



**Institute for Archaeologists  
London Area Group**

Minutes of the London Area Group AGM

5.30pm 8 June 2010

Clare Learning Centre, Museum of London

1. The meeting was chaired by Robert Whytehead who introduced the meeting, noting the purpose was to elect officers, committee members and agree the Constitution for the London Area Group. RW also noted some of the reasons for creating the group – to stage events and promote professional standards and the Institute.
2. Apologies: Laura Schaaf, Geoff Morley, Kathryn Stubbs
3. Election of Officers. RW outlined the rules for voting, and Robert Whytehead was elected unopposed as Honorary Chair, Geoff Morley was voted unopposed as Honorary Secretary and Roy Stephenson was elected unopposed as Honorary Treasurer. No other names were proposed.
4. Election of ordinary members of the committee. No new names were proposed from the floor and David Abell, Gary Brown, Chris Clarke, William Filmer-Sanke, Richard Meager, Laura Schaaf and Jane Sidell were all elected unopposed.
5. Adoption of the Constitution. Copies were available in the room and RW called for this to be read, considered and adopted. RW also outlined the benefits it conferred, including the ability to organize events and hold a bank account. It was accepted by the meeting.
6. Developing the mailing-list. There have been some issues with the mailing list, and RW asked for all present to disseminate details of the group widely in order to get as many people as possible in touch with the group and events.
7. RW called for suggestions for events and topics for the newsletter. The first newsletter has been issued with PPS 5 as the topic. It is proposed to have a seminar on this subject later in the year. The aim is to have several events and produce several newsletters per year – suggested topics include late post-medieval archaeology, building recording and a student event. RW also noted the group will have a web presence on the IfA central pages and this can be used for news and details of events, as well as the constitution,

meeting minutes and other documents. Christopher Constable noted that the group should be sent the web link to this page.

8. Statement from Peter Hinton, Chief Executive, IfA

PH noted it had been approximately 13 years since he had last addressed the subject of the future of London's archaeology in the Museum of London, and that whilst he may not have Calais written on his heart, he has London Archaeology enshrined in his CPD log and the London Area Group very much at heart.

PH noted that now more than ever we need a professional group for archaeology owing to the current financial and political climate, in order to maintain high standards and ethics. PH noted that IfA says in its 10-year strategic plan that 'in 2020 all archaeologists will have the skills, integrity and versatility to ensure that the study and care of the historic environment brings real benefits to people's daily lives.

A key theme to consider at the moment is that the difficult financial times have led to a 10% reduction in employed archaeologists, a 16% reduction in archaeologists and archaeological consultants and 23 million pounds a year lost to the profession in England through the decline in construction and industry. We all face very tough times with the additional issue that public sector cuts are going to be the worst since the Black Death. Local authorities will suffer which could have a significant knock-on to curatorial services (although London is fortunate in having some archaeological curation housed within English Heritage).

Nevertheless, there is good news, in the shape of PPS5. This is a radical document for the way we do business. It should mean a growth in the percentage of projects that require an archaeological component. It is not simply a revision of PPGs 15 and 16, but a new and expanded approach to the historic environment, spread more widely through the heritage sector, which will lead to more and better publication, better archives and better professional standards. It reinforces the need for accreditation and professional standards. So even in a time of diminishing markets, we can now use this guidance to ensure work is undertaken by professionally accredited people and practices, such as Registered Organisations.

PH also made reference to the discussion of the PPS at the IfA annual conference at Southport earlier this year. PPS 5 provides opportunities, if we are brave enough to take them, to move from mitigating damage to increasing understanding, from a fragmented to a collaborative approach, from recording baric to understanding and enhancing cultural significance, from preservation by record to celebration through research, and from data collection to knowledge creation.

He noted it was imperative to grasp the opportunities afforded by the PPS and not simply carry on business as usual with a few tweaks and slightly different language. There are a range of new concepts to understand and develop and it is the duty of both curators and practitioners to do this.

PH finally pointed to the importance of Continuous Professional Development and strongly supported the aspiration of the London Area Group to undertake a series of

CPD events whilst noting the importance of partnership with bodies such as the Council for British Archaeology and the Institute of Historic Building Conservation to spread our influence and also to achieve economies of scale.

PH concluded by exhorting all non-members to take an application form, and for all members to take a form and force it onto their friends.

9. AOB  
None.

The meeting was followed by an excellent lecture from Duncan Hawkins, entitled *Deptford Dockyard and the technology of the last sailing battlefleet*.