ 13,616	£ 12,813	£ 13,484	£ 14,274	£ 13,788	£ 15,518	£ 15,572
		0%	-6%	5%	6%	-3%	13%	0%
CPI	2.00%	2.60%	2.50%	1.80%	1.60%	1.30%	0.80%	1.20%
RPI	2.40%	3.50%	2.40%	3.10%	3.40%	1.50%	3%	1.80%

2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011
£ 13,232	£ 12,903	£ 13,710	£ 14,179	£ 14,294	£ 15,078	£ 15,299	£ 16,032	£ 16,744	£ 16,612
7%	-2%	6%	3%	1%	5%	1%	5%	4%	-1%
£ 14,806	£ 14,765		£ 15,900	£ 15,879	£ 17,037	£ 18,715	£ 18,926	£19,016	£ 19,517
16%	0%			0%	7%	10%	1%	0%	3%
£ 18,489	£ 16,592	£ 16,563	£ 17,598	£ 18,593	£ 19,928	£ 21,200	£ 22,548	£22,160	£ 21,792
19%	-10%	0%	6%	6%	7%	6%	6%	-2%	-2%
1.30%	1.40%	1.30%	2.10%	2.30%	2.30%	3.60%	2.20%	3.30%	4.50%
1.70%	2.90%	3%	2.80%	3.20%	4.30%	4%	-0.50%	4.60%	5.20%

Table 1: Increase in wages year on year and inflation during that same period

	Excavator		Supervisor		Field Officer	
	CPI	RPI	CPI	RPI	CPI	RPI
1994	£ 4,127.09	£ 2,337.33	£ 4,139.75	£ 1,935.36	£ 2,314.05	-£ 478.19
1995	£ 4,491.10	£ 3,047.25	£ 2,935.45	£ 723.27	£ 2,836.88	£ 308.04
1996	£ 2,997.74	£ 1,166.36	£ 3,701.15	£ 1,573.62	£ 4,389.81	£ 2,048.89
1997	£ 3,430.58	£ 1,845.99	£ 3,468.49	£ 1,539.24	£ 3,802.29	£ 1,639.69
1998	£ 3,068.26	£ 1,704.23	£ 2,798.08	£ 1,114.27	£ 3,048.21	£ 1,160.48
1999	£ 1,949.66	£ 504.78	£ 3,054.12	£ 1,431.80	£ 3,918.75	£ 2,157.46
2000	£ 1,149.11	-£ 11.84	£ 2,968.73	£ 1,726.29	£ 1,835.82	£ 337.52
2001	£ 882.62	-£ 198.67	£ 3,326.34	£ 2,213.34	£ 2,003.84	£ 643.53
2002	£ 13.18	-£ 1,058.10	£ 943.69	-£ 255.03	-£ 1,401.44	-£ 2,898.34
2003	£ 649.37	-£ 133.14	£ 1,250.84	£ 355.41	£ 1,265.62	£ 259.38
2004	-£ 131.33	-£ 662.22			£ 1,564.45	£ 923.08
2005	-£ 347.93	-£ 766.55	£ 498.53	£ 29.10	£ 742.50	£ 222.94
2006	-£ 101.09	-£ 364.26	£ 950.67	£ 658.32	£ 52.36	-£ 289.96
2007	-£ 621.40	-£ 557.10	£ 44.56	£ 117.21	-£ 984.71	-£ 899.73
2008	-£ 266.68	-£ 139.03	-£ 1,130.39	-£ 974.23	-£ 1,596.99	-£ 1,420.10
2009	-£ 694.69	-£ 1,029.88	-£ 912.98	-£ 1,308.66	-£ 2,548.41	-£ 3,019.82
2010	-£ 885.39	-£ 1,002.60	-£ 354.51	-£ 487.62	-£ 1,365.03	-£ 1,520.15

Table 2: Difference between current average pay and wages if they had followed annual inflation.

Looking at these numbers we can see a clear generational division between field staff. Those that started in the 1990s and early 2000s have made significant gains in pay. While those who have started archaeology in more recent years have seen inflation, severely in some cases, hurt their purchasing power. This assumes someone does not move up the ladder of job opportunities for higher pay.

