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ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVES

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The value of collaboration is also highlighted by Louise Brown, who introduces us to the South Pennines – home of the Watershed landscape project which has been recognised on a European level for its valuable work in community engagement and building sustainable legacies. Joe Altman puts forward his ideas on why archaeologists should be better at being sales people, and Kenneth Atchison compares the professions and professionals of archaeology and conservation.

IfA Archaeological Archives Group

‘All archaeological projects that include the recovery or generation of data and/archaeological materials (finds) will result in a stable, ordered, accessible archive. All archaeologists are responsible for ensuring that the archive is created and compiled to recognised standards, using consistent methods, and is not subject to unnecessary risk of damage or loss. It is the responsibility of all curators of archaeological archives to ensure that archives are stored to recognised standards for long-term preservation and made accessible for consultation.’ (IfA Standard and guidance for the creation, compilation, transfer and deposition of archaeological archives, 2009).

The above statement provides the opening Standard of the IfA’s standard and guidance relating to archaeological archives and sums up the ethos behind the recovery, investigations, reporting and conservation of archaeological materials, documentation, digital content and reports which relate to projects. The idea of access underpins much of the work we do as archaeologists and it therefore makes sense that, in order to achieve consistent access to archaeology, the creation, compilation and curation of an archaeological archive must be carried out in a well ordered and structured way.

How do we ensure that there is a consistent approach to maintaining a good archive, both within the organisation carrying out the archaeological work (and therefore creating the archive), and the repository where the archive is held? One view is that there should be similar approaches to archiving by all archaeologists and that, ultimately, all archaeological information should be placed within the public domain. Accredited members of IfA and Registered Organisations are all bound by the same Standards, the same Code of Conduct and the same guidance to dealing with archives. The platform provided by the Standard (quoted from above) is further developed by the Archaeological Archives Forum publication, Archaeological archives: a guide to creation, compilation, transfer and curation (Brown 2011) which gives detailed guidance on best practice.

Despite this, the current impression of most practitioners will be that archaeological archives are one of our biggest professional problems – and the one most difficult to deal with. The documentary archive is often inaccessible to members of the public, both physically, because access is restricted, and intellectually, because of the way it has been created and compiled. The material archive may also be inaccessible, boxed away within and organisation’s own stores or within the hard-to-reach corners of a museum. The digital archive is inconsistently dealt with and may only reside on a CD within a platform that is self-sufficient and not subject to unnecessary risk of damage or loss. It is the responsibility of all curators of archaeological archives to ensure that archives are stored to recognised standards for long-term preservation and made accessible for consultation.

The Platfor...
Both the IAA Standard for archives and the AAF guide provide a fairly simple picture of how archaeological project archives should be dealt with. We all have an important role to play; not only in producing archives for our own (and for others) research, but in making archaeological work publicly accessible. Anyone involved in the process of archaeological work (including desk-based assessments, building recording and academic work) has an equal responsibility in producing, maintaining and making accessible the archaeological archive.

The IAA Archaeological Archives Group (AAG) aims to promote the production of good and accessible archives, and to this end the committee includes representation from several areas of the heritage profession, including contracting archaeologists with responsibility for compiling and depositing archives, and museum archaeologists who accept and maintain long-term curation of those archives. To find out more about the IAA Archaeological Archives group, please go to the website at www.archaeologists.net/groups/archives.

Good practice in archaeological archives

The IAA is currently producing a guide to good practice in archaeological archives. This will be the basis for a number of workshops to be held in different parts of the country.

The committee of the IAA Special Interest Group for Archaeological Archives (AAG) represents different types of organisation and roles in the archive process (including national advisory bodies, contractors, independent archive specialists, museums and finds specialists). As a group of practitioners, we have found that meeting together and talking over issues from our perspective has proved useful in understanding each other’s roles and the day-to-day issues we face. We also felt that others working with archives could benefit from a similar process of knowledge exchange and conceived a rolling programme of workshops aimed at discussing archives with everyone involved in the archaeological process in a particular region.

Good practice in archaeological archives

The archiving crisis is seen a national issue and has even to hit the headlines on Radio 4’s Today programme (with FAME and the Society of Museum Archaeologists discussing the problem). However, it is equally helpful to examine the problem first at a regional level by bringing together planning curators, contractors, museum staff, consultants and finds specialists to talk. The idea is simple – give those people who might correspond only by e-mail or phone (or not at all) the opportunity to meet, to look at regional issues and, importantly, gain a valuable insight into each other’s roles.

The quotes highlighted through the text are taken from the feedback forms we have circulated at each of the workshops and show an encouraging picture.

The workshops

In setting up the workshops, we made the decision to hold them at low cost (£10 to IAA members and £16 to non-members), to include a year’s membership of the Archives Group, and to make it a CPD event.

Since Hertford we have held six more workshops across the country at Chester, Bath, Plymouth, York, Leicester, Fishbourne and Bury St Edmunds, and more are planned (see map). We have attracted enough people to fill places in the regions we have visited, in some areas workshops were

It’s good to talk!

Workshops in best practice

Helen Parslow
Archives Officer, Albion Archaeology

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In October 2012 we held the first workshop in Hertford Museum and attracted a good range of representatives including planning archaeologists, contractors and museum staff.

‘Clear and precise guidelines and procedures should be followed when archiving archaeological projects. Briefs should be more prescriptive and less generic’

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‘My understanding is now more up to date and I have learnt how different sections of the archaeological community work together concerning archives’

Archaeological contractors were asked to interrogate a digital archive provided by the Archaeology Data Service (ADS). The tasks set involved extracting certain information from the archive. This proved difficult if not impossible in some cases, and those attempting were frustrated, but all learnt what not to do!

‘From a contractor’s point of view it showed how important it is to structure a (digital) archive to make it accessible’

Planning archaeologists checked through a deposited archive to identify any problems (we had removed some paperwork and finds from the archive). One of our key insights gained from the workshops has been that planning archaeologists often take on trust that archives are deposited in good order, especially from organisations that worked on a regular basis in their county. We also discussed how organisations new to an area were introduced to archives practice for the first time.

‘An appreciation of the amount of work involved that checking the archive requires and the attention to detail required’

Round-table discussion

After our group sessions, we mixed up the attendees to include representatives from each role in each group (where possible) and discussed specific questions. They focused on the way archives should be considered in each part of the process, from project brief to final deposition. Each table aimed to look at the issues from one point of view.

‘The importance of thoroughly checking an archive before accepting it for deposition and – if it does not meet requirements – that you should return it until it meets an acceptable standard’

One of our most useful (and simplest) outcomes has been to enable those working within a region to meet (sometimes for the first time) and discuss these issues at a local level, to make new contacts and to start to improve archiving-related communication across the profession.

‘There is still a lack of communication between organisations eg planning, HER officers and museum archaeologists’

‘It was good to talk to curatorial and museum archaeologists, and to feel that we were all getting a better understanding of the problems we face when dealing with archaeological archives’

Over the first few meetings we met representaitves from UK museums and archaeology services and it was clear that we were all experiencing similar difficulties with archives. One of the main outputs of the workshops has been putting people together that don’t normally get to talk face to face.

‘It is important for people to know how others sectors work. The decision of one sector may affect the others. Bringing the professional community together will also streamline projects’

Although contractors and museums have had good representation at all the workshops, we have not always attracted many planning archaeologists or consultants. It has been suggested that consultants (and to some extent planning archaeologists) may not have a direct role in archiving as the contracting organisations will fulfil the archiving responsibility. However, we feel this is a point of debate – both consultants and planning archaeologists do play a vital role in providing the link between those funding the work and those contracted to do it. AAG is keen to encourage greater attendance from all underrepresented groups.

‘Gaining the different perspectives of people’s involvement with archives meant you could appreciate potential problems at different stages of a project, which could affect the archive or its preparation/deposition’

Museum staff were asked to compile an archive (rather than to check one) and were given boxes of finds with a file of mixed paperwork then asked to order it. They needed to identify anything that might be missing and to list any problems with the archive.

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Results

We have had some success stories already and the workshops are having a real impact on working practice. Hertford Museum learnt from contractors that it was difficult to work out the collection area of the museum and that clearer charging policies and
The archive is made up of digital, documentary and material information. There is no fixed format for museum deposition and it is important to check guidelines carefully prior to compiling the archive © Museums Sheffield
There is no fixed format for museum deposition policy documents, but there is guidance for professionals (e.g. Brown 2011). There are many reasons why museums have a slightly different structure to deposition guidelines and annexe a guidance. Collecting areas, storage facilities, access and research issues, resources, funding and ancillary museum documents all play a part in shaping what a museum can do and the type of material it can collect. Discussion on the time detail is encouraged and is vital to maintaining dialogue throughout the project as it saves time in the long run. It is useful for the museum to visit the site of investigation, especially in cases where it is of high archaeological significance. The museum would also encourage those involved in collecting policy to visit them to see where the material will be stored and what happens after it has been deposited.

A depositor can expect the guidance to offer a step-by-step approach to the creation, compilation and deposition procedures with that institution. This should include all the relevant forms for benchmarking and identifying the project, most importantly confirmation of deposition and the signing off of this work with the relevant body. Record management should be included as part of a focused information strategy. If the format of information can be streamlined to fit a variety of uses this too saves time and money.

