**21st Century Challenges for Archaeology: Work Package 3.2**

**Project design: enhancing and promoting CIfA Standards and guidance on archaeological practice proposal (pilot study, phase 1)**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Project Name | 21CAP work package 3.2: enhancing and promoting CIfA Standards and guidance on archaeological practice (pilot study, phase 1) |
| Organisation Applying for Funding | Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) |
| Company Number | RC000874 |
| VAT Registration Number | N/A |
| **Charities Commission Number** | N/A |
| Author and contact details | Jen Parker Wooding, Senior Professional Standards & Practice Coordinator (CIfA), [jen.parkerwooding@archaeologists.net](mailto:jen.parkerwooding@archaeologists.net) |
| **Other funding: Have you applied, or are you intending to apply, for funding from other sources in relation to this project? If ‘Yes’ please list.** | N/A |
| Origination Date | 12/07/23 |
| Version | 1.1 |

1. **Summary description**

This project is part of the Historic England and CIfA co-led *21st Century Challenges for Archaeology* (21CAP) work programme and supports the strategic review, update, and reformat work currently being undertaken on the CIfA Standards and guidance. This project aims to support this wider work by establishing a clearer understanding of the landscape of standards and guidance across the historic environment sector in England, outlining what is available, how it is being used and the roles and responsibilities associated with provision and enforcement. Opportunities for increased communication and collaboration on guidance development and more comprehensive signposting across the historic environment sector forms a key output and will support the improvement of archaeological practice in England, and by extension further afield. For CIfA, the project outputs will inform the development and review of existing and future CIfA Standards and guidance with the data providing the basis for the development of detailed (jurisdiction-specific) guidance for archaeological practice in England. The latter supporting the Universal CIfA Standards and guidance work programme already underway (see section 2).

It is proposed that the project be split into two phases both supported by external consultant input. The first phase (this project design) will focus on preliminary data gathering, research and the production of a literature review to explore the landscape of standards and guidance across England to help define the project scope and determine the search parameters required for the main project. This will culminate in an updated project design detailing the scope and associated methodology to be undertaken to address the wider project aims. The latter will be implemented in phase 2 of the project subject to the approval of the updated project design and associated costs.

1. **Background**

The historic environment sector comprises a vast landscape of standards, guidance and advice for practitioners to draw upon when undertaking various archaeological activities. These documents have been (and continue to be) developed by a wide variety of organisations including National agencies, professional bodies, public bodies, local authorities, groups, societies and academic researchers for different audiences (ranging from the general to specialised). Some standards and guidance are advisory and support good practice, some are required and enforceable through specific mechanisms (Figure 1). As it stands, it is difficult to fully appreciate the standards and guidance that are available and regularly used, which hinders the ability to identify potential overlaps, identify potential gaps, effectively enforce and promote what’s available. The Historic Environment Forum (HEF) advisory group on standards, convened by Historic England and Chaired most recently by CIfA’s Kate Geary, made a start on collating available standards and guidance for England in 2021 so there is some initial data that can be usefully referred to, but a more substantial review would be beneficial.