Before reading too deep into these numbers it is important to remember that inflation figures are based on a weighting of a series of goods and services. These weightings are based on the use of an average UK family. Needless to say, most field archaeologists do not live like or use the same amount of goods and services as the average British family. Figures 1 and 2 give a different look at inflation based on some goods and services.

When looking at these individual goods and services and comparing them against wages we see a very different picture (Table 3).

Again we see the trend that those who started out in the 1990s doing better than recent entrants into excavator positions. More importantly it shows the great variability between different goods and services. Overall, wages have been good compared to clothing and footwear but poor against food and alcohol. This raises the question, what do field archaeologists spend their wages on? The current inflation figures are based on the average British family but that is probably not reflective of the spending habits of field archaeologists, even between different positions of archaeologists. Ideally the question would be answered through a survey of some kind to determine the breakdown of costs for archaeologists. If that data was gathered it could be used to construct an accurate picture of archaeologists' purchasing power and its changes due to inflation each year. That will involve a much larger project and at the moment it has not been undertaken. However, each individual reading this article can calculate their own wages against inflation by:

1. Looking at your expenses to see the proportion of your costs.

2. Go to http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/datasets-and-tables/data-selector.html?dataset=mm23 (Office of National Statistics data selector) and look up inflation rates for the goods and services that you pay for.

3. Using the proportion of costs to weight the inflation rates to find out how your salary compares against the inflation of your costs.

Not an ideal solution but it will help you see how your wages fair against inflation. Though this is a UK wide measurement of inflation and there are local and regional differences in inflation that may cause this data to be inaccurate when reflecting your local circumstances. Still it will give a rough idea of wages against cost of living for your individual circumstance.