Most museums direct the deposition of the digital archives to a designated digital repository, but there is a current call from museums for further guidance in this area. Most museums will accept a digital copy of the archive in a user-friendly format for use by the public or the museum in creating interpretation, but cannot act as a digital repository as they cannot guarantee the safety of digital information because of changing technology. In these cases a CD is definitely not a replacement for depositing the digital archive with a designated digital repository.

The easiest way to prevent post-excavation work from spiralling out of control is to set in place a clear finds selection strategy from the outset. Selection will be informed by the type of investigation and the expected archaeological material. It is dangerous to select or to dispose without first assessing significance. Discussion with the repository regarding the expected archaeological material. It is dangerous to select or to dispose without first assessing significance. Discussion with the repository regarding the expected archaeological material. It is dangerous to select or to dispose without first assessing significance. Discussion with the repository regarding their collecting policy will be useful and might add to any processing of material after specialist advice has been given. A repository should only accept material where relevant specialists have made recommendations for retention/discard. Space is at a premium but parts of an archive should not be sacrificed unless both sides agree that it is unlikely to unduly affect the archaeological record or be influenced by later advancements in archaeological techniques and processes. This should be discussed at the archive preparation stage.

Pitfalls in stepping away from the prescribed process in the preparation of archaeological archives are unfinished/incomplete archives, lack of specialist reports, missing records, poorly documented records, poorly packaged materials and ultimately refusal from the museum to take the archive leading to an increase in cost of the long term care of the archive to the contractor.

You can expect a museum which agrees to take an archaeological archive to provide you with archive deposition standards at the beginning of a project. The museum should have the ability in house to act as a point of contact at all stages of the project and to advise on any queries that arise. The museum on agreeing to deposition is agreeing to store all archive material to accepted standards, to provide access to archives, to facilitate research and to interpret the archive and engage the general public. If it cannot agree to these basic principles then it should not be agreeing to the deposition of archaeological archives.

Helen gained a BA (Hons) in Archaeology from the University of Wales – Newport in 2003 and an MA in Museum Studies via distance learning from the University of Leicester in 2009. Helen is currently the Curator of Archaeology for Museums Sheffield. Her previous posts include Collection Assistant (BANES Council), Documentation Assistant (Bristol City Council), Researcher (Bristol City Council) and Museum Assistant (Merthyr Tydfl Council). Helen has hands-on experience of dealing with a wide range of archaeological archives, including those that would be classed as rescue. Helen has been member of the Institute for Archaeologists since 2008 and is currently secretary of the IAA Archaeological Archives Group.
LEARNING FROM INHERITED ARCHIVES

Samantha Paul
Research Fellow, School of Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology, University of Birmingham

I have inherited an archive, and it’s a big one! To be a bit more precise, I am now the custodian of a medium sized and now closed archaeological organisation’s entire archive: the results of approximately 25 years of excavations, evaluations, watching briefs, historic building surveys and any number of other project types I am sure to come across. It is my job to ensure that each and every one is properly deposited with the appropriate repository, a daunting task to say the least.

Although this makes an odd topic for an article, it is a problem which is perhaps not as unique as archaeologists would hope. I am sure most reading this issue of *The Archaeologist* are aware of the closure of at least one archaeological organisation as a result of the recent economic downturn – and when the dust settles and the ink has dried on those P45s, what is left of those companies and organisations? Hopefully some good memories and plenty of site hut stories, a library of grey literature reports and publications, as well as (in most cases) a number of physical archives. These archives may be stored within the archaeological organisation’s archives and finds store, but can overspill into offices, garages, lofts… a familiar tale. What is of paramount importance at the first sign of any closure, restructuring or even downsizing of offices, is that someone is responsible and ensures that the archaeological archive is not foreseen circumstances (Brown 2011), and it is also worth noting that, in the event of the liquidation or closure of an archaeological organisation, there are BFA guidance notes in place for administrators and liquidators which do refer specifically to the treatment of the archaeological archive (www.archaeologists.net/profession/recession).

An extreme example of the mismanagement of archaeological archives after the collapse of a commercial organisation left one museum having to rescue the discarded boxes, files and finds from a skip. Not only does this provide a sobering story, but the situation which followed was hampered by many of those niggling issues which many of us who work with archives are very familiar with. Taken on single archives, such problems seem small – they are annoying and add time to the process, but they can be dealt with. The problem with an inherited archive is that you are faced with a mountain of unfamilial sites, often coming to the material with little experience of it, hoping everything is well documented, in order and ready to go.

One of the most important and time-consuming issues highlighted by that extreme example was the lack of transfer of title for the majority of the sites included. Attempting to contact landowners and gain their consent to deposit an archive long after the event is (as those who have tried are aware) a frustrating process for someone who knows the site, let alone someone who doesn’t. If the project paperwork with contact details are included you may be lucky, but even then the owner/ company may have moved on, gone bankrupt, or simply don’t reply. When they do, they often want to know what is so important in the archive that they have to sign away their rights to it. In the past I have been known to open and photograph the contents of every box of finds to prove to a landowner they are not losing out before any documents were signed. The lack of a paper trail from the start of the project can cause serious issues when dealing with inherited archives – starting with the basic question of what should be in the archive. Oftentimes it may be unclear if all the finds are present or some are still with specialists, if all plans or photographs are in the boxes and rolls and if any are stored digitally. A clear conservation record is also vital. In some cases, the report may contain some of the information needed but with older archives there may never have been one; many of the rescue excavations of the 1980s resulted in nothing more than a site notebook! In these cases, there is the added complexity of inheriting the archive (that should have been deposited long ago) from an unreported and unpublished site, attempting to establish its contents and significance for future research.

Back to the rescued archive and another problem was that much of the material was not sorted or collated in preparation for deposition. As a result boxes weren’t labelled or packed to museum standards and a review of the material for selection and retention had to be undertaken. This time-consuming and costly process seems to be a common feature of inherited archives. Once the organisation which undertook the original investigation has closed, there is unlikely to be access to funding which can cover the work. One way to reduce this problem is to task other organisations to help with the process, preparing archives for deposition with a museum. However, commercial organisations require support and advice from the relevant repositories, with a number of institutions needing support from the same people. Even once the archives had been processed to an acceptable standard, the cost of physically depositing with the museum had to be considered; who was going to cover it? Often planning conditions are signed off before the completion of the post-excavation work, meaning the client no longer has a vested interest in the archive; and some historic conditions never specifically required deposition with a museum to begin with.

In general, people within the heritage sector want to do what is right by the archive and we are all aware that they are all that remains of a site. In the case highlighted here, the museum did all that they could to ensure the material was appropriately dealt with and some of these sites were included in the organisation provided as much information as they could. It is reasonable to expect that not everyone in similar situations will be so helpful, a sad but understandable reaction to the extremely stressful situation that will lead to the closure of a company or the loss of employment. In developer-funded archaeology, many employers may feel forced to move people from project to project, keeping staff employed and finishing reports – finding little time for staff to deal with and the archive. Within an active company, this is a problem that can allow an unsorted and undocumented archive to build up quickly. If an organisation closes, a small problem of time allocation can turn into something no archaeologist would want to see. We may be shocked that an archaeological archive could end up in a skip, but in circumstances where there is little documentation, little time, no resource and no-one responsible, it is not so inconceivable. Awareness of the importance of the archives is definitely improving.

However, many archives (both historical and recent) that could be deposited remain in storerooms, garages and lofts. There are challenges (such as archives from counties with no repositories) but in reality, they only account for a small percentage of those awaiting deposition. In addition, there are archives developed outside the planning process, from university excavations and community projects, and those long ago put in the attic for safe keeping that surely someone will discover and inherit one day. Although we cannot predict the collapse of an organisation, and planning workload on the assumption that one day we may lose our jobs is not the way forward. However, many problems can be avoided with communication, organisation, documentation and following procedures which have long been in place.

So what issues am I going to have dealing with my inherited archive? In the case of the archive I will be working on, I do have some clear advantages. This is not an abandoned archive and I have previously worked at the organisation and therefore know a small number of the projects very well. I know how projects were managed at the organisation and also have access to the paper trail, the management files and project databases. The institutional body within which the company was based is committed to seeing the archive project through to its full conclusion and, in that sense, I have the support of my employers. Only time will tell if there are major issues to come.

How can these situations be avoided? It’s not too complicated; start the archive process at the beginning of a project, not as an afterthought; keep an eye on the paper trail; and, wherever possible, deposit the archives with the museum – they really do want them!

Samantha Paul BSc AIfA 5630

Sam is a Research Fellow at the Centre for Archaeological Studies within the School of Classics, Ancient History and Archaeology at the University of Birmingham. Sam joined the commercial arm of the department in 2006 and has worked extensively within Cambidgeshire, Herefordshire and the Midlands, project managing a variety of commercial and research excavations. As a Research Fellow, a major part of her role is to compile, analyse and deposit the archival material from Birmingham Archaeology, the results from 25 years of commercial and research excavations. Sam has a particular interest in prehistory, landscape archaeology and heritage as a public asset and is currently compiling the publications for several large scale excavations as well as undertaking a PhD.