A screenshot of a computer screen

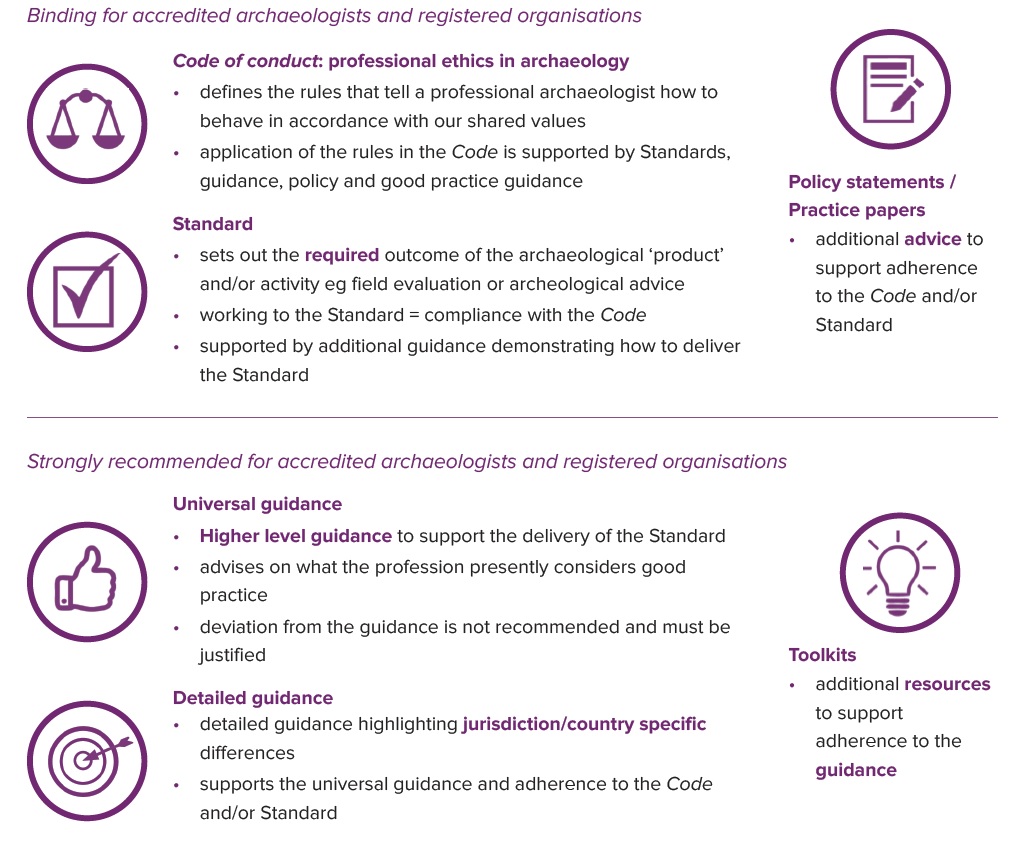
Description automatically generated

**Figure 1 Standards and guidance across the historic environment sector**

**CIfA Standards and guidance**

CIfA’s suite of Standards and guidance is currently under a programme of restructure, review and update. With a steady increase in overseas members and registered organisations, it has become a strategic priority for the Institute to ensure its professional Standards and guidance are universally applicable and usable wherever CIfA-accredited and non-accredited archaeologists are undertaking archaeological activities. The Standards and guidance provide assurance to those commissioning works and any other stakeholders that archaeological activities are being undertaken to a measurable quality standard and in the public interest. Phase one of the programme has involved providing an updated structure that focuses on the delivery of universal Standards and universal higher level guidance (Figure 2). Phase two comprises supporting this universal information with detailed (jurisdiction-specific) guidance for local implementation. The latter will include collaborating with organisations and/or individuals to align existing or newly developed guidance with the CIfA regulatory framework, signposting to good practice guidance that already exists for specific jurisdictions and/or identifying any gaps in guidance provision that may be apparent and addressing how those gaps may be filled.

Identifying the standards and guidance being utilised at present across England as part of this proposed project will build upon the work already undertaken by the HEF advisory group and directly interface with phase 2 of the CIfA update work being undertaken helping to lay the foundation for collating the detailed, jurisdiction-specific guidance for England.