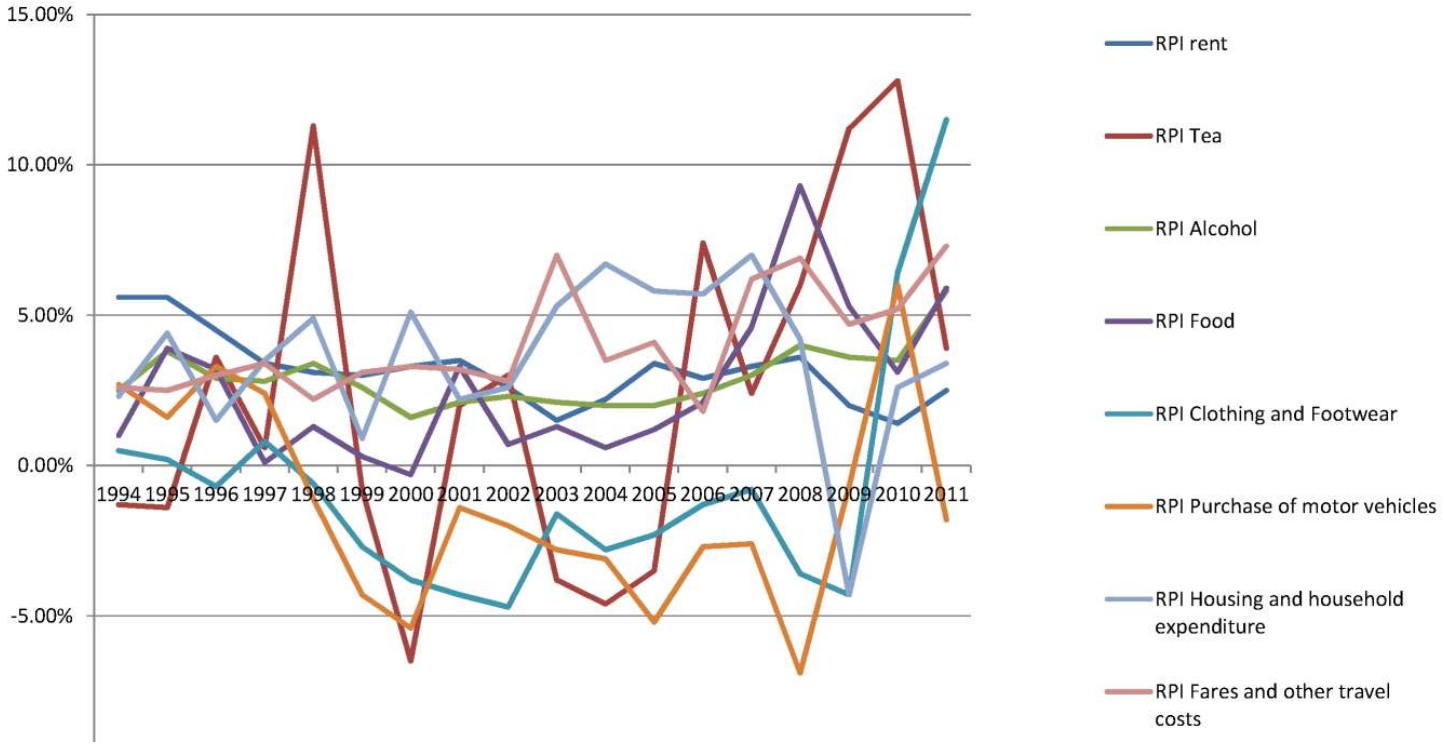


Figure 1: Look at RPI inflation for a selection of goods.

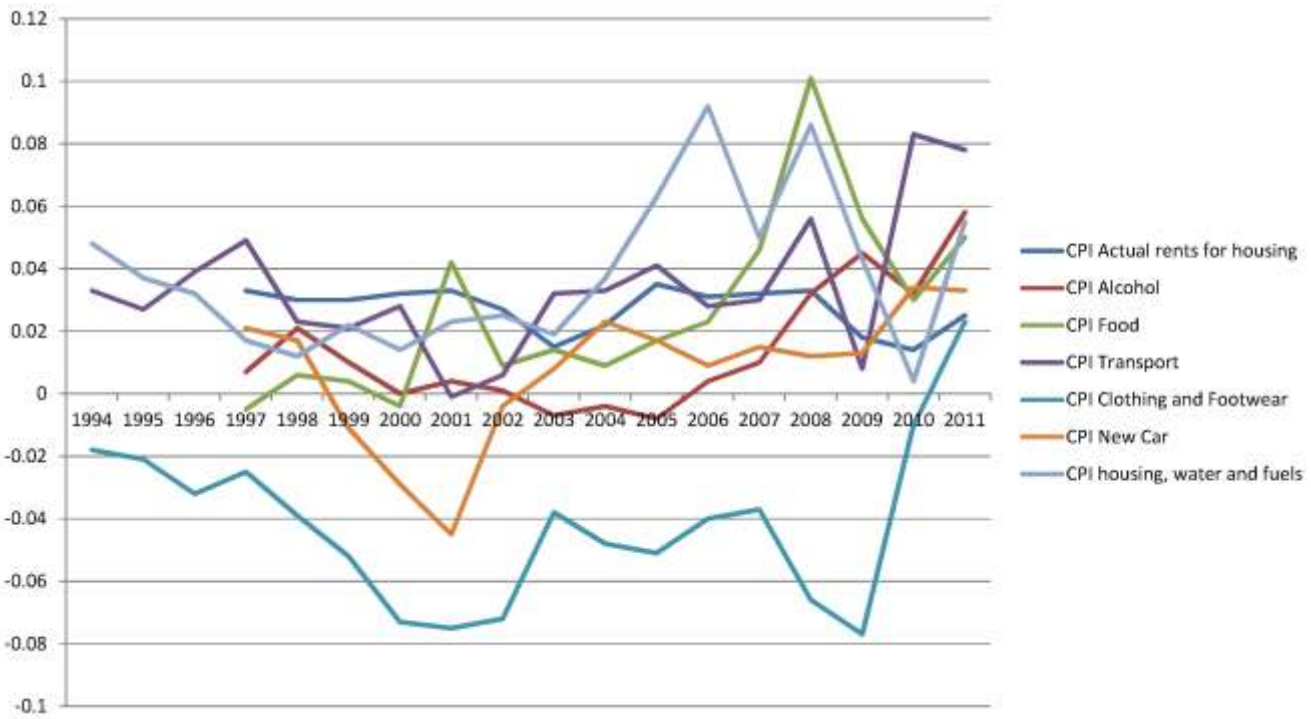


Figure 2: Look at CPI inflation for a selection of goods.

