



Forum Dispatch

Inform, debate, represent



Newsletter 7
Autumn 2011

The newsletter of the Diggers' Forum

Chair's introduction

Chiz Harward

The coming months will be busy ones for the DF: first up are the IfA Council elections where there are three DF committee members standing. Your votes must be received by the 23rd September so make sure you get your votes in before then. We then have our AGM in London on the 3rd October, immediately before the IfA AGM when we will find out how many of those DF candidates have been elected onto the IfA Council.

In November the IfA Council meet to decide the IfA salary minima for next year: the more DF candidates voted onto Council the greater the calls will be for the increase of IfA salary minima, and the implementation of the salary benchmarking increases. We are working hard preparing solid arguments to show that failing to increase minima will hurt archaeology and archaeologists more than a further freeze. We will also argue that as nearly all archaeological employers pay above the minima there is no logic in keeping the minima down.

As an industry and as a professional institute we have to move away from the current situation where the employers who pay the least are commercially advantaged, whilst those that try and pay a reasonable wage are penalised.

Last issue we set out our initial position on the Southport Group draft report and asked you to let us know your thoughts, we subsequently submitted our response and the final report has

been published. Some elements and wordings in the report have been changed, and there is indication that the specific issues the DF raised were taken on board to some extent. What will happen to this 'Southport Vision' remains to be seen, after all there are a great number of threats to the survival of archaeology as we know it.



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With the constant pressure of work and life it is sometimes tempting to ignore the constant news of cuts and closures until they directly affect us. What, after all, can we do? Well it turns out that we can do something and as our article on the 'Bunnygate' debacle in Fenland shows, there is a clear place for individual action alongside established organisations. As individuals we need to back up the work of the IfA, Rescue and the CBA by lobbying whenever and wherever we can. Writing to Councillors, MPs and newspapers **does** make a difference; signing petitions and joining Facebook groups also has its place. We may not all agree that where we are as a profession is where we want to be, but there is a clear danger that the whole system of developer-funded archaeology could be dismantled if we do not put up a fight.

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Are your details up to date? We want to make sure you get this newsletter and other DF communications, so please let the IfA know if you change your postal or email address at:

groups@archaeologists.net



Diggers' Forum mission statement

The Diggers' Forum (DF) is committed to creating a positive, sustainable and financially viable career for all professional archaeologists at all points in their career. The DF is a Special Interest Group of the Institute for Archaeologists representing all archaeologists working out on site at whatever grade. Membership of the DF is open to all.

The DF was formed in 2004 to represent the views, aspirations and professional requirements of its members, in addition to campaigning for improvements in pay and conditions within the profession.

The views of those new to a career in archaeology, or who are employed at the lower rungs of the job, are under-represented in the industry. It is a key aim of the Diggers' Forum to redress this balance and keep the issues and welfare of its membership at the top of the IfA agenda and publicised to the world beyond.

The Diggers' Forum will serve as a platform to provide up to date news and information to its members, as well as actively encouraging debate and involvement within the DF and the IfA on the developing roles required of field-staff now and in the decades to come.

Join us in the Diggers' Forum and help make a positive difference to our profession: <http://www.archaeologists.net/groups/diggers>



Letter from the editor

Chiz Harward

Another season, another newsletter. This issue has some of our now established, regular features, and a new review slot. If you'd like to review a new book, map or website, drop us a line, similarly if you have a new book out, let us know.

We'd like the reviews to be slightly different to the academic style you may know from the back of journals. We'd like to bring a more Digger-level perspective to the reviewing of monographs, so if you worked on a site and the report is now out in print, get reviewing.

I'd like to welcome the new contributors this issue, and thank them for their articles. Its always good to get a range of perspectives in any publication and the more people who contribute, the better the issue.

A couple of you have mentioned that the format of the newsletter can be quite difficult to read on a computer screen. As we have to produce a newsletter that can be printed out easily, as well as read on-screen, we are restricted somewhat to the format. To view this newsletter as a pdf open it in Adobe Acrobat™, and go to **View<Page Display** and tick **Two-Up Continuous** and **Show Cover Page During Two-Up** and it will appear as intended.