Phase 2

Phase 1

**Figure 2 CIfA Standards and guidance – updated structure**

**21st century challenges for archaeology – work package 3**

In 2017 CIfA received funding from Historic England to support the implementation of project 7521 *The world after PPG16: 21st century challenges for archaeology*. This project undertook a series of workshops to review and discuss archaeological practice and resulted in the identification of numerous recommended actions (Wills 2018). A follow up to this *21st century challenges for archaeology – what’s next* was then funded to bring together sector partners to review and rationalise the recommendations and create a framework to support implementation (HE 7881). This led to the creation of the 21st Century challenges for archaeology programme (21CAP) co-led by Historic England and CIfA with numerous sector partners (Figure 3). The 21CAP programme comprises five work packages which collectively aim to improve archaeological practice in England. This project proposal forms part of work package 3 (Table 1) which is dedicated to Standards and guidance with the remit to e*nhance and promote Standards and guidance on archaeological practice to increase public benefit.* This comprises four distinct but interrelated areas of work (3.1-3.4) with this project proposal is encapsulated in 3.2 (see Table 1) – *Conducting a strategic review of what standards and guidance are available, and how they can be used with a view to ensuring relevant guidance is available, has more weight, standards are effectively enforced, and guidance better promoted.*

A group of logos of different brands

Description automatically generated with medium confidence

**Figure 3 21CAP sector partners**

**Table 1 21CAP work package 3**

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| **21st- Century Challenges for Archaeology Work Programme (21CAP)** | |
| **Work package 3. Enhance and promote Standards and Guidance on archaeological practice to increase public benefit** | **Lead organisation** |
| 3.1 Redesign the sector's suite of standards and guidance, to produce better archaeology; and to ensure that the results of this work feed into wider heritage sector approaches to advice and standards and guidance. | CIfA lead (underway see Figure 2) |
| **3.2 Conducting a strategic review of what standards and guidance are available, and how they can be used with a view to ensuring relevant guidance is available, has more weight, standards are effectively enforced, and guidance better promoted.** | **CIfA lead (current project proposal)** |
| 3.3 Developing detailed technical guidance for England to support and underpin the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists' suite of standards and guidance (3.1 and 3.2). To provide national consistency, for instance over sampling/volumetrics, standardisation of artefact class nomenclature, digital trench-side recording etc. | UAUK lead, CIfA support (project planning) |
| 3.4 Developing a process of common, industry compatible, measurement metrics, and a costing/pricing approach, through the development of a Standard Method of Measurement for Archaeological Excavation. To be used to inform contract negotiations in development-led archaeology. | FAME lead, CIfA support (complete) |

1. **Aims and objectives**

The landscape of standards and guidance across the historic environment sector, and all those organisations involved in their development, needs to be reviewed and better understood. Without this knowledge, consistent use, promotion and effective enforcement will continue to be a challenge. The information contained within standards and guidance documentation should be written by those with the right expertise and published/promoted by organisations with the mechanisms in place to effectively promote their use and support their enforcement.

To support this, this project as a whole aims to review and better understand

* which standards and guidance pertaining to archaeological activities undertaken across the historic environment sector in England are being accessed and used on a regular basis
* how standards and guidance pertaining to archaeological activities undertaken across the historic environment sector in England are being promoted, recommended, stipulated and enforced
* the roles and responsibilities associated with the development, publication, maintenance and enforcement of standards and guidance
* which organisations/bodies should be producing and or/endorsing different types of standards and guidance

The overarching objective for this project mirrors the wider objective for the 21CAP work package 3 -*to enhance and promote standards and guidance on archaeological practice to secure better archaeological research/synthesis potential and increase public benefit*.

The objectives specific to this project are to

* reduce the amount of duplicated effort by different organisations providing guidance on the same/similar topics
* make it easier for archaeologists and clients to find the appropriate guidance
* increase the effectiveness of available standards and guidance by ensuring that it is published/endorsed by the bodies/organisations best able to enforce its use by practitioners, or to persuade clients and specifiers to require its use

1. **Business case and Public Value Framework**

The project will support the improvement of archaeological practice in England by providing the means to assess how the standards and guidance in use across the historic environment sector relate to each other, how they relate to CIfA Standards and guidance and where there is repetition, overlap and/or gaps. Clarifying the roles and responsibilities associated with the provision and enforcement of standards and guidance as well as highlighting the importance of collaboration and detailed signposting is key to promoting and facilitating a legacy of consistent implementation leading to better research synthesis opportunities and greater public benefit. For CIfA, the project outputs will inform the development and review of existing and future CIfA Standards and guidance with the data providing the basis for the collation and development of detailed (jurisdiction-specific) guidance for archaeological practice in England supporting the Universal CIfA Standards and guidance work programme already underway. Although this proposal is specifically focused on guidance provision and experiences in England, there is the potential for applicability beyond England, as appropriate. For example, where guidance covers practice in England, in addition to other countries and/or jurisdictions.

