

## **Making the right choice: Treatment options for archaeological leather and recording techniques for organic materials - Angela Middleton, English Heritage**

### *Synopsis:*

This talk is designed around case studies dealing with treatment options for waterlogged archaeological leather, recording techniques for archaeological wood and high tech recording of a concreted artefact from the marine environment.

### *Learning outcomes:*

- Research value of organic materials
- Brief overview of leather production and preservation
- Treatment options for leather
- What to do if....
- How to find a conservator
- When to contact a conservator/ finds specialist
- Various recording techniques for organic materials
- Handling/ examination of leather and wood

## **Wood remains - Information, Preservation & Management - Jim Spriggs, Conservation Consultant, York**

*Synopsis:* The presentation provides an appreciation of wood remains and the information categories they contain. The content focuses on pre-excavation planning, resources, services and advice and the simple do's and don'ts regarding the excavation, recording, lifting and storage of wood remains. A brief outline of the guidelines of wood recording and sampling, in addition to conservation, research potential, and archiving.

### *Learning outcomes:*

- An appreciation of the potential for waterlogged wood as a window into past technologies and environments
- An awareness of the practicalities of planning for and managing the excavation and post-ex care and assessment of preserved wood from waterlogged deposits

## **Dating organic remains - Zoe Outram, English Heritage**

### *Synopsis:*

The presentation will introduce the scientific dating techniques that can be used to sample organic remains, with a specific focus on Radiocarbon and Dendrochronology. The session will include a discussion of the materials that can be dated, the sampling considerations, and the issues that need to be addressed for each technique to ensure that an accurate and precise date is obtained.

### *Learning outcomes:*

- an understanding of the techniques available to date organic remains

- the ability to be more critical of the samples selected for dating, as well as of the resulting dates

**Animal matters: identifying archaeological bone, antler and ivory - Sonia O'Connor, University of Bradford**

*Synopsis:*

Animal hard tissues, such as bone, antler and ivory have been used by man since the Palaeolithic for the fabrication of everyday objects, tools, artworks and symbols of power and affinity. Identifying the materials from which these objects are made is a vital step to understanding their cultural significance, evaluating resource utilisation and recognising long distance trade. Today many of these materials are unavailable or have been replaced by metal alloys and synthetic plastics, so few people are familiar with their characteristics. This, combined with the changes in appearance and properties produced by working and decay, can make correct identification very problematic.

Through a combination of lectures and hands-on practical sessions this workshop will cover the identification of archaeological objects worked in bone, antler and ivory. The emphasis will be on visual identification techniques, using low-power microscopy, and will cover the characteristics of the raw materials, worked and decayed surfaces that enable these osseous materials to be distinguished from each other.

*Learning outcomes:*

- Microscopy skills
- A basic understanding of the chemistry and structure of osseous materials and their decay in archaeological environments
- Improved accuracy in materials identification.