To print the newsletter: if you only have an A4 printer it is easiest to print it double sided and staple down the spine to create a booklet format. If you have access to an A3 printer then you can use booklet print: go to http://kb2.adobe.com/cps/897/cpsid_89736.html for details.



photograph © MoLA

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A common theme throughout these topics is the role of the individual and the role of the group. Together we can combine with a stronger voice to question, argue and propose improvements. But any group is only the sum of its individuals and we rely on the individual to tell us what they think on each topic, and to help support the group, rather than just abdicate responsibility upwards. A formal submission protesting at a closure or a freeze to wages is far stronger when backed by hundreds of individual emails.

The future shape of archaeology directly depends on all of us as individuals: whether we vote, whether we join in and lobby, whether we participate. It doesn't have to take much time, but unless we do join in we may find out that there is nothing left.

I'm stepping down as Acting Chair of the DF at the AGM as the rotating chair continues around the committee. Its been an interesting and absorbing tenure and it makes me appreciate the work of my predecessor Chris Clarke all the more! I hope that the DF is now in good shape to respond to whatever comes our way, and to represent and speak up for site workers in the IfA. I wish my successor all the best and all my support.

My last act as Chair is to ask all of you whether you can spare any time to support the DF and your profession. How you do this is up to you: you can vote, you can join the DF committee, write for the newsletter, *your newsletter*, or just tell us what you want us to do on your behalf, thankyou

Its quite simple. If you don't say what you are thinking *out-loud* then *no-one* can listen to you.

If you would like to contribute to the Diggers' Forum Newsletter, or have a suggestion on a subject we should cover, please contact the editor by email: chiz@urban-archaeology.com

Dates for the diary and details of events or news should be sent to Gwilym Williams by email: gwilymwilliams70@yahoo.co.uk

IfA Annual General Meeting: time to use your vote

Alex Llewellyn and Gerry Wait (IfA)

The old adage has it that our actions – or inaction – speak louder than our words. Some archaeologists will spend time complaining in the pub or whinging on web-fora but won't give equal time to vote in IfA elections. If so their actions speak loudest – they are not interested in making a change, just having a good old whinge. Is this you?

Or are you willing to spend a few minutes to make a difference?

It's time for elections to Council and for Council to make proposals to improve our standards by updating the documents that govern the Institute and its members. All corporate members (PIfA, AlfA and MIfA) should take the opportunity to use their right to vote.

Why should I vote? IfA doesn't represent my views and until they do I'm not interested!

IfA can represent your views – but only if you act! Look at the backgrounds of the current IfA Council members and the 14 standing for election and looking for your votes. Their experiences are very wide ranging (academics, finds specialists, museums, consultants, self-employed, national and local government officers). All of them have experience working in the profession. But more important than their background is the role they propose to play on Council, as set out in their election statement. If there is a candidate who seems to have the same values as you then vote so they get a seat in October and can represent you! If there are any gaps why not stand for election yourself next year?

What gives IfA the right to tell me what standards to work to?

IfA exists because many committed and responsible archaeologists want to have a professional institute to promote their standards and ethics to their peers and to the outside

world – IfA wouldn't be here otherwise. It is a democratic organisation and all its codes, standards and policy statements are agreed by its members. BUT in order for it to represent the desires of the majority, every member needs to take the opportunity to vote when substantial changes or new standards are proposed.

Make sure you get involved

Even if you haven't got the time to serve on IfA Council or its committees you must have the time to vote for new candidates, or to indicate your preference to amending the standards for the profession. And if you want to see higher standards as a corporate member of the IfA you can put proposals forward or raise them directly with individual Council members at any time. After all, they are your elected representatives and would welcome the opportunity to hear your views – and it has worked before.

So make sure you use your votes - democracy doesn't always mean that your opinion will win but at least you can say you tried. Details of Council candidates, AGM resolutions and voting forms are on the website at <http://www.archaeologists.net/AGM>

Cotswold Outdoor Discount

Did you know that IfA members can get a 15% discount at Cotswold Outdoors? If you are into the outdoors, or just need some new socks for site then you could start making back your IfA subs whilst shopping for anything from fleeces to sleeping bags, tents to torches.