There have been several recommendations related to CIfA Standards and guidance (and standards and guidance more widely) from projects including *The Southport Review* (Nixon 2017), *Reporting on archaeological artefacts in England* (Cattermole 2017), *The Roman Rural Settlement Project* (Allen et al 2018), *21st Century challenges in archaeology* (Wills 2018), *Supporting the sector: professional pathways and standards* (CIfA 2018) and *21st Century Challenges for Archaeology: What next?* (CIfA 2019), with more associated with the recent development of the HE funded CIfA Toolkit series. The various recommendations when viewed collectively identify the importance of ensuring the standards and guidance are up to date with an emphasis on their uptake, use and enforcement especially in supporting consistent and standardised approaches to archaeological practices. Additional emphasis is also placed on collaboration, training and the importance of accreditation. In Nixon’s 2017 review of the original it states, ‘*the Standards and guidance now in place represent the most robust infrastructure we have yet had’* (Nixon 2017, 13). That said, the work being currently undertaken on updating the suite of CIfA Standards and guidance and this proposed project intend to future proof their efficacy by improving that solid infrastructure, and responding to change as practice develops.

These recommendations are being addressed in various CIfA projects, training and CPD workshops but also by the work being undertaken by the 21st-Century Challenges for Archaeology Programme (21CAP). The work proposed here on standards and guidance will help contribute to a future where archaeology maximises its public benefit and social value supporting a more sustainable profession built to meet the challenges that lie ahead. The project contributes to the following strategic objectives.

**CIfA Strategic plan 2021-2030**

This project contributes to the following CIfA’s strategy objectives and identified actions.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **CIfA Strategic plan objectives** |  | **This project will contribute to the following actions** |
| **1 Higher standards**  *CIfA-accredited professionals will provide improved research and engagement, using fit-for-purpose technical and ethical standards for competence, education, and practice, supported by more useful guidance* |  | * ensure practice/product standards are universally applicable and appropriate (geographically and across specialisms and roles) and encourage their adoption * provide essential guidance to support practice standards, tailored to different jurisdictions, built on accessible good practice * increase understanding, attainment and application of standards by CIfA professionals * nurture the development cycle of innovation, established good practice, requirement, innovation * promote the use of standards to all non-professional archaeologists and those who commission, sponsor and work with archaeologists |
| **2 Inspiring our discipline**  *More archaeologists will want their professionalism*  *recognised. A larger, more diverse and inclusive*  *profession will offer a wider range of expertise and*  *better reflect its relevance to society* |  | * Promote CIfA-accredited professionalism * Encourage members to draw confidence from their professionalism and the trust it creates |
| **3 Greater influence outside our discipline**  *Professional archaeologists will be more effectively*  *promoting the many public benefits of archaeology, and will be more trusted and more valued as a result* |  | * Encourage more/all archaeologists to recognise the ethical imperative of professionals to deliver public benefit, and the many forms it takes * Build new and stronger partnerships for influence with our sector and others, to create an environment where good practice in archaeology can be facilitated |
|  |  |  |
| **4 A well-governed and effective institute**  *Provide the governance and resources that let the profession flourish* | |  | * Encourage and empower CIfA members to promote its work and accreditations, and support them to become even more active contributors to their profession |