	1994	2005
RPI rent	12%	0%
RPI Tea	21%	-30%
RPI Alcohol	14%	-6%
RPI Food	18%	-15%
RPI Clothing and footwear	55%	9%
RPI Purchase of motor vehicles	60%	22%
RPI Housing and household expenditure	4%	-2%
RPI Fares and other travel costs	-4%	-17%
CPI Actual rent for housing	21%	1%
CPI Alcohol	36%	-2%
CPI Food	22%	-15%
CPI Transport	7%	-12%
CPI Clothing and footwear	75%	31%
CPI New car	41%	4%
CPI Housing water and fuels	3%	-17%

Table 3: Wages against inflation for individual goods and services for excavators for those that started in 1994 and 2005. Negative numbers indicate how much less of that good or service excavator wages buy. Positive numbers indicate how much more of that good or service excavator wages buy.

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Conference announcement

21st century archaeologists: Teaching, Training and Professional Development

One day conference to be held at the University of Winchester Centre for Applied Archaeology and Heritage Management, Tuesday 19th June 2012.

Four years ago, the Archaeology Training Forum expressed its concern at *"an ongoing level of disconnect between the expectations of archaeological employers, employees, training providers and students of archaeology in terms of the objectives of training and its outcomes"* (http://torc.org.uk/ATFvision.pdf).

This Centre for Applied Archaeology and Heritage Management (in association with Landward Research) day conference will look at how training can be innovatively used to effectively deliver what individuals and organisations need to develop new skills and knowledge, to keep capabilities up to date and to bridge that disconnect between training demand and supply. Papers will discuss issues which have been confronted and overcome, explaining how innovative approaches to training can best be developed, evaluated and employed, giving opportunity for discussion between individual professionals, learning developers, students and employers.

Over three sessions, which will focus on different stages of the learning journey (undergraduate, postgraduate and continuing professional development), the underlying philosophical strands will be the development of fieldwork skills and the development and application of e-learning with the aims of promoting employability for students and CPD for professionals, both in the UK and internationally. Speakers are drawn from across the sector.

Registration begins at 0900 at the West Downs Campus, University of Winchester (see: http://www.winchester.ac.uk/contactusandmaps/Documents/How%20to%20find%20the%20University%20of%20Winchester%20(West%20Downs).pdf), and the fee for non speakers is £20 to include: beverages, sandwich lunch and wine reception at the end of the day. Please contact Kenny Aitchison, Niall Finneran or Paul Everill for more information: kenneth.aitchison@landward.eu Niall.Finneran@winchester.ac.uk; Paul.Everill@winchester.ac.uk.

The introductory talk begins at 0930 and the keynote address is provided by Dr Joe Flatman the Surrey County Archaeologist and UCL academic. Post-workshop wine reception to be held at 1730-1830.

Invisible Diggers 2: Survey 2012

Paul Everill

Many thanks to the Diggers' Forum members who supported the recent update to the 2005 survey. I'm delighted to report that over the two months that the survey was open I received 651 responses – almost exactly twice the number received for the original survey – and that these appear to represent a good cross-section of the profession.

It's still very early days in terms of processing and analysing the data, but already it's possible to see some fascinating results, and initial comparisons of the two sets of data have significant implications for the changing state of the sector. Looking at 'age of staff' and 'fieldwork experience' by gender, and comparing it directly with the results from 2005, the overwhelming sense is of a significant drop in the number of staff aged under 25 (down from 22.8% in 2005, to 6.9% of the profession today), and with less than five years' experience. This, of course, supports anecdotal evidence regarding the scale and focus of the recent job losses, which have impacted most significantly on that cohort. Despite the different sample size, the results clearly indicate that the wide base of the profession's pyramidal structure has simply aged, rather than being replaced at the base of the hierarchy by a significant intake of new graduates.

Regional trends are also evident. Participants were asked to identify where they were currently working and the percentages in southeast England, Scotland, the East Midlands and Northern Ireland were largely unchanged from 2005. By contrast there has been a significant increase in southwest England, eastern England, the West Midlands and Wales. The greatest drop has been seen in London.

