



BRIGHTON 2018

THURSDAY 26 APRIL

SESSION AND PAPER ABSTRACTS

16.00 – 17.30 MAXIMISING RESEARCH OUTPUTS AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER OF INTERDISCIPLINARY RESEARCH TEAMS

Organisers: Andy Howard, Landscape Research & Management
Colin Forrestal, ClfA Research Impact Group

Many modern archaeological projects are characterised by large-scale interventions, encountering multi-period remains across a range of preservation environments. Therefore, project managers have to coordinate a range of professionals collecting primary data, from field teams to specialists. Data capture is often undertaken within GIS offering the potential to present information in a variety of digital formats that can reach out beyond traditional audiences.

The opportunities afforded by such interdisciplinary working are considerable but creating project environments where communication between professions is seamless is challenging. This session aims to demonstrate:

- the success and failure of interdisciplinary working
- how interdisciplinary working allows engagement with non-traditional audiences
- best practice support for managing such projects, and communication pre-planning to post-excavation
- the role of new technologies as platforms of communication

PAPER ABSTRACTS

Making multidisciplinary archaeological projects work: case studies from the Middle Pleistocene sub-epoch through to the Tudor period, in England

Mark Roberts Institute of Archaeology, University College London

Multidisciplinary projects are now the norm in research and commercial contexts for all periods. It is perhaps the Palaeolithic which it is best known for its large-scale collaborative projects combining archaeology with the geological and environmental sciences, where stratigraphic contextualisation is so important for finds be they in situ or, more commonly, residual, at the point of excavation. However, the advent of LiDAR and GIS, together with the ability to access huge amounts of documentary data have led to greater interdisciplinary analysis of multi-period remains across a wide spatial and temporal range but especially in the later prehistoric and historic periods. The multidisciplinary work in these post-Pleistocene periods can be made extremely accessible to keen, non-professional, lay audiences, who can be engaged at a variety of levels. This paper looks at recent and current work in Sussex that illustrate the pleasures and pitfalls of interdisciplinary research teams at work.

Delivering a public Palaeolithic: research outputs and narrative reach from the archaeological record of the deep human past

Matthew Pope, Institute of Archaeology, University College London, Hannah Fluck, Historic England, Beccy Scott, British Museum and Rob Hosfield, Department of Archaeology, University of Reading

The Palaeolithic record of the UK constitutes an internationally important archive of human occupation extending back almost 1 million years. As a discipline, the Palaeolithic archaeology which has delivered this record has emerged in the past generation as heavily interdisciplinary in nature, relying heavily on earth sciences, palaeoenvironmental specialisms and scientific analysis to develop, alongside our archaeological techniques, a detailed and nuanced analysis of the ancient human occupation record. Public interest in this period is always assumed to be high, and certainly individual finds and discoveries always attract widespread media interest and apparent public engagement. But how effective are we really in feeding back the results of our work to the public, either as knowledge sharing with other heritage professionals such as HER's and museums; or direct to wider communities, challenging assumptions about human origins and bridging the technical detail with plain English accounts of very remote periods and very different worlds. This paper explores what an effective public Palaeolithic archaeology could look like and considers how we might evaluate our success in delivering it.

Between a rock and a wet place? Commercial reality, interdisciplinary research - perspectives on Seven Years of Birmingham Archaeo-Environmental

Ben Gearey, University College Cork, Emma-J. Hopla, Atkins, Kristina Krawiec, Trent and Peak Archaeology, Henry Chapman, University of Birmingham and Andy Howard, Landscape Research and Management

This paper presents a perspective on the lessons and experience gained from working within commercial archaeology, from the perspective of a University based commercial unit with a remit to generate income, whilst maximizing research outputs and knowledge transfer. Birmingham Archaeo-Environmental was established in 2005 as part of Birmingham Archaeology, and carried out variously sized commercial projects with additional involvement in research-led projects funded by bodies such as English Heritage (now Historic England) and the Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund. Many of these larger projects were by definition, interdisciplinary, of various complexities with a range of planned publication outputs, and engagements with various audiences and stakeholders. In this paper we reflect on the problems, challenges and lessons learnt from seven years of working at this interface. In particular, we consider what worked, what didn't and consider how future projects might maximize research and knowledge transfer in difficult and pressured work environments.

Rivers of Bronze: an interdisciplinary and collaborative approach to understanding communities in Britain c 2500-800 BC

Benjamin Roberts, Durham University, Edward Caswell, Durham University, Andy Howard, Landscape Research and Management, Floor Huisman, Durham University and Rob Wiseman, Oxford Archaeology East

The Rivers of Bronze project aims to forge a new integrated account of Britain's Bronze Age by drawing together the huge volume of data now available – much of it generated over the last 30 years commercially-driven excavations and the Portable Antiquities Scheme. It focusses on eight key river catchments from Cornwall to Scotland. This presentation focusses on the lessons learnt in the project's initial data-gathering phase and the application of an innovative approach to understanding Bronze Age communities in Britain (c. 2500-800 BC). It will also look ahead to three challenges facing all integrative projects in archaeology: (1) how to assimilate results from individual sites (the focus of commercial archaeology) into regional and national datasets; (2) integrating data across multiple specialities to create well-rounded and coherent pictures of life and society, and (3) how to explain change and variety across time and space. The talk will illustrate these issues with results from a case study of the eastern Fens.

Chipped stone and microchips

Fraser Brown, Oxford Archaeology North

In advance of the construction of the Carlisle Northern Development Route, Oxford Archaeology North undertook the excavation of complex prehistoric remains, including waterlogged deposits and an in-situ lithic assemblage numbering c300,000 pieces. Digital technologies were utilized in order to manage the complex data sets, effectively interpret the site, and communicate information between the various members of the research team. GIS was employed extensively to analyse the spatial composition and distribution of the lithic assemblage and the complex deposit sequence, finds and palaeoenvironmental remains in a palaeochannel. A web-based PostgreSQL database was developed to manage the site archive and ultimately act as a tool for dissemination. This project and others like it have helped to kickstart a programme of digital innovation across OA's practice, which promises to radically change the way we record and share information, both internally and externally.

Effect management of interdisciplinary teams

Jonathan Dempsey, Jacobs UK

Based on heritage and EIA co-ordination experience on large-scale infrastructure projects, Jacobs wider project experience, and Lean principles, the purpose of the paper is to share best practice to enable effective management of interdisciplinary teams and communication within these teams. The paper will explore five main themes:

- Hoshin Kanri - Shared goals and the importance of commonality of purpose
- collaborative planning (IAP) and the paramount role of programme
- focussed communication and problem solving through techniques such as exception meetings, surgeries etc
- effective information share using web-based applications (eg SharePoint, Project Mapper)
- approaches to production management of deliverables