One extreme example of the mismanagement of archaeological archives within the process of a commercial company closing left one museum having to rescue the discarded boxes, files and finds from a skip… something all archaeologists still want to be repeated. In order to prevent such extreme cases happening again, archives must be managed effectively while projects (and organisations) are still current © Walter Newton
Selection, retention and dispersal

Lorraine Mepham
Senior Project Manager, Wessex Archaeology

It is as true today as it was in 1993 to say that ‘an issue as sensitive as selection, retention and dispersal inevitably arouses a wide range of opinions within the museums and archaeological profession’ (SMA 1993, 3). Twenty years after the publication of the Society of Museum Archaeologists’ guidelines, while there is at least a grudging agreement that the subject needs to be considered seriously, it seems that the SMA has still not succeeded in its stated aim of establishing ‘a consensus of opinion and practice which will find general acceptance’ (ibid.). This may be at least partly due to the fact that the guidelines were so general as to offer little detailed guidance to practitioners, and their interpretation has been widely variable.

What has happened in the intervening 20 years? The AAF guidelines of 2007 were revised in 2011 to include a beefed-up section on ‘Selection and retention’, this boldly states up front that ‘it is recognised that not all material collected or produced during an archaeological project will be worthy of preservation in perpetuity’ (Brown 2011, 23), and also recognises that other elements of an archaeological archive apart from the finds may be subject to selection (paper records, photographs, digital data). However, it is still only the minority of museums in England and Wales that include sections on selection and retention in their guidelines, and those that do tend to be those in the larger urban centres, which might expect to encounter correspondingly larger assemblages.

A quick and fairly random straw poll of different finds research groups suggests that few have addressed the question directly. The Medieval Pottery Research Group’s Minimum standards document of 2001 recommends that ‘all pottery from archaeological contexts is retained for the benefit of future researchers, with the possible exception of large quantities of kiln waste, for which a sampling strategy should have been established.’ (MPRG 2001, 17, emphasis as published). Further guidance on the subject is currently being prepared by the Group (G. Perry pers. comm.), but against a background of anecdotal evidence suggesting that some specialists feel, rightly or wrongly, that a recommendation to retain an assemblage, however well justified within a research framework, may prejudice their chances of further work in that area.

It is perhaps unfortunate that the current debate on selection has been at least partially sparked by the reality of rapidly shrinking museum storage space. The argument that we have to think about selection because there is no longer room to keep everything is not necessarily conducive to rational discussion. This is a particularly sensitive issue when dealing with backlog or ‘legacy’ archives, where the appropriate level of analysis has not taken place, for whatever reason. While simple logistics and the limitations of backlog paper and early digital records, may dictate that these archives should not be retained in full, surely we cannot just consign them to the skip in the knowledge that valuable data may be lost to future research?

This is just one aspect of what may be interpreted as tension between museums and contractors and which can be boiled down to the simple question of who gets to make the decisions about selection and retention. But it really isn’t that simple. Speaking as a specialist, I would expect to have a fairly major input into any selection and retention policy applied to my specialist material, but I would be happy to discuss this with the receiving museum – Helen Harman feels, rightly or wrongly, that a recommendation to retain an assemblage will prejudice her chances of further work in that area.

There is another aspect that also needs to be considered. Where museums can overcome their fear of de-accessioning, collections can be reviewed with a view to identifying elements considered to be of limited or no potential for future research. Southampton Museum (for example) conducted an exercise which graded archives according to quality, eliminating those deemed to be “inextricably below current standards” (D.H. Brown pers. comm.). Other examples are derived from work which my own organisation has been conducting with Winchester, Salisbury and Dorset County Museums, which has resulted in the redaction of collections of ceramic building material and flint from field walking exercises, but accompanied by a recording process that can now provide a consistent dataset for these unique collections. Not everyone will agree with this process, but these are assemblages which, if excavated now, would routinely be dealt with on a much more selective basis. On the other hand, the archive review process can also help to highlight forgotten assemblages with good research potential. This was the case in Dorset County Museum where the review rediscovered gypsum recovered from grave linings in a Romano-British cemetery. These fragments retained the impressions of the individuals in the graves, sometimes as just body shapes, and sometimes as clearly preserved textile impressions from body wrappings. This assemblage was identified as having high research potential and Bradford University has since expressed an interest in using it for ongoing research.

Where do we go from here? Clearly the subject needs much more open discussion, and a continuing dialogue between museum curatorial staff and those producing archaeological archives, be they contractors, or those working in academic or amateur spheres. To this end, a workshop on the subject was held at the LAARC (Museum of London) in November 2013 providing useful debate on the topic and (perhaps) providing a starting point for similar discussions around the country.

Lorraine Mepham
BA FSA MIA 4620

Lorraine has worked in archaeology for more than 30 years, for the last 28 years for Wessex Archaeology. She is primarily a finds specialist, particularly in pottery and other ceramics, and for several years ran the WA finds department. She is now a Senior Project Manager in the post-excavation team, where she runs post-excavation programmes, but also still undertakes finds analysis and reporting. She also has responsibility for maintaining and depositing WAs archives, a role she has filled intermittently for 20 years, and which continues alternately to challenge, frustrate and inspire her. Lorraine is on the Committee for the BA Archaeological Archives Group.

When old things come to light! A finds review at Dorset County Museum rediscovered a number of gypsum fragments recovered from grave linings in a Roman-British cemetery. These fragments were identified as having high research potential and Bradford University has since expressed an interest in using it for ongoing research. © Wessex Archaeology.
The aim of ARCHES is to produce a European archival standard that will be applicable in any state that cares to adopt it, during an archaeological project and identified for long-term preservation, including artefacts, ecofacts and other environmental remains, waste products, scientific samples and also written and visual documentation in paper, film and digital form.

An archaeological project is ‘any programme of work that involves the collection and/or production of information about an archaeological site, assemblage or object in any environment, including in the field, under water, at a desk or in a laboratory. Examples of an archaeological project include: intrusive projects such as excavation, field evaluation, watching brief, surface recovery and the destructive analysis of objects; non-intrusive projects such as landscape or building survey, aerial survey, remote sensing, off-site research such as desk-based assessment and the recording of objects or object assemblages. The re-investigation of archives in curatorial care also constitutes an archaeological project’.

There is an important difference here between the definition of an archive presented in the AAF Guide and the ARCHES version. The latter defines an archaeological archive as the product of an archaeological project (hence the subsequent definition of a project). This is important because it recognises the final transition of an archive from something that was initially defined by the project into a component of a greater resource, in the form of an archaeological collection, which is curated within an established repository. The end of a specific project is therefore seen not only as the dissemination of the results but also the addition of those results to the overall sum of knowledge. That knowledge should transcend political boundaries and the aim of the ARCHES project is to do just that, through the promotion of good practice and the principle of international co-operation and exchange.

The associated guidance, currently being completed following wider consultation (which took place this year at the IfA Archaeological Archives Group AGM), will describe how the core standard can be applied according to the particular organisational and methodological circumstances of individual states. To this end the standard and the guide will be disseminated in native languages, in order to reach as many practitioners as possible. Subsequent work packages, culminating in a programme for sustainability, have the same aim; shared responsibility for making everything we do universally accessible.

For further information visit the website at http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archesWiki.jsp?page=ARCHES%20Introduction
ACCESS TO ARCHIVES

Karen Avery
Buildings Historian and Heritage Researcher, Archangel Heritage

As someone who has worked for many years with both archaeological archives and the more traditional non-archaeological variety (considered, for the purposes of this article, to be those deposited within record offices, local studies libraries and galleries and museums, rather than those held in privately created collections within businesses and other bodies) it is striking how many of the same challenges and issues face both.

Of the many challenges encountered when working with archaeological archives, the recurring issue of access seems to be the most difficult to overcome. Circular discussions revolving around how to facilitate better access to archives have been running for years. Articles have been written, studies have been made, forums have been set up, strategies have been suggested and guidelines have been written. Yet turning these ideas and models into practice has not been universal and there remains a worryingly large quantity of undeposited archives within archaeological organisations. Encouraging archaeological organisations to deal with their archives as part of the project process and to publish, publish, publish is the obvious answer - but this is just not happening on a suitable scale.

So can the wider world of archives offer any solutions? Similar preservation and access challenges are faced, yet there is a perception that non-archaeological archives are easily accessible. Certainly, there is a network of county record offices, and local studies libraries all holding collections to which public access is the norm. But is this a distorted view? Access to such collections entails visiting in person, and it is misleading to think that everything can be researched fully online.

Digitisation is often regarded as the answer to all access problem, but there are issues raised by the creation of digital data and dissemination, especially that of data preservation, which becomes more pronounced when repositories have limited resources. Practical solutions are available, of course, including depositing with ADS, and signposting through OASIS, but this may not be suitable for all archaeological projects.

In the non-archaeological world, dissemination of digitised catalogue entries describing archive material through centralised hubs can offer a parallel. Access to Archives www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/ perhaps being the best known. This database contains catalogue descriptions of archives held locally in England and Wales, dating from the 8th century to the present day. This is a good way to locate archives, as long as it is borne in mind that these entries are just the tip of the iceberg and represent only a portion of what has been catalogued. And that is not even addressing the miles and miles of shelves of uncatalogued archives at various locations throughout the UK.