And, finally, university departments seeking to underscore their relevance in the face of the new tuition fees regime take note: 66% of respondents reported that they didn't feel their degree had prepared them for a job in commercial archaeology – and of course that doesn't just mean in terms of excavation. The views of some academic archaeologists, expressed at the recent IfA conference, seemed to be that the focus of a degree should simply be to provide interpretative/ theoretical frameworks. It is my opinion that the logical conclusion of that old-fashioned stance is that archaeological degrees will become increasingly irrelevant, certainly to the majority of those engaged in professional practice.

Anyway, as mentioned, it is very early in the process of analysing this data so there is lots more work to be done before I can report more fully, but watch this space!

Dr Paul Everill MIFA FHEA
Lecturer in Applied Archaeological Techniques
Department of Archaeology
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Bookmarks

Tom Elliot

Each issue we bring you a selection of useful or interesting web resources to bookmark.

Community groups

A random selection of community group sites to tickle those community archaeology taste-buds. Who knows what you might discover?

Surrey - http://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk/
Yorkshire - http://www.yas.org.uk/
Kent - http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/Society.htm
Bristol and Gloucestershire - http://www.bgas.org.uk/
Derbyshire - http://www.derbyshireas.org.uk/
Glasgow - http://glasarchsoc.org.uk/
North of Scotland - http://www.nosas.co.uk/

Worked on a good community archaeology project recently? Write an article or send us a link!

Blogs

The fabulous **Annie Partridge** has a blog about her CBA placement as a community archaeologist in Kent. A great blog for someone interested in a CBA placement or if you're just curious about what they do.

http://beadsboatsandflowerbeds.blogspot.co.uk/2012/05/and-now-for-something-completely.html

Doug's Archaeology is another really useful website on commercial archaeology and career advice for anyone who hasn't seen it.

http://dougsarchaeology.wordpress.com/

The knee bones connected to the thigh bone....

Great time-lapse video of osteologist Michael Henderson laying out a skeleton ready for analysis.

http://www.mymuseumoflondon.org.uk/blogs/blog/author/michaelhenderson/

GIS

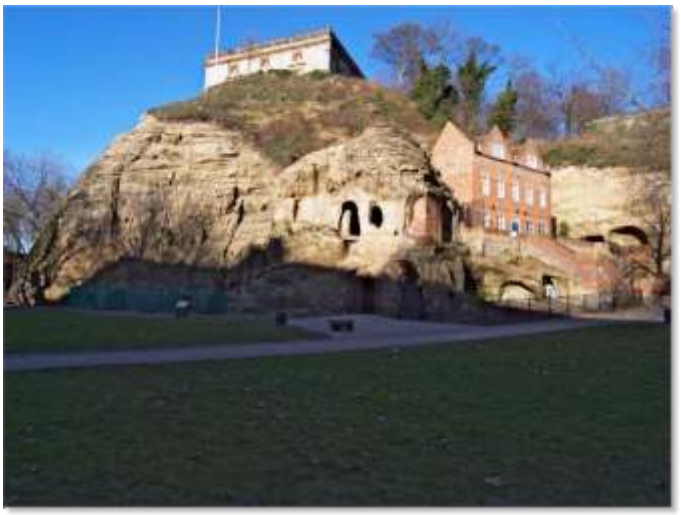
Interested in learning more about GIS? Take a look at this excellent introductory series of lectures by the University of Leicester.

http://www.le.ac.uk/ar/arcgis/Main.html

Interpreting Stratigraphy

The Interpreting Stratigraphy Conferences ran from 1992 to 2002 and brought together archaeologists to discuss stratigraphy, and a whole wealth of related subjects. Many of the papers are available via this website.
http://www.york.ac.uk/archaeology/strat/

Nottingham Caves Survey



Didn't know there were caves in Nottingham? Well there are over 450 known man-made caves cut into the sandstone beneath Nottingham, and the Nottingham Caves Survey is plotting and recording as many as it can, including some spectacular laser-scan fly-throughs.