Quote 'Institute for Archaeologists' at the till and show your IfA membership card. IfA members of the DF should have been sent a discount code by email they can use. If you didn't receive it, let us know. You may need to speak to the manager as staff may not be immediately aware of the discount. The discount code is also valid for phone and online orders.

Please note this discount cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer. If you have any difficulty using this offer please contact the IfA office (and let us know as well!).



DF roundup and news

The DF has been fairly quiet over the summer months, we've finished researching the travel and away survey and are about to start writing it up, it will hopefully be ready for the end of October, but jobs have a way of getting in the way. Our response to the Southport Group draft report was put in, and some of the points seem to have been taken on board. It was a worthwhile exercise in getting a consultation together, so thank you to the members who contacted us with their views and thoughts.

The months ahead will be busy as Chiz has said, with elections, the AGM and the November discussion of pay minima. We want to push for an increase this year, and for the long overdue implementation of the benchmarking scheme so we need to turn up with water-tight arguments as to why increasing minima is the only way forward for archaeology. One thing we want to know is where pay rates are at the moment: we're getting what we can from our surveys and from job adverts, but we still have big gaps. YOU can help- send us details of your employer's job titles and the basic pay levels in total confidence and we can make sure we are properly prepared to argue for increases come November. Email us at diggers@archaeologists.net.

Sadie, Chiz and Geoff are standing for council at the current elections, please get out and vote for them. Don't leave it too late! If we can get them all on the council then we will have three DF members on the council who will push for more representation of site workers, and implementation of the benchmarking increases.

DF Secretary Sadie Watson met Gerry Wait, Honorary Chair of the IfA Council, earlier in the summer to discuss the situation over the IfA minima, and to see what could be done to make sure that the discussions could reach an informed conclusion. We're working hard to prepare our arguments and hope that if all the hard work comes off then in November there may be some good

news for Diggers. It will have been a long time coming.

Unfortunately we haven't been able to do the planned pre-election special to cover the IfA Council elections. A combination of away work and well-earned holidays has meant we just couldn't get it all together in time. Sorry, we will try and do this next year, but we were stretched too thinly to do a proper job on it and get it out in time to make a difference. If you'd like to help out with projects like this do get in touch!



photograph © Dave Webb

We've continued checking the **IfA Jobs Information Service** and the **BAJR** website for job adverts which appear to pay below IfA minima or equivalent freelance rates. The JIS is now available online and the IfA have taken on board some of our comments, making it easier to find relevant jobs, and ignore the irrelevant ones! If you hear of a job that pays below the IfA rates then let us know and we'll see if there is anything we can do about it.

Cold weather coming?

Last winter we published a survival guide to cold weather working, we were planning on running a hot weather guide in the summer newsletter as well, but somehow it never really seemed that relevant... We want to update the cold working guide in the next Winter issue with more tips to beat the winter blues, so send us in any top tips on avoiding frostbite, and we'll include them next issue.



New IfA policy statement on self-employment and the use of self-employed sub-contractors

The IfA has published its [new policy on self-employment](#). In it the IfA clearly recognises that whilst it's up to you how you work, some aspects of self-employment do come within the IfA's remit on ensuring members and ROs work to the recognised standards and do not contravene the IfA Code of conduct or IfA Standards and guidance. This includes making sure that freelancers are remunerated in line with IfA minimum salaries. The IfA policy states:

'An example of where self-employment might be considered by IfA to conflict with ethical practice would be when self-employed workers are used as a way of cutting costs by avoiding the employers' obligation to provide benefits such as paid leave, sick pay, provision of personal protective equipment etc. Engaging self-employed workers for this purpose is considered to be a contravention of Principle 5 of the IfA Code of conduct. For members and Registered Organisations this could lead to investigation under IfA disciplinary or complaints procedures as appropriate...

...A potential grey area is the increasingly common practice of sub-contracting fieldwork either to an individual or a group of self-employed archaeologists.

Where questions are raised regarding the use of self-employed archaeologists in this way...IfA may require the member or Registered Organisation to provide an opinion from an HMRC Status Inspector or a report from the online Employment Status Indicator tool as confirmation of employment status....

