



CIFA2021 ONLINE: ANNUAL CONFERENCE

ONLINE 2021

21 - 23 APRIL 2021

SESSION TITLE

If at first you don't succeed... sharing those failures again, 2021

SESSION ABSTRACT

The 2019 Conference in Leeds allowed us the opportunity to start a conversation about our failures. It wasn't easy. The subject matters discussed were not unusual and the topics were in the most part readily relatable. But talking openly about what went wrong, just felt new. The resounding response from those that took part in (or just listened to) the exchange was that we couldn't leave it in Leeds. So this year the conversation continues. With fresh perspectives and this time, with greater confidence, it shouldn't feel so novel.

In 2019 the papers presented personal failings; methodological failings; project design failings; and workplace failings. This year we are thinking bigger. We will be exploring the systemic and repeating failings of our sector and how we continue to create barriers (accidentally or otherwise) that prevent successful engagement with our clients and stakeholders. But don't despair; solutions will be offered too!

SESSION PROGRAMME

13:30 – 13:50	If at first you don't succeed.... just give the paper yourself! <i>Rob Sutton, Cotswold Archaeology</i>
13:50 – 14:10	The 2019 Chartered Archaeologist vote – what went wrong? <i>Kate Geary, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists</i>
14:10 – 14:30	How we failed our field teams <i>Callum Allsop, ClfA Diggers' Forum</i>
14:30 – 15:00	Open mic! Audience participation encouraged
15:00 – 15:15	Break
15:15 – 15:35	Things we thought we knew – what goes wrong in the planning process and development-led archaeology? <i>Jan Wills & Stewart Bryant, independent consultants</i>
15:35 – 15:55	Can we be catalysts for change? <i>Alex Llewellyn, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists</i>
15:55 – 16:45	Facilitated discussion: sharing failures, learning lessons <i>Rob Sutton, Cotswold Archaeology</i> <i>Kate Geary, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists</i>

SPEAKER ABSTRACTS

If at first you don't succeedjust give the paper yourself!

Rob Sutton, Cotswold Archaeology

An introduction to the session and a short discussion on the barriers that inhibit sharing stories about failures, especially when they are bigger than the actions or decisions of an individual and incorporate organisations and even the sector. Some real examples will be tabled, mostly drawn from personal experience but many will be clearly recognisable as those that are repeated across the sector.

Also, a personal reflection on 'what's wrong with me?' Why do I find it so easy to stand up and say "that's on me, I bodged that right up; I didn't see that coming at all."

The 2019 Chartered Archaeologist vote – what went wrong?

Kate Geary, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Fifteen years ago, Diggers' Forum and Prospect Archaeologists Branch held a joint day conference under the banner '*If we want to change archaeology, it's up to us*'. The topics up for discussion will come as no surprise: pay and conditions (and mechanisms for improving them), skills and training and raising the profile of archaeologists with clients and the public. On the latter point, amid calls for IFA (as we then were) to make progress on its strategic objective to gain a Royal Charter, IFA's Tim Howard cautioned delegates that chartered status should not be viewed as a 'magic bullet' to solve the problems of low pay, poor working conditions and lack of recognition. Nevertheless, IFA was tasked with an action to raise the external profile of archaeologists and an explicit aim to work towards becoming a chartered profession.

Fast forward to April 2019. Nearly five years after the Institute gained its charter and following a long period of development, ClfA members were asked to vote on a proposal for the introduction of a Chartered Archaeologist grade. The proposal provoked heated debate and divided opinion and ultimately failed to achieve the 75% majority it required to pass, much to the disappointment of those of us who had worked so hard to develop it. So what went wrong? Based on feedback from members and a great deal of personal reflection, this paper will take an honest look at what we got wrong and what we've learned from it.

How we Failed our Field Teams

Callum Allsop, ClfA Diggers' Forum

This paper will lead us through the history of a systematic failure to engage and value the engine room of our sector: the field teams. From exclusive management behaviours to a steady erosion of terms and conditions the professionalisation of archaeology has not always been a positive experience for many of our colleagues, and in particular those who fundamentally believe in the

value of fieldwork as an occupation (as opposed to vocation!). Nobody escapes the finger of blame however, with the 'pub moan' proving ultimately unhelpful in forcing change but strangely persistent nevertheless. Perhaps we have the profession we deserve after all? There may be a positive bit at the end, but this is not guaranteed.

Things we thought we knew – what goes wrong in the planning process and development-led archaeology?

Jan Wills and Stewart Bryant, independent consultants

In this paper we will look at both heartening and depressing stories from the Archaeology and Planning Case Studies project, ranging over the implementation of planning policy in development management, the resulting archaeological projects, and the lessons learned.

Can we be catalysts for change?

Alex Llewellyn, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Whether or not CS Lewis actually said '*you can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending*' it's still a good point to make!

Existing workplace cultures and pressures can have an impact on our ethical decision making and behaviours – often inadvertently, without us being aware of it until it becomes an issue, or because it's always just been like that. Using examples and guidance, I'd like to discuss how can we start to influence and address these through the power of positive leadership? How can we empower our colleagues and peers to speak up and have the confidence to ask for advice or collectively to challenge behaviours? What can we start doing now to make sure we really do change things going forward?