Different approaches to raising awareness of what archive repositories hold are increasing. Some archive collections have been digitised wholesale due to recognition of increased interest in certain types of archival records, the UK census records of 1841 – 1911 being perhaps the best known example. However, this is ambitious, and relatively rare. Collections as a whole are not usually digitised in this way, but rather parts of collections will be digitised, highlighting ‘treasures’ or focusing upon a particular theme. There has thus been a huge increase in the types of records which can now be accessed digitally, especially over the last five years or so, and such digitisation projects are now being created specifically to raise the profile of and enable access to archive material.

The National Archives, in partnership with the National Railway Museum, has recently launched an online resource, All change!, which charts the history of how railways have affected peoples’ lives over the last two centuries. It brings together railway collections of The National Archives and the National Railway Museum, using video, photography and data visualisations to broaden access to historical records and railway heritage (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/railways/).

Of particular interest is the Explore your archive toolkit, created by The National Archives. Aimed at
Let's get sorted: archaeological archives as a basis for outreach and family activities at Leeds museums and galleries

Lucy Moore
Curator, World War 1, Leeds Museum Discovery Centre

As part of the Festival of British Archaeology 2013, Leeds Museums and Galleries created a programme of events to involve sites that are key to the service's archaeological collections.

The programme for the fortnight included sessions such as:

- Cannonballs and dawnstones: where geology confuses archaeology
- West Yorkshire hoard talk
- tours of Armley Mills Industrial Museum, teaching visitors to begin reading industrial buildings, as well as a practical industrial archaeology session
- numismatic coin handling sessions based on Funny money – alternative currencies and also Animals in the Ancient World (particularly those displayed at Leeds City Museum)
- Kirkstall Abbey, using the Art in the Abbey framework to celebrate Cistercian floor tiles from the excavation archive. Our collaborative doctoral student candidate also gave a tour on the Guest House complex, based on his research.

Karen Averby
MA PGCert Arch Hist (Oxon)
AfA 2153

Karen is a freelance buildings historian and research consultant, working as Archangel Heritage for commercial and private clients across the heritage sector. A trained archaeologist with a degree in History and Classical Studies, a Masters degree in Archaeology and a post-graduate qualification in Architectural History, she has worked within heritage since 1997. Before moving to private consultancy, she worked in various roles combining archaeology, archives and architectural history at the University of Birmingham, Birmingham Archaeology, The National Archives and the Church of England. She is a research volunteer for Birmingham Conservation Trust and recently joined design review advisory panel, AE17.

Old habits die hard, of course, and mindsets can be difficult to change. But thinking tangentially into ways of encouraging the use of archaeological archives can only be positive. Regarding an archaeological archive as a future resource, as a legacy, rather than the remains of a project, together with recognising potential user groups would be a good start. In the main, the wider archive world recognises the value of archival material and is producing a wealth of interesting and engaging projects using existing collections. Of course, such approaches will not be suitable for all archaeological projects, but understanding and recognising the potential of those that are is key.

It is encouraging to see projects such as the outreach activities organised by Leeds Museums and Galleries (see Lucy Moore’s paper below), and the English Heritage-funded pilot scheme using urban archaeological archives at Ipswich and Nottingham. The latter project will develop secure, ordered archives from rescue excavations which took place prior to 1990 and provide online access to their contents. The pilots will form the basis for a wider strategy to open access to important archives whose contents have yet to be synthesised, as part of its wider programme to provide last-resort funding to significant historic environment projects, where knowledge would otherwise be lost (www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/protection/national-heritage-protection-plan/plan/activities/83).

UK and Irish archives, it was designed to help create events and promote stories relevant to collections and communities, the aim being ‘to increase public awareness of the essential role of archives in our society, to celebrate our network of collections and emphasise the skill and professionalism of the sector’. (www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/archives-sector/explore-your-archive-toolkit.htm)

More traditional methods also used include exhibitions and outreach projects, working with local schools and other organisations, which have been used to great effect in the archaeological world as well, though not often with a consideration of the archive angle. Part of the problem is bound up with the way archives are regarded; archaeological archives are often last on the list in terms of project management and although some organisations have dedicated archive staff, archive-associated activity is often overlooked, leading to back-log issues, or is assigned to people as a last resort in periods of ‘downtime,’ which can lead to inconsistencies and bad practice.

Perhaps surprisingly to some (in the world of non-archaeological archives), it is not unusual for some archives to be relegated to basements or annexe, with a lone archivist managing important collections, often working part-time, while record offices and local studies archives are often amongst the first to face council budgetary cuts in times of financial difficulty. Yet despite such restraints, the archive sector manages to forge ways to raise the profile of their collections through various mediums, thereby encouraging and facilitating access.
Thwaite Mills Watermill, working within the ecological framework of the sight and looked at archaeological waste products, as well as analysing our own rubbish.

Planning for all these activities began shortly after I returned from the Archaeological Archives Forum discussion of Archaeological archives and museums 2012. What stuck in my mind, after the day of stimulating discussion, was how there was not just a responsibility for me to make sure the archives at Leeds Museums were documented, researched and preserved, but more importantly how would I raise and discuss the issues surrounding the archaeological archives and their management to the people of Leeds who own the collections and support our work.

Leeds Museum Discovery Centre is our purpose-built store and is a place where we have developed a varied and exciting activity programme. From a practical perspective it is the perfect location for sessions dealing with an archaeological archive. We are the store - let us teach you about storage! I think it would be fair to say that even for museum archaeologists, putting the entertainment into archaeological archives can be a challenge. However, by working on the principle that if we are inspired, others will be too, the team at the Discovery Centre built a family workshop based on the journey an archive would take once it leaves the hands of the archaeologists. The format used a recently received small archive from Monkbridge Ironworks as a case study for the journey from archaeological to museum object.

Experience shows that visitors get a lot of satisfaction from seeing and experiencing what goes on behind the scenes and from knowing the detail of processes. To build on this, we used the archive itself to explain (beginning at the front door) how an archive was dealt with. There was initial discussion about what they thought a store to be like and then an introduction to what an archaeological archive actually was: objects, but also plans, reports, photographs, digital information. We ran through the all-important question of how we ensure the archive is really ours, object entry and transfer of title forms. We explained that each archive only needed one set of forms (because the group was there a few days after it had arrived, they had already been completed) and that this was good museum practice. We then kept the attendees conditions checking forms and showed them how we clean certain objects using swabs and water. At this point, the objects from the archive (industrial slag) were substituted for sea shells, which were cleaned and marked using the principle of our accessioning number system. These codes show the collection, date of entry to the museum and the number of objects in each acquisition. Each object's number is then attached to its record on the Museum Service database which gives it a location in the store. We also discussed suitable packaging for different materials, such as paper records as opposed to the iron slag. Teaching people the different ways to package an object really does give them an insight into all the small decisions that are made every step of the way when organising your archive.

Having cleaned, identified and created records for our objects, they were then packed appropriately and labelled. We then discussed how to find room for our new and exciting archive. First, we showed our visitors the freezer through which all objects entering the store must pass to be frozen at minus 28 degrees for 3 days in order to check that neither object nor packaging has any pests hidden within. Then, using directions around the zones of the store, they located where (once it came out of the freezer) our archive would be stored, safe for many more generations.

In the build-up to the Festival of British Archaeology event, we trialled let’s Get Sorted as an outreach activity, visiting a community archaeology project in Leeds to make them aware of what happens once the finds and records move away from an excavation. This particular event had certain IT challenges, in that the promised computer was absent but, based on its success, one of the participating community groups booked in to visit the Discovery Centre for the full workshop. What began as a ‘let’s try it and see’ exercise has become part of the regular activities we can offer to groups and members of the public. With further archives arriving, the context of the workshops will continue to alter, which will mean that the workshop itself will be different every time. We’ve had positive feedback, both from the visitors who came through the Festival of Archaeology, as well as from the different groups we’ve worked with.

The work here in Leeds goes to show that the process and challenges of archaeological archives can be adapted to inspire people. As a result, the workshops act to raise the profile of issues surrounding archaeological archives in general, getting people to engage in the debates that can keep curators awake and showing the point, purpose and value of good archival practice for everyone.

Lucy Moore BA (Hons) MA

Lucy currently works for Leeds Museums & Galleries as Project Curator: World War One. Prior to this, again at Leeds Museums she was Archaeology Curator covering maternity leave. Her first love is numismatics and she has previously worked on a variety of collections, including those at the Ashmolean Museum. An initial wide-ranging Modern History degree and an MA in Medieval Studies means that interdisciplinarity is key to her practice.
DISCUSSION: meeting the challenge

Where does all this leave us? There are few within the archaeological profession who can now be unaware of the challenges and issues facing those working with archaeological archives in whichever way. They are well documented, and most recently have been encapsulated in the survey and report Archaeological Archives and Museums 2012 (Edwards 2013). Before that, many recommendations were published within the Southport report in 2011.

