

Professor Koen Lamberts,  
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University of Sheffield,

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*Delivered by email.*

24 May 2021

### **Re: Review of the Department of Archaeology**

Dear Professor Lamberts,

I am writing to you on behalf of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA) in response to the news that your Executive Board is currently reviewing the Department of Archaeology and is considering options which would result in the closure of the department. Although the review has not been officially announced, we are aware of a vote on 25 May to decide how to proceed in relation to the department's future funding. We would welcome further information about the review, but also wish to take the opportunity to express our views ahead of the vote.

The University of Sheffield's archaeology department has one of the most highly regarded archaeology departments in the UK since the 1960s. In our profession, the University's graduates have been ambassadors for the high-quality education that the University has been delivering for decades. Those graduates have found their way into some of the most prominent roles in UK archaeology.

CIfA is the leading professional body representing archaeologists working in the UK and overseas. We promote high professional standards and strong ethics in archaeological practice, to maximise the benefits that archaeologists bring to society, and provide a self-regulatory quality assurance framework for the sector and those it serves. We have close links with the academic archaeology sector, through University Archaeology UK (UAUK), and with individual departments through our degree accreditation programme – to which the University of Sheffield is currently an applicant. The accreditation scheme was developed by CIfA and UAUK to ensure that Archaeology degree programmes offer students a sound foundation in archaeological practice, preparing them for a career in archaeology as well as equipping them with a broad range of transferable skills. It is likely that departments offering accredited programmes would

have a competitive edge, especially for recruiting students seeking a career in archaeology.

We are, of course, only too aware of the pressures that higher education institutions are facing, and we appreciate that you must consider options which may help you to meet your financial responsibilities. However, in making your decision we hope that you also will acknowledge the high esteem with which the department's research and teaching has been held over many years.

We understand that the Department has been going through changes recently and that the short-term need to invest may eclipse the long-term potential for building on the Department's success. For instance, as a centre for Osteology and other scientific specialties, the Department is likely to remain an attractive prospect for students, as well as key contributor to the archaeological work force at a time of skills shortages in the sector. The department also stands as an exemplar in terms of engagement with and impact in local communities, as well as a contributor to research with national and international significance. There are factors which deliver considerable impact, capitalising on the huge public interest in archaeology – local, national, and international – in the revealing of stories about our pasts.

We urge you to find a solution to the problem which does not throw away the proud history, and future potential, of archaeology at Sheffield.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'P. Hinton', written in a cursive style.

**Peter Hinton**  
BA MCifA FRSA FSA FIAM FSA Scot  
**Chief Executive, CifA**