...Regardless of the circumstances, IfA expects Registered Organisations and members engaging the services of sub-contractors who are not themselves members or registered with the Institute to ensure that the sub-contractors are made aware of the responsibilities of membership or Registration with regard to the IfA Code of conduct and IfA standards and guidance. Members and Registered Organisations should satisfy themselves that their sub-contractors:

- are able to meet the appropriate standards,
- are adequately insured and
- are remunerated in line with IfA minimum

salaries...

...In order to meet IfA minimum salaries, self-employed members should remember to include the appropriate uplift to the minimum salary for their grade to compensate for lack of sick pay, paid annual leave and employers' pension contribution. '

Many members of the DF work or have worked as freelancers so we are well aware of the issues around self-employment. The DF welcome the clear statement regarding self-employment and remuneration and the linking of this to the Code of conduct in this policy.

DF committee members were involved in the IfA Self-employment Working Group which led to this policy and will be raising the issue of low-day rates with Council again. We would like to see the IfA publish estimates of day rates that are comparable to the salary minima. This has been done in the past and should be done again.

The DF has been very concerned at the nature of 'self-employment' at a number of companies around the UK where there are not only concerns over whether the situation is in compliance with HMRC regs, but more importantly whether these companies are paying significantly sub-standard day-rates **-in some cases as low as £67.50 a day**. That works out at around £15,700 a year **TURNOVER**, from which you have to pay a lot more expenses than an employed digger - expenses like insurance, holiday pay, sickness pay and pension! Holiday pay, sick pay and pension subs are currently valued by the IfA at £2559.15 for PlfA level wages. That means that **even without ANY costs at all** (insurance, tools, accountant, travel, stamps) you should be charging £75 a day just to give you the IfA minima! **This policy means that if they continue to pay such low day rates the IfA members running those companies are in breach of this policy, and may well be in breach of the Code of conduct.**

The DF would like to ask any members who feel that they have any information on low-paid self-employment to get in touch so that we can see whether there is a case to answer under the Code of Conduct. Email us at diggers@archaeologists.net, or via our personal emails on the inside front cover. Your information will be treated **in total confidence**, and your details will not be disclosed to anyone unless you give explicit permission. The IfA recently changed its complaints procedures to allow anonymous complaints by proxy (see Forum Dispatch Issue 6 for details).

Freelancing is as valid a way of running a business



as being an employee, and it can be far more rewarding and fulfilling, although it can also be far more risky and uncertain. Freelancing is not for everyone and you should go into it with your eyes open and aware of the facts. Companies that pay severely low day-rates are ripping off their 'staff' and are damaging the profession and should be held accountable.

Inflation news

Latest inflation news is that the CPI is now up to 4.5%, and the RPI is up to 5.2%. Train fares are set to rise 8% this year...and the Bank of England's Inflation Report warned of utility bill rises of up to 15% (source: BBC news).

The Southport Group Report: what now?

Sadie Watson

As you may be aware, in July 2011 the Southport Group published their [report](#) on the public benefits of development-led investigations into the historic environment. Funded by English Heritage, the Southport Group pulled together a diverse group of professionals to produce a draft paper for consultation and then to collate responses and publish the final document. The Diggers' Forum sent in a detailed response and were gratified to see that our main points had been included and addressed *to some extent*. In particular the phrase relating to developer-led archaeology that '**public participation should be the norm not the exception**' was qualified and watered down somewhat.

Starting from the lofty ideals of maximising our understanding of the value the historic environment (including buried archaeology) offers to the public, the proof of the pudding as they say, will be in what happens next. The recommendations offer a focussed set of aims and objectives and set out possible opportunities for partnership working. It will be interesting to see how the recommendations fare given the level of cuts to local Historic Environment Services, organisations such as English Heritage, and the uncertainty of what the National Planning Policy Framework will bring. We fieldworkers should be able to see any visible changes that may occur as a result of the Southport Report, from increased public participation on projects to better provision of training and career development for archaeologists, two very different but crucial recommendations. New

Standards and Guidance are also on the 'wish list', including one for Consultancy! One of our main concerns was that (cheaper) volunteers should not replace (paid, but still cheap!) professional archaeologists in the name of 'public participation' and this viewpoint is expressed in the report, along with a reminder of the [IfA policy statement on the use of volunteers and students on archaeological projects](#).