To some extent these problems have been exacerbated by the current economic climate, which has had a significant impact on the profession. In commercial organisations, archive-related posts may be at risk; indeed, the whole business may be at risk, leading to stores full of ‘orphaned’ archives, a potential toxic legacy for someone else to inherit. In this situation we must try and ensure that the primacy of the archive is maintained and that archives become more integral to the project process rather than being a final ‘add-on’, thus reducing those end-of-project archive problems (eg lack of funds to complete, difficulties in pursuing transfer of title, etc). In this situation it is encouraging to see national guidelines promoted (Brown 2011) and a new European initiative.
In museums, curatorial staff are faced with the erosion of specialist archaeological posts and heavy workloads. Practical concerns such as funding, managing an ever increasing catalogue of archives and the associated documentation alongside a growing public enquiry service means the time set aside to deal with this type of acquisition is minimal: experience, expertise and support is essential. It is important that the profile of the role the museum plays in the process is promoted and that the need for a specialist to carry out this type of work is reinforced. Continuing discussion between museum staff and organisations producing archaeological archives is also crucial for a consideration of important questions such as selection and retention policies.

If the workshops on good archive practice have taught us one thing, it is that communication is crucial, across the profession, and that everyone understands each other’s role in the process. The workshops brought together people from various backgrounds who wouldn’t necessarily meet as a matter of course, and the discussions they instigated were most fruitful. It is to be hoped that the channels of communication opened up here will continue to function. Future training to encompass the roles that a variety of partners play in the process should be advocated, especially within educational institutions with students carrying out archaeological investigations as part of their courses. By understanding the process and working together it is possible to achieve the successful creation, compilation and transfer to a museum of an archaeological archive on time, on budget and in a structured format.

And a museum store should not be the end of the line for our archives – they should be accessible to all for a variety of purposes, not just academic research, but also as a means to engage the community. It is their heritage, after all.

Archaeological archives are not just what remains at the end of the project, but begin life at the planning stages and continue to grow. As we excavate, clean, conserve, report, teach, investigate and explore our archaeological sites, the archive has to be compiled and managed effectively…

References


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In 2012–13, research was carried out into the UK’s labour markets of both archaeology and conservation, two similarly sized and comparable parts of the wider cultural heritage sector. The archaeological research was undertaken by Landward Research Ltd and the conservation study was undertaken by Icon, the Institute of Conservation. The archaeological research was undertaken by Landward Research Ltd on behalf of the Lifelong Learning Programme of the European Commission, English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Cadw and the Department of the Environment (Northern Ireland), and was the fourth in the series of five-yearly studies known as Profiling the profession. The conservation study was undertaken by Icon, the Institute of Conservation, on behalf of Arts Council England, English Heritage and the Heritage Lottery Fund. Both research projects were led by me.

How many people

The first point of reference for these studies was the estimated head-counts: how many people worked in these sectors. There were estimated to be 4,792 people working as professional archaeologists in the UK in 2012–13 and 3,175 conservators. Of course, some of these people will have been counted by both surveys – at least 88 people are archaeological conservators.

Changes over time

The way the data on archaeologists were gathered was consistent with the previous Profiling the profession surveys, and so reliable time-series datasets allow us to see real changes over time. From the first Profiling the profession snapshot in 1997–98, archaeology grew and grew until the 2007–08 survey captured data at the peak of the economic boom – and by 2012–13, the economic impacts of the post-2008 changes meant that archaeology as a profession had shrunk considerably, having reduced to being more than that which was calculated as the median salary for conservators. By comparison, £26,500 was the median figure for the UK workforce as a whole – and the median for all professional occupations was £16,359.

So archaeologists and conservators are rewarded very similarly, and slightly less well than the whole UK working population – and far less than the professional occupations which both sectors would like to be compared with.

Gender and age

The ‘average’ archaeologist was aged 42 in 2012–13; five years previously, the average age of a working archaeologist was 38. This suggests that the workforce, while much smaller in number, had not been refreshed in terms of who worked in the sector – people leaving archaeology at the end of their careers had, by and large, not been replaced by young people coming in at the start of their working lives. Most (54%) archaeologists are men, but over time, the percentage of archaeological jobs that have been held by women has been increasing (fifteen years before, 65% of archaeologists were men). Most archaeologists under the age of 30 are women. By contrast, 65% of conservators in 2012–13 are women – and this profession is also becoming ‘more female’ – forty years ago, in 1973, 62% of conservators were men; in 1987, only 40% were. And by comparison, the average age of conservators is 45.

Qualifications

In both professions, it is normal to be a graduate. 78% of conservators hold at least one degree, as do 93% of archaeologists. Indeed, it is increasingly normal for archaeologists to hold post-graduate qualifications, with 47% holding a Masters degree or higher.

Attitudes to training

While individuals are highly qualified, organisational approaches to training are patchy.

In conservation, the overwhelming majority of organisations identify training needs for individual members of staff, with nearly as many identifying organisational needs. But most organisations in conservation do not have a training plan or a training budget. Only a minority record how much time is spent in training or evaluate the impact of training on individuals, and even fewer evaluate the impact of training upon the organisation. The overwhelming majority encourage individuals to engage in their own continuing professional development. In archaeology, organisations typically identify training needs for individual members of staff and for the organisation as a whole and they also encourage individuals to engage in continuing professional development. They are likely to have a training budget but they do not normally have a formal training plan. While they will normally record the amount of time employees spend on training activities, they then do not typically evaluate the impact of that training on either the individual or the organisation as a whole.

So – in both sectors, employers recognise that there are needs; in archaeology there will normally be a budget to help address these needs, although that is not the case in conservation – and in neither sector is it normal for there to be a training plan. So money is spent in an unplanned way, and then the impact of that spend is not then evaluated, so organisations cannot tell whether this expenditure has represented value for money or not.

Attitudes to business

While there are many similarities between the two sectors, attitudes to business is one where there are real differences. 59% of archaeologists work in the private sector, as do 38% of conservators, but the degree of engagement with the market, together with the understanding and attitudes that accompany that, differ significantly. A telling comment from a respondent to the Conservation LM4 survey showed confusion over what is income, what is profit (and no doubt what is cashflow): ‘We are a non-profit organization. We don’t have “income” as such.’

A revealing figure – not reported in either report – is that of the 241 practices (organisations or individual conservators) listed on the Conservation Register maintained by Icon, approximately 75% do not present website addresses. By contrast, only one of the 73 IFA Registered Organisations listed on the IFA’s Directory does not have a website (and that is because that organisation has been recently incorporated into another business on the Register). Unlike archaeological practice, conservation has a limited engagement with technology and its use as a promotional tool, which must hamper opportunities for business development.
The future

Slowly and unsteadily, a post-crash rebound is underway. Both archaeology and conservation collectively and cautiously expect to grow over the next three to five years – but there is not a sense of this taking place in the context of these being high-growth industries. Business models in both sectors are changing in line with expectations of low levels of growth – such as commercial practices delivering increasing numbers of ‘community’ projects to ensure turnover rather than surplus, alongside an increase (or return) of social enterprises as a commonly adopted model for new practices.

The bigger picture

Many of the issues identified in archaeology and conservation are shared by professions across all of ‘cultural heritage’ but collective work across the entire sector would be difficult, as individual professionals do not typically associate themselves with such a broader ‘cultural heritage sector’. Instead they strongly identify themselves with their own individual profession, which they do not see as a subsector of a greater whole. If pan-sectoral work is a non-starter, then joint working between closely related professions – such as archaeology and conservation – could strengthen these areas. It might also support skills development overall if means were found for specialists to share their expertise – but this is going to be hampered by the problems in the ways that training is planned, budgeted and delivered in both sectors.

Opportunities

There are still real opportunities – qualifications can be aligned. If comparable vocational qualifications are placed on the Qualifications and Credit Framework – such as the EDI Level 3 NVQ Certificate in Archaeological Practice, which is on the QCF, and the Conservation Technician Qualification, which is currently not – then there would be potential for new entrants to the cultural heritage professions to go through workplace learning experiences that would first introduce them to the broader experience of working in cultural heritage and then to specialise in specific, technical routes. These learning and skills accreditation experiences could then potentially be formalised as Apprenticeships.

Shared training opportunities and communication activities can enhance understanding between the professions, and archaeology and conservation can lead the way across cultural heritage, as we already have the extremely unusual crossover of some people – archaeological conservators – who have shown that they understand and appreciate the needs and approaches of working embedded within two professions.

This article will also appear in Icon News, Issue 49, November 2013.

References


Kenneth Aitchison MA PhD FSA FSA Scot RPA MIA 1398

kaitchison@icon.org.uk

kenneth.aitchison@landward.eu

Kenneth Aitchison has over 20 years’ experience of working in cultural heritage and skills development. He owns Landward Research Ltd, an international consultancy which focuses on human capital, knowledge management, capacity building and information systems structures. He also works for Icon, the Institute of Conservation, delivering the National Conservation Education and Skills Strategy, a sectoral approach to enhancing the future capabilities of professional conservators and he is European Project Coordinator for York Archaeological Trust, bringing together 22 partners from 20 European states in a transnational labour market intelligence analysis project principally funded by the European Commission.

Jobs in British archaeology 2012–13

Doug Rocks-Macqueen

This is the 19th year of tracking wages through job postings in the Jobs in British Archaeology series. As recently pointed out in the 2013 Profiling the profession report (Aitchison and Rocks-Macqueen 2013), job postings provide a relatively accurate portrait of wages for archaeologists (Figure 1). Of course, this sort of reporting works better for positions that have a larger number of job postings. As one would expect more data leads to greater accuracy. This article continues the tradition of measuring wages through job postings though with some slight changes in methodology.