**Historic England Corporate Plan 2023-26**

This project contributes to the following priorities and outcomes outlined in the Historic England Corporate Plan 2023-26.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **HE Priorities and outcomes** |  | **This project will** |
| **2. Inclusion, diversity and equality**  **Everyone can connect with, enjoy, and**  **benefit from the historic environment.**  *Everyone can connect with, enjoy, and benefit from the historic environment*  **A.** **We are more inclusive and demonstrate greater diversity in our people and practices** |  | Support a wider audience to engage with, better understand, contribute to, access and use professional Standards and guidance leading to more consistent approaches to archaeological practice and greater opportunities for knowledge exchange |
| **3. Planning, listing, conservation advice and investment**  *We secure positive change and sustainable futures for historic places through our expertise, advice, and investment*  **C. Our partners, including local authorities, have the skills and knowledge they need to effect positive change** |  | Provide an up to date and robust suite of professional Standards and guidance with signposting to jurisdiction-specific guidance to assist the work of local authority archaeologists  Provide an updated and expanded Standards and guidance infrastructure that instils confidence in those applying them and which better encourages and supports enforcement, where necessary |
| **6. Developing Historic England**  *We are a valued, adaptable organisation,*  *equipped to deliver on our strategy*  **A. Our people have the skills, knowledge, and resilience to perform well where they are most needed, and get things done easily.** |  | Provide additional awareness of the role and responsibilities associated with the production and use of professional Standards and guidance and how they may relate to the development of Historic England guidance  Provide a wider understanding of the relationship between professional Standards and guidance and other types of guidance/advice |

The project also aligns with the following themes in Historic England’s Research Strategy (2016) and Research Agenda (2017):

**#inform - improving and developing heritage information management**

* how can we encourage the sharing, linking and interoperability of historic environment data and information, particularly information derived from the commercial sector?
* how can we ensure the consistent development, application and enforcement of existing technical information and data standards and their promotion to others?
* how can we secure maximum public value from commercially generated information?

**#skill – working more effectively**

* what benchmarks and approaches can be developed to improve standards of work where needed and demonstrate the impact of investigative research in the historic environment?

The rationale for investment in this project is based on advocating for the continued cycle of development and understanding related to archaeological practice. It is essential to provide archaeologists with appropriate standards and guidance to ensure the outputs of archaeological works can continue to effectively contribute to and enhance current and future research agendas whilst consistently delivering public benefit and social value.

1. **Stakeholders and interfaces**

CIfA has a proven track record of working with various stakeholders and managing relationships through involvement and consultation. These stakeholders include archaeological professionals, wider heritage actors, and those in adjacent sectors, such as construction, development and the natural environment. The stakeholders for this project include those organisations producing standards and guidance for different archaeological activities and those using them to design, implement and monitor works being undertaken.

The project interfaces with the projects being undertaken as part of work package 3 under the 21CAP programme (see Table 1) but will directly feed in the work being undertaken as part of work package 3.1 *Redesign the sector's suite of standards and guidance, to produce better archaeology; and to ensure that the results of this work feed into wider heritage sector approaches to advice and standards and guidance*.

1. **Methods**

This project will be split into two phases. The first phase (this project design) will appoint a consultant to research the current landscape of standards and guidance and determine an appropriate project scope and methodology to best address the wider aims of the project. This will involve working with the project advisory board and project team to identify the parameters for search and inclusion of standards and guidance and agreeing a methodology to implement in phase 2. The project will be supported by a project team and project advisory board (that will include colleagues from the 21CAP programme and Historic England). There is a vast amount of published guidance in existence so agreeing the scope, and specifically, the criteria for search and inclusion supported by a detailed methodology are key to ensuring the project runs smoothly. After the scope has been agreed the appointed consultant will work alongside the project team and advisory board to design a suitable methodology to address the overall project aims, which subject to the agreement of an updated project design and associated costs will be implemented in phase 2 of the project.