Have a look at the report online if you're interested. Hopefully it will lead to an increased awareness of archaeology amongst the public once the opportunities for involvement and engagement are taken up.

Diggers' Forum survey of travel and away work

The second part of our survey of travel and away work in commercial archaeology has now finished. The first part was a survey for employees -that's us the second part was a survey for employers -that's them! We'd like to thank all of you who participated and gave us some really good data. Over 260 of you took the time to tell us about your jobs and how away work affects you, thank you.

Unfortunately, despite sending requests to around 200 archaeological employers only 19 completed their surveys. Of these, only a handful were happy for their answers to be made public so thank you to Archaeological Services and Consultancy, Archaeology South-East, Archaeology Warwickshire, Headland Archaeology and Tyne and Wear Museums Archaeology.

From the outset we wanted to give employers a chance to give their perspective and to add their voices to a debate on travel, away work, driving and subs in the hope of achieving some sort of understanding. It's a shame that so few could be bothered to fill out the survey, but respect to those that did.

We'll be spending the next few weeks crunching the stats and preparing a report on the subject. We'll be proposing improvements and highlighting good practice where we can, although from initial analysis it seems that there is no clear group of winners: financially away work *may* benefit as many as it hammers, but mainly those with no rent to pay or ties to maintain. Most respondents seemed to think that long-term it was detrimental to their quality of life, and that it was a factor for many in leaving archaeology.



Diggers' Forum on Facebook

Tom Elliot



In order to better communicate and help its members and archaeologists around the country, the IfA Diggers' Forum (DF) has decided to set up its own Facebook page. It can be found at <http://www.facebook.com/DiggersForum>

We've been trialling the page for a while, and although building the page is obviously a work in progress, we are now ready to officially launch it ready for the IfA Council elections and our upcoming AGM.

By "liking" the page you will be able to receive regular news updates on DF activities, events, current and ongoing campaigns. The page will support the existing newsletter, which will still feature in-depth coverage of relevant news and articles. The page will also be for you to give feedback to the DF committee and members, as well as for everyone to contribute to discussions and general talk on the above news and events. You can also contribute to the DF by adding links and any relevant information that can help us all out, be that the latest way in which the National Planning Policy Framework will effect field workers, or perhaps just a blog, funny relevant video or review of a piece of site kit. The page is a resource catered for archaeologists out on site.

For those not already a member, details of how to join the Digger's Forum can be found on the page. This way you'll be able to get DF news in

the site hut on your smart phone and you'll never be out of the loop again.'

So if you're on Facebook go to <http://www.facebook.com/DiggersForum> and click on 'Like' and tell all your friends!

Blossoms' Inn reunion: ten years on

Sylvia Warman

Last winter I received an invitation to a 10 year reunion of the Blossoms' Inn excavation team (MoLAS and AOC joint project in the City of London). Having got over the initial shock that it really was a decade since this epic undertaking, I accepted. The site had produced some interesting insights into Roman London, most memorably [the water-lifting mechanism](#).

During the excavation our favourite pub had been the Green Man – a large establishment close to the site which was not fussy over the dirt levels of its clientele. But as the reunion was on a Saturday the George Inn in Borough was selected. A good showing of those involved had turned up from all levels of the then hierarchy, including both field and office staff. I was struck by how few were smoking compared with 10 years ago. It was lovely to catch up with everyone and find out who had married who and names of children, cats and dogs since acquired. All this was gently fuelled by real ales, ciders and beers.

Recent redundancies cast a slight cloud over proceedings; but generally I was impressed by how many of us were still employed in archaeology and its related disciplines. We are now quite widely dispersed across the British Isles. And at least one [media star](#) was present!

It was a great evening and a reminder that a big part of archaeology, in particular field archaeology, is the sense of belonging that working together and relaxing together can build. Many thanks to Chris Clarke for arranging the event and to everyone who attended.