Some of the caves are medieval in origin and were used as underground malting factories which allowed the year round production of beer! Caves were also used as *'dungeons, beer cellars, cess-pits, tanneries, malt-kilns, houses, wine cellars, tunnels, summer houses, air-raid shelters, sand mines, follies, dovecotes and even a bowling alley'.*

http://nottinghamcavessurvey.org.uk/

We are hoping to bring you a full article on the survey in a future newsletter.

Got useful links or websites you'd like to share? Send them to us by email or on Facebook. Go on, we're only a few clicks away!

Tools of the trade:
Metal detectors

Sadie Watson

Archaeologists working within the commercial sector have often had an uneasy relationship with metal detectors: most of us can recall situations (or anecdotal evidence from colleagues) where sites have been invaded by nighthawks and archaeology compromised as a result. However when used correctly and under archaeological supervision they can be tools that greatly enhance results from excavations and we should be embracing their use on our projects as long as a few golden rules are followed.

This article is aimed at professional archaeologists and will not discuss the use of metal detectors by hobbyists or clubs. The Portable Antiquities Scheme has a guide for this (http://www.britarch.ac.uk/conservation/portant/detecting) and it is not the DF's mission to get embroiled in the whys and wherefores of treasure hunting, mudlarking or any other amateur activity!

Most commercial organisations will have metal detectors in their tool stores and they are used with varying degrees of success on many projects. WSIs will often stipulate that the spoil from excavations should be scanned by a metal detector or that an initial scan be carried out to determine the potential for further detecting. This is more common on rural sites but the urban environment can also offer great potential. It is a common misconception that the use of metal detectors can divert staff away from excavation but if a strategy is identified from the outset this can be avoided.

A key issue will be the site itself; whether it is suitable for detecting and if it would increase the finds recovered. Large amounts of reinforced concrete and modern services will interfere with the signals. An excavation on the Thames waterfront saw 80% of the metal finds being found by the detector: the alluvial clay did not lend itself well to being excavated thoroughly and time constraints did not allow for wet sieving to be carried out on tonnes of material excavated on site. The detector was used to scan the spoil directly after it had been excavated, (so before it became contaminated by other spoil) and each artefact found was bagged with its context number, thereby ensuring the integrity of the artefact was not lost. In addition, these finds were labelled 'MD' to enable the finds specialists to incorporate the recovery method in their analysis: if some deposits are fully scanned they will probably have a higher number of finds recovered, which does not necessarily mean they were originally richer in metal finds. Crucial here is the availability of space to spread out the spoil, although it can be rapidly scanned and does not need to be left on the site for long.

There is not room here to discuss a research strategy that would incorporate detecting but generally the type of archaeology expected on a site will inform the suitability of otherwise of metal detecting. For example, waterlogged deposits are generally a good bet, particularly if there is a possibility of ritual deposition of metalwork (always a thorny subject but not entirely beyond the realms of possibility when dealing with rivers running through landscapes). It can also provide great results when used on industrial areas.

Metal detectors are given names that will strike fear into the heart of any archaeologist: Treasure Hunter, Bounty Hunter or how about the Gold Hunter Junior for the kids? Commonly used on excavations are the Saxon, Viking and their Classical colleagues the Amigo and Compadre as these are more robust and tend to last longer when stored in muddy site huts. Detectors can cost between £60 and £1000, but an average quality one will be around £300. They work by picking up a charge from the magnetic field of a buried piece of metal which is then converted into a beep by the metal detector. Actually it's much more complicated than that but physics was never my strong point…A decent detector will allow you to focus the detection on certain types of metal (if you want to ignore all iron nails for example) but it is important to note that you have excluded metals from your search as this will inevitably skew the results.

Metal-detecting at community excavations at Cousland, Midlothian © David Connolly

Finally and to be honest my own personal priority with using metal detectors on site would be to train up members of the field team in their use rather than have external detectorists. This is not because I want to exclude them from our projects but rather because I think we should be training each other up in additional skills, and more importantly because we are the people who can recognise the difference between two waterfront dump deposits and can identify which context any finds came from. The integrity of detected artefacts is vital, as without it we are also just treasure hunting and much of the research potential behind accurately located finds is lost. That said, these views are my own and do not necessarily reflect those held by either my employer or the DF…

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