1. **Impact**

The wider public benefit of undertaking this project will be achieved through increasing collaboration across the sector, facilitating discussion and generating a better appreciation and understanding of the role and responsibilities associated with the production and enforcement of archaeological standards and guidance. This is especially important as archaeologists undertake work in the public interest that supplements and enhances our collective understanding of the past. A past that is more frequently being called upon to inform current agendas and debates on a host of topics, for example, the ongoing climate crisis. The public are stakeholders in all archaeological works either within or outside the planning process and benefit from work that is being consistently undertaken according to recognised standards utilising good practice guidance. This project will improve the capacity of the sector to better manage and enforce the outputs from archaeological projects promoting consistency to maximise research synthesis opportunities (also a key theme in 21CAP, see work package 4 - *Turn data into knowledge by synthesising discoveries, and by sharing research findings in more accessible ways*) and support the continued cycle of knowledge generation. Sector-wide agreement and understanding on the role of standards and guidance and the responsibilities associated with their creation, promotion and enforcement will inform approaches to future guidance development leading to greater consistency in application.

The potential impact in terms of any demonstrable changes to sector practice will be difficult to pinpoint in the short and medium - terms. However, feedback and any obvious changes can be captured and monitored to a degree by repeating the project survey and comparing feedback, utilising the CIfA biannual survey and via the Registered Organisation inspection process. Further discussion can and will also be conducted via mechanisms already in place, for example, the CIfA Professional Standard Advisory Panel, HEF advisory group, and Responsible Post-holder meetings, as well as liaison meetings with ALGAO and FAME.

1. **Products, communication, engagement and archiving**

Phase 1 of the project is focused on research and scope definition. This will result in several products including a literature review and updated project design with detailed methodology for phase 2 of the project. The project (upon completion of phases 1 and 2) will produce a report that will outline the standards and guidance in use according to the search parameters agreed, highlighting overlaps, gaps and a commentary on their use, promotion and enforcement published on the CIfA and 21CAP websites. The report may include recommendations that will be followed up by a discussion with relevant organisations and the 21 CAP advisory board. The results will be presented at a future CIfA event with a piece included in *The Archaeologist* magazine. A communication plan/strategy to feed into the CIfA Standards and guidance review and update work currently taking place will be produced.

In terms of general communication and updates, the project team will keep the 21CAP project manager and colleagues up to date as the project progresses and updates will be given at 21CAP project advisory board meetings. Opportunities for external communications and social media will be carried out to ensure that relevant stakeholders are encouraged to take part in the project, and that results are communicated. CIfA will use its social media channels and email lists to communicate the work to the including on Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and LinkedIn and via e-bulletins to CIfA members.

Data derived from the project will be stored/archived on the CIfA server.

1. **Stages and tasks – phase 1**

Two stages have been outlined for phase 1 of the project with key tasks and outputs identified below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Phase 1** | |  |
| **Stage 1 Appointing a consultant and establishing project advisory board** | | **Timeframe TBC\*****\*Estimates provided below - start date may change** |
| Tasks | 1. Invite representatives to be on the project advisory board 2. Create and circulate consultant job advert for project consultant to include consultant brief (with project advisory board agreement) 3. Score advert responses 4. Interview shortlisted candidates 5. Appoint consultant | March – June 2025 |
| Outputs | • Consultant brief   * Job advert   • Scoring results survey questions  • Appointment letter and signed sub-contractor contract |
| **Stage 2 Data gathering/research to define project scope and methodology (to be undertaken by consultant in liaison with project manager)** | |  |
| Tasks | 1. Appointed consultant to meet with project team and project advisory board to discuss project plan to define project scope 2. Undertake literature review to further explore the landscape of standards and guidance in England – what guidance is available to practitioners in England (utilising HEF advisory group work as a starting point), what are practitioners referring to. 3. Discuss/seek feedback from CIfA Standards panel on the use of standards and guidance 4. Produce summary report drawing together literature review and feedback with scope/methodology recommendations 5. Discuss report and results with project advisory board (including colleagues from HE) to finalise and agree the scope and discuss an appropriate methodology to implement 6. Produce updated project design with project scope and methodology detailed for commencement of phase 2 of the project | July – September 2025 |
| Outputs | * Literature review * Notes from Standards panel meeting * Phase 1 report * Project scope as agreed by project team/advisory board * Updated project design including scope and methodology as agreed by project advisory board |
| **Phase 2 (to be submitted as updated project design with updated tasks and costs for HE review and approval)** | | |

1. **Ownership and copyright**

All intellectual property rights in the materials and records created by The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA), its employees, agents and sub-contractors for the Project archive, and all other materials created by CIfA, their employees and sub-contractors in connection with the Work (collectively “the Materials”) shall vest in CIfA.