The data was gathered from both the IfA’s Jobs Information Service and BABR’s job postings from 1 April 2012 to 31 March 2013. Each job advertised was treated as a single data point and the advertised pay rate counted; those without pay rates were not counted. This year has seen a slight change in titles for positions. Moreover, since it has been several years since the actual positions have been defined for the jobs in British archaeology series it would be good to do so again here.

Figure 1: Profiling the profession average pay against Jobs in British archaeology series from 1994 to 2012-13 based on graph from (Aitchison and Rocks-Macqueen 2013) with this year’s data included. PP – Profiling the profession results. JIB – Jobs in British archaeology results.

Technician: Formally referred to Excavator, this position covers a range of titles from Site Assistant to Digger. These tend to be entry level positions in commercial archaeology. In a clarification from past reviews the title does not just cover field workers but also those working in the lab (although very few lab positions are ever advertised).

Supervisor: Responsible for running the whole or part of a site.

Project Officer: Formally called Field Officers the title changed to Project Officer to reflect what most companies now call this position and also the fact that officers can be in charge of a wider range of projects and not just those in the field. Essentially, this is middle management for many commercial archaeology firms.

Senior Managers: Formally called Project Managers this title was changed to avoid confusion and to more accurately reflect the range of titles given to these types of positions. This is the senior management within commercial archaeological organisations.

Junior and Senior Sites and Monuments Records (SMR) / Cultural Resource Managers (CRM): These titles have not changed and reflect those with responsibilities to manage and protect the cultural heritage. Junior positions are those that do not general have management responsibility over others while senior positions are those who would line manage others.
Consultants: This title has not changed and reflects those who offer consulting services.

Specialist positions: In the past a catch all term was used to record a range of positions from osteoarchaeologists to radiocarbon technicians. Of course these positions have very little in common and the data were of minimal use. In a break from past surveys specialists’ posts will be broken down into smaller categories, though only those with three or more job postings. Because of the limited number of jobs in these positions this data are at best anecdotal, though it is provided for those with an interest. This year’s sub categories are:

Illustrator: Those who work as illustrators or whose main responsibility is graphics.

Conservation: Those who work in conservation. This group comprised mainly archaeological and building conservators, excluding (where possible) non-archaeological museum positions.

Geophysics: Those that conduct geophysical work.

Surveyor: This category covers both landscape and building surveyors.

Curator and collections: Only positions that specifically mentioned archaeology, archaeological remains or required archaeological experience were included. Thus most museum curator positions were not included.

Archaeological sciences: A broad subject that covers such positions as environmental and geomorphology archaeologists. Essentially, those who specialise in an archaeological science field not covered by other positions.

Community and education: Those positions that involved archaeological community, public or educational engagement but excluding university positions such as lecturer.

Jobs were categorised based on the description of the position given. In some cases, no descriptions were given or were vague, resulting in attempts to hunt down the original job posting on the employer website. For the most part this was sufficient enough to determine how a job should be characterised but in a few cases this was necessarily based on job title alone.

When a salary range was given in a job advert the midpoint was shown as the midpoint £15,500. The only exception to this in the tables is the highest and lowest salaries offered, which are not based on midpoints but on the salary offered. Hourly, daily or part-time wages were converted into full annual equivalent salaries. All calculations are done on pro rata bases of a full year’s salary. Hourly and weekly rates are also given in the distribution section of the tables for those who may not work full time or who have intermittent work.

As the midpoint is used as the reference for pay, it is important to remember that the numbers in this article are all averages and that, while this sort of averaging works for many positions, it may not be applicable to all. For example, technician positions are usually on short term contracts and technicians tend to move from company to company. Constantly starting work at new organisations usually means starting at the bottom of the pay scale. As a result, the number of people actually reaching the highest or even the average advertised within technician roles is likely to be small.

Results
Overall 430 positions were recorded for 2012–13. The data show a slight rise in average pay for most positions (Figures 2 and 3), although distribution is probably a better indication of what most archaeologists are making. For example, the largest number of supervisors make between £18,000 and £18,999 as an annual salary, or roughly £9.20 to £9.70 an hour. However, the average is raised slightly by those in supervisory positions who make over £20k, and the resulting average sits at around £19,500. Overall, the data show clustering for most positions near certain salaries. A few positions don’t cluster but this is because of the broad range of jobs that are included or because of low sampling. In the case of Community and education positions, the CBA bursaries cause clustering at the lower end of salaries and should probably be ignored.

References
### THE SOUTH PENNINE WATERSHED: a landscape of change

Louise Brown

The South Pennines forms a large-scale sweeping landform with an open character created by exposed gritstone moors. An undesignated landscape between the Peak District and Yorkshire Dales National Parks, it is bordered by the conurbations of Leeds, Huddersfield, Halifax, Bradford, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale and Burnley, remote, yet within an hour of where seven million people live.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Hour Rate</th>
<th>Weekly Rate</th>
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<tr>
<td>Full-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Part-time</td>
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<tr>
<td>Casual</td>
<td>£10,000</td>
<td>£500,000</td>
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Doug Rocks-Macqueen, IA student member

Doug Rocks-Macqueen is a Researcher at Landward Research Ltd. He is currently completing a PhD at the University of Edinburgh. He can find out more about some of his research at his website [http://dougarchaeology.wordpress.com/](http://dougarchaeology.wordpress.com/) or contact him on drocksmacqueen@gmail.com. Doug would like to thank IA and David Connolly for providing the data used in this article.
It’s brought about a different approach to connecting people with the landscape – taking the landscape to them and not people to the landscape, in a way that’s more long lasting and a two-way rural-urban process.** Mid-term evaluation

Despite the ‘Industrial Pennines’ forming part of the initial long list of potential National Parks in 1949, the South Pennines has failed to achieve a landscape designation. Much of the South Pennines (National Character Area Number 36) is protected by European habitat designations (ie SPA, SAC, SSSI) whilst the cultural heritage set within this protected landscape remains largely unprotected. This is a heritage under threat, either directly through wildfire, peat erosion, infrastructure (eg wind farms, the building of the M62), or through a lack of awareness of this resource by land managers and those trying to stabilise the all-important peat resources. This is particularly resonant for a landscape rich in cultural heritage, from the Mesolithic to echoes of the more recent past.

The Watershed Landscape Project (www.watershedlandscape.co.uk) was established as a three-year programme (2010–2013) managed by Pennine Prospects and funded by the Heritage Lottery and South Pennine LEADER to enhance and conserve the unique South Pennine upland landscape. The project focused on c350km² of the south pennine uplands, broadly contiguous with the designations of the South Pennines Special Protection Area and/or Open Access Land. The project used the rich heritage and biodiversity of this landscape to inspire community engagement and encourage access to the upland, and to make a directly positive impact on the conservation and protection of the cultural and natural heritage. Much of the work undertaken was carried out in partnership with project stakeholders (community groups, charities, local councils, landowners) and consultants, working together through the project to fulfil aspirations that, in the current climate, would remain merely that.

The project operated across six themes, with much cross-theme working

- **theme one** Access to landscape
- **theme two** Historic environment
- **theme three** Natural heritage
- **theme four** Inspired by landscape
- **theme five** Interpretation and engagement
- **theme six** Learning (apprenticeship)

The historic environment theme aimed to protect and enhance the nationally and internationally significant historic features of the project area by empowering individuals to investigate their landscape and promote a greater understanding of the important role the upland played to the surrounding settlements. This not only promotes a sense of place, but also helps to ensure the long-term conservation of the heritage resource. Archaeological training and support was provided to those engaged in the recording and wider research of cultural heritage assets in a number of locations; Riches of the Earth focused on the mineral extraction features of the 19th and early 20th centuries, whilst CSI: Rombalds Moor (carved stone investigation) set out to record the large number of prehistoric carved stones on one isolated upland plateau.

Riches of the Earth

Volunteers, trained in basic survey techniques, carried out fieldwork and collated historical records to help to understand just how important the extractive industries were for the industrialisation of the areas surrounding the South Pennine uplands. Surveying at Baildon and Todmorden Moors used a combination of Google Earth imagery and handheld GPS units to survey the landscape. At Oxenhope Moor, a detailed metric and photographic survey of a specific area of quarrying on Nab Hill was undertaken. This work has been published in the Riches of the Earth booklet available from a number of outlets throughout the South Pennines.

CSI: Rombalds Moor

Kirsty Digge – just one of the activities at the archaeology fun day as part of a weekend celebrating the heritage of the South Pennines in March 2013 at the University of Bradford © Jane Wilkins

A team of dedicated volunteers have recorded almost 500 Neolithic and Bronze Age carved stones in their landscape contest on Rombalds Moor, and have even found a number of previously unrecorded carved stones. Following in-depth training the team used a mixture of new and old technology to create a comprehensive record of each of the stones. Recent advances in digital modelling techniques have enabled the team to create detailed 3D surface models of some of the rocks that will ultimately add valuable information about the current condition of carved stones. This project will help to increase our understanding of the rocks, and protect them for future generations. The records will be publicly available at England’s Rock Art: http://archaeology.dataservice.ac.uk/era/

Outreach was at the core of the historic environment theme. The project sought to encourage greater understanding of the role that the uplands have played in providing resources for society in the past. Implications for their current and future roles were also highlighted so that the landscape is further valued and protected. In addition, opportunities were provided for people to access upland heritage in non-traditional ways (such as using the creative arts), therefore widening participation to a broader spectrum of people to include non-experts, those unfamiliar with uplands, those who may feel intimidated by this environment or come up against physical and cultural barriers to access encouraging greater understanding and enjoyment of the special landscape.

