

Buildings Archaeology Group (BAG)

CifA Groups Forum summary, Birmingham, 4 Dec 2019

2018-19 has seen the Buildings Archaeology Group (BAG) committee's determined efforts to make the Group more relevant to its large membership (over 900), and more influential within the profession. Whilst the Chair, Tim Murphy, stepped down at our May AGM after five years, he leaves us confident in the well-being of the Group. Tim worked tirelessly to help rejuvenate the committee and has been a driving force to achieve the much-needed updates to CifA Standard and guidance for Historic Building Recording. Lara Band and Megan Lloyd-Regan also stepped down; Lara had made useful progress assessing the results of our 2018 survey, which has already shaped our thinking about future initiatives for the group.

A recruiting drive after the AGM brought us three new committee members, all with considerable buildings knowledge to share: Alison Dickens, Jeremy Lake, and John Mabbitt. Charlotte Adcock is now the Acting Chair, the Group's representative on Advisory Council and Newsletter Editor. Esther Robinson Wild remains Treasurer, and is on the Board of Directors, while Gillian Scott retains the Standards and Guidance portfolio. Beverley Kerr, Tiffany Snowden and our three new recruits are Ordinary committee members. Catherine Bell from the Council for British Archaeology has become a Group advisor.

The decision to hold most of our committee meetings via Skype, supplemented by active e-mail communication, has resulted in more efficient use of resources. A meeting in York in November, with all but one-member present, gave us impetus on several issues.

Our successes so far this year have been:

1. **Standards & Guidance:** As an interim measure, Jen Parker-Wooding has now uploaded the technical revisions that BAG committee members requested to the Buildings S&G, to address superseded references and terminology in the short term. CifA are currently enhancing BAG's draft specification for a full re-write of the document, which will hopefully be put out to tender in 2020 and will include a requirement for considerable industry consultation.
2. **2019 AGM:** In May, at The Gallery, Cowcross Street, London, we were pleased to have an improved AGM turnout, and pragmatic suggestions from members. We welcomed Eva Forster-Garbutt to speak about *Buildings Archaeology at the edge of the Empire: the investigation and recording of heritage buildings in Aotearoa, New Zealand*. Eva is Senior Heritage Advisor with Wellington City Council and is a recipient of the Winston Churchill Memorial Trust Fellowship. The Fellowship was established for NZ professionals to have the

opportunity to travel the world and gain insight into the practice of their field abroad. Eva had spent three weeks visiting the UK, sharing thoughts and ideas on the similarities and differences between approaches in the UK and NZ with academics, professionals and archaeologists.

3. **CifA conference:** Whilst our proposed session for Leeds 2019 was not successful, we are pleased to be offering a walking tour and a shared workshop session at Bath in April 2020.

4. **New CPD initiative:** Charlotte Adcock has successfully organised two well-attended evening CPD sessions in York, in our Buildings Archaeology in the Pub (BAP) series. The first one was in September, where Keith Knight (Chair IHBC Yorkshire Branch) presented on the relationship between archaeology and historic buildings and the complimentary roles of architects, historic building consultants and archaeologists. Dr Kate Giles, Dr Dave Smith and Dr Matt Jenkins (University of York) also spoke about teaching buildings archaeology and mapping the skills needed for the future. At the second, in November, Jane Grenville talked about the challenges and methodology for revising the Pevsner volume for North Yorkshire. Both evenings were well received, and more such sessions are planned for 2020.

Nigel R. J. Neil, Secretary, Buildings Archaeology Group