If CIfA sub-contracts any of the Work in relation to this Agreement, or if CIfA includes in the Work or reproduces in connection with the Work any material the Intellectual Property Rights of which do not belong to CIfA, CIfA shall at CIfA’s own expense obtain from the third party concerned an assignment of such Intellectual Property Rights in its favour and any such materials shall be deemed to be Materials for the purpose of this clause.

CIfA will grant to Historic England a non-exclusive, transferable, sub-licensable, perpetual, irrevocable and royalty-free licence to use, copy, reproduce, adapt, modify, enhance, create derivative works and/or commercially exploit the Materials for any purpose required by Historic England.

CIfA waives and will procure that all its employees and sub-contractors and any other relevant third parties waive, all moral rights in the Materials in favour of Historic England.

1. **Project Team**

The project will seek to appoint a consultant to undertake the primary tasks in liaison with Jen Parker Wooding who will manage the project on behalf of CIfA. The project will be overseen Kate Geary and will report to a project advisory board consisting of representatives from across the historic environment sector including CIfA, ALGAO, FAME, Historic England, ICON, UAUK and the National Trust. The project team will liaise with colleagues already involved in projects linked to the 21CAP programme.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Member** | **Project role** | **Representing/affiliations** |
| Kate Geary MCIfA | Project Executive | Director of Learning and Skills |
| Jen Parker Wooding MCIfA | Project manager | CIfA Senior Professional Standards and Practice Coordinator |
| TBC | Project consultant | TBC |
| Carl Smith | Project Support | CIfA Marketing and Communications Manager |
| Michael Sharp | Project Support | Administrative Assistant |

1. **Health and Safety**

CIfA recognises and accepts its responsibilities as an employer for ensuring, so far as is reasonably practicable, the health, safety and welfare of its employees and other persons who may be affected by activities under the Institute's control. It will take steps to ensure that its statutory duties are always met. All work by CIfA employees conforms to the policies set out in its *Health and Safety Policy Statement*, dated December 2014. This can be accessed here <https://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/Policy%20statements%20revised%20Jan%202022.pdf>

1. **Timetable (Phase 1)**

Pending approval of this proposal, the anticipated start date of this project is March 2025. It is estimated to complete in September 2025 with phase 2 commencing (if agreed) early in 2026.

The following timetable is proposed:

|  |
| --- |
| **MARCH – JUNE 2025 - Stage 1** **Appointing a consultant and establishing project advisory board** |
| 1. Invite representatives to be on the project advisory board 2. Develop and circulate consultant job advert for project consultant (to include consultant brief) 3. Score advert responses 4. Interview shortlisted Candidates 5. Appoint consultant |
| **JULY – SEPTEMBER 2025 - Stage 2**  **Data gathering/research to define project scope and methodology (to be undertaken by consultant in liaison with project manager)** |
| 1. Appointed consultant to meet with project team and project advisory board to discuss project plan to define project scope 2. Undertake literature review to further explore the landscape of standards and guidance in England – what guidance is available to practitioners in England (utilising HEF advisory group work as a starting point), what are practitioners referring to. 3. Discuss/seek feedback from CIfA Standards panel on the use of standards and guidance 4. Produce summary report drawing together literature review and feedback with scope/methodology recommendations 5. Discuss report and results with project advisory board (including colleagues from HE) to finalise and agree the scope and discuss an appropriate methodology to implement 6. Produce updated project design with project scope and methodology detailed for commencement of phase 2 of the project |