Interpretive materials have been developed, both on site and as an outreach at the core of the historic environment theme. The project sought to encourage greater understanding of the role that the uplands have played in providing resources for society in the past. Implications for their current and future roles were also highlighted so that the landscape is further valued and protected. In addition, opportunities were provided for people to access upland heritage in non-traditional ways (such as using the creative arts), therefore widening participation to a broader spectrum of people to include non-experts, those unfamiliar with uplands, those who may feel intimidated by this environment or come up against physical and cultural barriers to access encouraging greater understanding and enjoyment of the special landscape.

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Volunteers and project partners celebrate the award of a Europa Nostra Laureate with members of Europa Nostra UK © Sarah Mason/Pennine Prospects

‘My perception of how the landscape inspires artists and writers has changed. Also, my understanding of how the landscape has been so deeply affected by man has been deepened.’

Visitor, Online survey

The project allowed a different dimension... it gave the ladies a totally new way of looking at what is around them in the community.'

Keighley Soroptomist

While the project has left a physical legacy (in terms of online resources, interpretation panels, etc), it is the legacy of knowledge and ownership of the cultural heritage retained by the individuals who have participated in some way that is already being seen as a result of the project. Many young people inspired by classroom archaeology workshops have rushed home to encourage their family out onto the moors. It is hoped that by providing a strong focus on encouraging, organising, training and enthusing volunteers, embedded within a robust network of community and voluntary organisations, the impact of the project will extend well beyond the initial three years of implementation.

This project has brought the heritage of the South Pennines upland zone to a wider audience, of diverse ethnic and economic backgrounds as well as being cross-generational. By engaging and directly involving people with the upland environment, it is hoped that individuals have become more educated about the fascinating life histories of these locations, promoting a sense of place, and in turn fostering a desire to protect the wealth of heritage assets for future generations.

Acknowledgements

The project was funded by the Heritage Lottery Partnerships Programme and South Pennines LEADER, and managed by southern pennines rural regeneration company Pennine Prospects.

The author wishes to acknowledge the support of the project partners and many others who have provided advice and support over the course of the project, in particular Ian Sanderson (West Yorkshire Archaeological Advisory Service), Christine Hopwood-Lewis (Natural England), and Yvonne Luke (English Heritage). Thanks are also due to the archaeological consultants and contractors who have participated in the project, including Dr Tertia Barnett, Chris Maise, Minerva Heritage Ltd, Pippa Rochford, Dr Kate Sharpe, and Richard Stroud.

The project would not have been a success without the tremendous dedication, support, enthusiasm and hard work of the project volunteers.

Louise Brown BSc MPsI FSA Scot MBA 2138
louise.d.brown@gmail.com

Louise was employed by Pennine Prospects as Community Archaeologist for the HLF and LEADER funded Watershed Landscape Project. She is keenly interested in training and community involvement in archaeological projects, and recently directed the excavations and post-excavation of The Stanbury Hill Project, a community archaeology project funded by HLF and run by Bingley and District Local History Society in partnership with the University of Bradford (published 2013). She holds an Honorary Research Fellowship at the University of Bradford and is currently working freelance.

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The Archaeologist Winter 2013 Number 90

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Louise Brown
Selling in spades: why archaeologists should learn more about sales

Joe Abrams

Sales are fundamental to any business. With the vast majority of archaeological investigation in the UK taking place as a result of commercial activity; all archaeologists will be affected and not always primarily interested by who sells and who loses on sales. A variety of organisations still exist in our relatively young sector with university and local authority companies competing for the same opportunities.

Without those opportunities to tender and the abilities required to convert a proportion of those tenders into live projects; no amount of interest in archaeology will result in our being able to influence how archaeology is done. The ways in which archaeological remains are investigated and recorded and reported upon will be left to those who convert the most sales.

Of course, industry standards, research frameworks and the planning archaeologists who produce and agree specifications for work have an influence also. These standards and planning archaeologists are (mainly) free of commercial sales activity. Those wielding the excavation tools, commissioning specialists and shaping the publication will be supplied with resources via successful salespeople (eg those who tender for projects). How those various professionals are paid and under what employment conditions they work will be decided in large part as a result of who wins the most valuable sales most often.

That being the case, we may be surprised to reflect just how rarely sales skills are mentioned in connection with commercial archaeologists. Pure business skills, such as sales, rarely form the focus of training requests and are even more rarely assigned as much status as specialist experience in archaeological topics. Yet how much charcoal would be assessed, dated and analysed without a well-crafted and enthusiastically sold project tender to support that process? As with other commercial sectors a slightly disdainful attitude to sales can sometimes exist.

Where there is frequent reference to project management systems and the expectations of well-funded developer led projects, I have found scant mention of the process by which developers are persuaded to select one supplier over another. The systems of management and processes by which we are accountable seeming to be of more attention than the means by which they are needed at all (and funded).

It is within the exchange between developer and archaeologist that I have spent most time and effort during my career. Having done so I have noticed some ways in which we archaeologists can borrow from others. Drawing on contemporary approaches to rapport-building and sales techniques, the following text briefly examines some of the techniques which seem most apt to borrow.

Acting as if ‘Those who dream by day are cognisant of many things that escape those who only dream by night.’

Edgar Allen Poe, Eleonora

Having a destination in mind and a clear understanding of how we are to get there, means we have an increased chance of arriving there. That journey will be smoother if we act as if we are already worthy of that destination and know it may feel like to be there. The self-belief that we are credible and that we can provide the services we are selling is exactly what the sales person must provide for the organisation they are representing. The clients we are supplying services to will have many criteria upon which they select and the credibility and confidence inspired by the organisation they are dealing with certainly being amongst them... Your attitude to sales (and life) can be different if you change your habits; “if your way of thinking changes, your actions change, if your actions change, your habits change, if your habits change” (Broughton 2012, 92) etc.

The act as if model (Bavister and Vickers 2009) provides a set of steps we may utilise to help take this mindset. The purpose of the exercise is to decide upon a desired outcome or goal: first imagine being there, go into a future time when that goal has been reached and consider what that might be like. Having done that move back from the destination experiencing (and labelling) the various steps along the way to reaching that goal. Essentially, we are bridging the gap between goal and present location – what steps are needed between the two? Having done this exercise we have a process and map we can use to get there (Bavister and Vickers 2009, 146).

Resilience

‘Success consists of going from failure to failure with no loss of enthusiasm.’

Winston Churchill

Any sales activity will involve rejection. Maintaining our self-belief in the face of rejection requires a skill beyond the imagination of the ‘act as if’ frame; we need resilience. In the world of telesales one successful call out of fifty is not considered unusual, so twenty-five rejections simply means a person is half way to their next success. Bearing in mind most telesales staff are selling services to which they have no personal affinity, we must consider ourselves fortunate to be selling services in a sector for which we have an enduring passion (if we are lacking that passion then it may be less easy).

Resilience in this context is the ability to maintain emotional equilibrium when hearing ‘no’ more often than ‘yes’. To maintain self-belief in our approach, the value of our services and oneself, despite the relatively large dose of no that must accompany a life in sales requires a resilient person. Broughton coins the phrase ‘loose robes’ for what some sales people manage to develop their ability to accept rejection and failure and see them as essential experiences needed to develop the muscles necessary for eventual success.

Anyone involved in sales will have the opportunity to develop this resilience, though some are naturally more robust than others. We could all benefit from accepting that it is simply a part of (and will always be) taking a service (product) to market. The sooner we accept the need for ‘loose robes’ and develop an expectation of regular failure; the sooner we may find ways to use that reality to sharpen our approach and ensure we have the flexibility of mind and resilience needed for the successes that will also surely come.

Optimists and pessimists

‘If you believe you can or if you believe you cannot, you are probably right.’

Henry Ford

Following on from our recognition of the need for resilience by anyone engaged in sales, it seems logical that an optimistic, enthusiastic and energetic approach will be more likely to result in a better sales performance. Those individuals capable of maintaining such an approach will deserve to win more often. Our clients will be more inclined to buy from them than from a pessimistic, cynical, low-energy individual.

Two individual sales people could experience the same rejection/success and yet interpret the meaning of that in such different ways. Pessimists tending to believe that bad things happen for internal, stable and global reasons; that is to say, for reasons over which they have no influence and cannot change, essentially they have learned helplessness. This happens because I am x (internal); this always happens because (stable); developers all think y (global). The cycle of rejection confirms the validity of the set of beliefs which govern that stable worldview.

Optimists on the other hand have ‘learned optimism’ and tend more towards believing in their own ability to influence events, force change and succeed despite superficial odds against them. Significantly for our purposes, academic research into sales figures suggests that optimists outsell their pessimistic colleagues (Broughton 2012, 117) making the tendency either way of interest to those involved in commercial activity. Challenging negative beliefs, generalisations and limiting beliefs about ourselves and others may turn out to be the keys to organisation, as well as individual growth.