Diggers' Forum Annual General Meeting



Monday October 3rd, 11am-12pm

**Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London,
W1J OBE**

We are holding our AGM on the same day as the IfA's AGM this year, in the hope that this will encourage more people to attend both meetings.

As a SIG we are governed by the By-Laws for IfA SIGs, and therefore the AGM is largely a procedural event, with the election of Officers and annual reports presented by the outgoing Officers. There is also a call for Resolutions that we can debate and vote on- so if there is anything that you think we need to concentrate upon over the next year then please send them in to us on our email address (diggers@archaeologists.net).

The timing of our AGM allows us to have our meeting in the morning and then head somewhere nearby for lunch. The Seminar 'Greening the Historic Environment' takes place at 12.30 so members can attend afterwards if they wish.

After the main IfA AGM and wine reception we will be heading to a local pub for refreshment and heated debate- hope to see as many of you as possible there.



IfA Annual Conference 2012: Proposed Diggers' Forum/Finds Group Joint Session

The theme for the 2012 IfA conference is 'Partnership Working – creating effective networks throughout the historic, natural and built environments to maximise resources, increase public benefit and build a stronger sector' and the **Diggers' Forum** and the **IfA Finds Group** have proposed a joint session at the conference to be held in Oxford from 18-20 April.

The session would cover the subject of applied methodologies in archaeology, covering basic practice as well as new approaches in

archaeological work. The session is intended to cross the boundaries between individual disciplines such as finds and stratigraphy and explore how together we can carry out better fieldwork and better analysis. The conference session would highlight more efficient practice and the importance of communication as a whole as well as obviously be good for CPD for all contributing and attending.

We're hoping that as well as interesting papers we could also organise CPD workshops to discuss the themes and issues raised in the session.

Madness in our Methods?

Proposed joint session of the IfA Finds group and Diggers forum

Organiser: Dr Phil Mills

There are currently a number of venues where theoretical approaches are highlighted, popularised and discussed in archaeology (e.g. TAG, TRAC etc) but the venues whereby the basic methods (and new approaches) are critiqued and disseminated beyond the specialists who directly use them are few and far between. This session aims to foster partnerships between field, finds, environmental and management specialists to encourage conversations and awareness between the different group within the profession.

Speakers at this session are encouraged to not only present papers about new approaches, but also what they consider

existing best practice. We would also be keen on speakers explicitly showing how their field ideally fits within an archaeological project.

This session should act as CPD for field and finds practitioners who want to keep abreast of current thinking in their fields, as well as to find out more about other areas. It will also be a venue where the values of current methodologies can be discussed, and a venue which fosters a greater understanding between the requirements and constraints of different aspects of archaeological projects.

The speakers will be invited to submit their papers for publication in a standalone session volume.

If you are interested in giving a paper (or in hosting a CPD workshop) then please get in touch with Phil Mills (cbmphil@aol.com) or the DF (diggers@archaeologists.net).



Opinion: Its my site and I'll write it up if I want to

Chiz Harward

I was catching up with an old friend a few months ago, chatting about old sites, friends and colleagues and the future. At some point he reminded me that at one unit where we'd worked all the sites were written up not by the excavation supervisors but by a small group of staff who never worked on site, but only wrote publications. The actual supervisors had no input into the assessment, analysis and publication of their site, and the publication team had no input into the excavation.

Now of course at this point I do have to say that the unit in question produces some excellent publications, and presumably has numerous systems in place to make everything run smoothly with no loss of information, but the conversation did make me think about the role and function of the individual and memory in excavation and about what makes a good field archaeologist.

Of course it is sadly rare for the humble site assistant to seriously influence the analysis and publication of the sites they work on: they write the context sheets and draw the plans but that is unfortunately usually the end of their input; come the end of each site their involvement is over and the next site (hopefully) fills their time.

For site assistants sites often consist of the potentially disparate features that they themselves excavated: a site seen through individual context sheets with little chance for the over-view. For the supervisor the site is a larger entity. One of the few attractions of running a site is the bigger picture: the overview and the continuous process of

excavation strategy and evolving interpretation. Supervisors get quite attached to their sites and I certainly couldn't imagine *routinely* handing over my precious checked archives to someone else to analyse and publish according to their own direction and interpretation.