Rapport

‘It’s a natural phenomenon. When we are getting along with people we’re in rapport most of the time’. Bavister and Vickers, 2009, 116.

Having gained access to a potential client using self-belief, resilience and optimism – we find there is further to go. We must now gain the rapport from where a sales person turns ‘interest’ or a one-off sale into trust and repeat work.

Some people are blessed with natural abilities here, they get along with a range of people in most situations and it can seem effortless for those observing. We can all hone our own natural abilities here though and NLP supplies us with a range of tools, rapport being one of the central pillars of this approach. An emphasis is placed upon active listening skills in which not only the content of words...
2 A wide bandwidth of people

Some of us may feel uncomfortable with the sales process. So universal are the negative myths surrounding poor and/or exploitative sales approaches. We can understandably want to distance ourselves from any association with such practices. Individuals can feel put off by strategies which seem to demand uniformity of approach, worse still uniformity which doesn’t seem natural to us as individuals. What a release to realise then, that by being sincere individuals we are more credible, more sincere and more plausible sales people.

Archaeology has many strong individuals working within it, a wide bandwidth of acceptable people to draw upon and utilise as recognisable individuals to sell our services; and to be ambassadors for our still young and developing sector.

Summary and some suggestions for further reading

Looking ahead, the sales figures of archaeological organisations will be closely allied with the level of influence those organisations have on the quality of work in our sector. Our salaries and employment conditions will reflect the way our services are pitched and the values which underlie that effort. We all have an interest in these trends and, therefore, in becoming better at selling ourselves and our sector.

There are many texts on sales and NLP, and the following two are accessible and signpost many other quality texts. They have formed the basis of my own understanding of the subject and used in the production of this short summary:

Debora Broughton, P 2012 Life’s a pitch: what the world’s best sales people can teach us all. Portfolio

Bavister, S and Vickers, A 2009 Teach Yourself NLP. Teach Yourself.

Gary Crawford-Coupe ABA 7452

Gary is the company director of Cornerstone Archaeology Ltd, an independent archaeological contracting unit based in Chester. He finished his History and Archaeology undergraduate degree at Chester University in 2006 while working as a volunteer on a local research project. Since then he has been employed predominantly in commercial archaeology throughout the country, still managing to find time to take part in various research excavation projects such as the recent Heritage Lottery Funded ‘Habitats and hillforts project’ as well as supervising student training excavations, the most recent being the Liverpool University excavation of Pensychnedd Hillfort in Flintshire in summer 2013.

Gary became self-employed in 2008 and set up Cornerstone Archaeology in September 2012, joining the IfA at Associate level at the same time. He chose to apply for membership to demonstrate to colleagues and clients his level of competence in the profession and to add credibility to the company.

Gary now spends the majority of his time working and reporting on developer-funded projects. He also maintains a keen interest in prehistoric research specifically hillfort studies, to which he has made published contributions whilst travelling abroad to pursue his studies into early civilisation around the Mediterranean. Gary can be contacted via gary@cornerstone-archaeology.co.uk.

Andy Howard MAEA 7835

Andy Howard has recently gained Member status of the Institute. Andy is well known in both the Quaternary geology and geoarchaeological communities and has worked in both academia and consultancy for over 20 years. Until September 2013, he was Chair of the Association for Environmental Archaeology. Andy has worked extensively and published widely on Pleistocene and Holocene geosurveys and geomagnetic records in the UK and continental Europe with a particularly focus on the evolution of river valleys, archaeological preservation and geoprospection. Over the last five years, he has also gained an interest in and published articles on the impact of future climate change on the wider Heritage record.

Until June 2013, Andy was a Senior Lecturer in the Institute of Archaeology and Antiquity at the University of Birmingham and had spent a decade teaching various aspects of geoarchaeology, environmental archaeology and Quaternary environmental change to undergraduates, as well as being Programme Leader for the (now defunct) MSc in Environmental Archaeology and Palaeoenvironments and Strategic Director of Birmingham Archaeology. However, with the restructuring of Archaeology, Andy chose to leave Birmingham and set up the consultancy Landscape Research and Management with the aim of providing holistic, yet bespoke environmental and geoarchaeological advice and practical assistance (including project management, quality control and publication services) to a range of organisations mitigating and managing landscape change within the heritage and natural environment sectors. For further information, Andy can be contacted on 01746 769739 or via andy.howardconsulting@gmail.com.
Having worked widely in development-led archaeology in Britain and Ireland, Brendon left a senior management position in commercial archaeology in July to concentrate on bringing DigVentures, the innovative social enterprise he co-founded in 2011, to scale.

An elected council member of IfA, Brendon has pioneered crowdfunding and crowdsourcing in archaeology, harnessing digital technologies to develop new audiences and revenue streams that can then be invested back into archaeological research. His new role as Projects Director draws on his fieldwork background, designing and delivering public-facing research and traditionally funded HLF projects tailored to the specific needs of heritage site managers and custodians. His projects are coordinated through www.digventures.com – a responsive crowdfunding web platform designed to encourage more people to get involved with archaeology, and the first exclusive archaeology and heritage website of its kind in the world.

Brendon will be hosting a crowdfunding masterclass at Leiston Abbey, Suffolk, on 15-16 March 2014, to help archaeologists and heritage professionals learn how to develop their own crowdfunding campaigns, using social media to build an audience of loyal advocates who will support their projects over the longer term. See digventures.com for further details.

New members

Membes’ news

New members

Upgraded members
DigVentures

Founded in 2011, DigVentures is an innovative social enterprise committed to designing, developing and delivering community archaeology projects throughout the UK and further afield. Whether that be at nationally important sites like Flag Fen, Leiston Abbey or historic sites deep in the Berkshire mountains of upstate New York, our motto – archaeology in your hands – is what joins the dots between our many different projects.

We were formed by a small team of commercial field archaeologists, community engagement experts and specialists in digital technologies, driven to action by what we saw as a market failure to address the two defining challenges facing our profession (See The Archaeologist 84). The first challenge is a growing awareness that archaeological ‘value’ must be expanded to express our social and public purpose; the second is a declining financial capacity for either private, public or third sector organisations to service these newfound ambitions.

Our response was to launch the world’s first crowdfunded and crowdsourced excavation at Flag Fen, developing a uniquely digital approach to community archaeology that we have subsequently rolled out to other sites. Our success is based on a start-up mentality: creatively forming the structures, alliances and strategies to amplify existing assets, rather than being restricted by financial constraints. This is the ‘ventures’ part of our ‘dig’ equation, and over the last year we have raised over £55k in seed funding from a globally networked crowd of supporters – money that has gone on to leverage four times that amount for our project partners in match funding. This approach has drawn widespread media and political attention, with feature coverage on the BBC’s flagship Today programme, and public backing from Ed Vaizey, UK Minister for Culture, Communications and Creative Industries, at last month’s cross-party debate organised by IfA for The Archaeology Forum at the Society of Antiquaries in London.

We believe that for archaeology to serve a wider social purpose, generalised commitments to ‘outreach and education’ are no substitute for the rigour of an enterprise defining its contribution to society through its core revenue generating activities. With a continued commitment to creating lasting, positive change for communities, our principal motivation for achieving Registered Organisation status is to uphold the standards of our profession, whilst inspiring the next generation of archaeologists to continue defending the historic environment and its relevance in the wider world. If you need help with a project, or if you are interested in joining our team – please get in touch. As they say, nothing ventured, nothing gained.

For a small selection of our community testimonials and further insight into our projects, please see this YouTube video: http://youtu.be/UH75VV319W1

Brendon Wilkins MIFA 4494
DigVentures

The DigVentures approach in action at Leiston Abbey, Suffolk, 2013 © DigVentures

The DigVentures Social Contract business model © DigVentures

Inspiring the next generation at Flag Fen, Peterborough, 2012 © DigVentures
Cotswold Archaeology launched a new fieldwork base in autumn this year, based in Andover, Hampshire, to complement those in Milton Keynes and Cirencester.

An office was established in the town last year, primarily to service our marine archaeology service. We have now relocated to larger premises allowing us to launch a fieldwork operation led by Richard Greatedex, who previously led the fieldwork team at the Salisbury office of Wessex Archaeology. Richard brings with him many years’ experience of managing some of the largest and most complex archaeological projects from Kent to Cornwall and will spearhead an expansion of our fieldwork services in south and south-east England, building on the growing reputation of Cotswold Archaeology throughout the country. Richard will be assisted by Senior Project Officer Chris Ellis MBA 1438, one of the most experienced site directors in the country having spent the last 20 years leading projects in southern England. Other members of the Andover fieldwork team include Project Officer Matt Nichol MBA 5738, who recently directed a number of sites on the A5 road improvement scheme in Northern Ireland.

The marine archaeology service led by Steve Webster MBA 7503 also goes from strength to strength and has just been awarded the contract covering the Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland component of the Heritage Asset Assessment in Relation to Marine Designation programme. The contract covers the next two years and will entail diving, marine geophysical survey and desk-based research. The work will focus on designated and undesignated underwater shipwrecks and submerged prehistoric sites to assess their date, nature, condition and significance.

The Andover office will be headed by John Dillon MBA 446, who is also responsible for leading and growing the office in Milton Keynes which we opened in 2011.

Neil Hollbrook
MBA 737
Chief Executive