I've written up quite a few sites over the years, from small trenches to some rather large projects, and I have also been involved with writing up a number of sites that I never saw. Usually these were urban 'backlog' sites where funding had somehow disappeared or projects where the supervisor had since left and I was chosen to pick up the pieces. Within some larger excavations I have also carried out analysis on areas of the site which were run by colleagues, and vice versa.

Each time I analysed a project without any personal knowledge I always wondered what I might be missing, what nuances I may have carried with me had I actually worked on the site. I would scour the site photos to try and get a better understanding of the topography, of changes in the natural, of some idea of how the site was dug and what areas may have been left undug for whatever reason. I'd try and find out who worked on the sites, look for patterns in recording styles based on often illegible initials, and track down surviving diggers to grill them over the sequence of excavation and try and get any details of on-site interpretation that had escaped the records

Of course theoretically the site archive contains all the information necessary to fully reconstruct the site. All its aspects are captured on the context sheets, drawings, photographs and artefacts. But we all know deep down that these flimsy records do not capture all the granularities of the site and that the excavators and supervisors carry with them knowledge that cannot be written down. Thoughts and ideas that mature and develop over time, that cannot be captured on context sheets or in lines of database code and GIS polygons.

On the wider level though, it cannot be good for supervisors to never have any experience of, or input into, the assessment, analysis or publication of their own sites, and to never know how their raw data will be processed and analysed. They will then see only the one side of the coin no matter how good the project management linking the site and post-ex



(PX) teams. The same applies to the PX team - how can someone who not only never saw the site and has maybe never dug on site for years know how site conditions can affect the records, how the rain or the development program meant that certain areas were dug in certain ways, or the how interpretations changed during discussions on site. How can they know which records are good but sparse, and which appear precise and well-thought out, but are in fact nonsense? Yes all this should, and usually is picked, up during checking, but the fact remains that the people digging the site know the site better than anyone else.

Now I'm sure it can be argued that a specialist team of authors are more efficient at churning through the data and writing reports. No more battling with mud-encrusted Diggers over enforcing the en-rule or other Style Guide apocrypha. No more trying to train everyone in databases, GIS, writing styles and bibliographies. No more giving Diggers the opportunity to see What Happens Next, how the site data is digitised, assessed, sub-grouped, analysed and tested. No chance to read around the subject, learn new skills or work with new people and get new ideas they can take back to the next site. No, keep all those Diggers out on site, and let more refined creatures get their name on the cover!

What message does this send to site staff? That publication is somehow to be restricted to a specialist team? That the mud-monkeys on site can do the donkey work but when it comes to the refined art of putting text together then you need to get some specialists in? Well I believe that Digging and running sites is a specialism, and a complex and varied one at that, and that it shouldn't be entrusted to just anyone. And I also see that not everyone has the time, aptitude and skills to analyse and publish every site they dig. But I do believe that we make better archaeologists if we have an understanding of the *whole* process, and have at least an awareness, acquired through personal experience, of how assessment and analysis works.

Of course some find it easier to write than others, but to separate the two halves of the process –excavation and post-excavation- deprives each party of the wider experience of how it all fits together, it reduces the diggers and site supervisors to mechanistic technical

excavators with no connection to the final product, no incentive to create a perfect archive. Quite simply it doesn't produce good archaeologists.

The ideal is of course a happy medium, somewhere between dragging reluctant supervisors in to two-finger-type a report that will need endless editing and having a slick team of PX authors who don't understand the nuances of the site. Of course in an ideal world there would be enough time on site, and immediately after, to ensure a comprehensive and integrated site archive which captures the state of understanding of the site as you leave it. Interim reports are a useful way of capturing initial thoughts but only as long as they don't fossilise interpretations too early on.

What happens at post-excavation assessment and beyond may vary according to individual workload, skills and ability, but surely the default position should be that supervisors should be given the guidance, training and advice to write up their own sites? Supervisors need to understand What Happens Next in order to do their job on site and make the myriad of decisions needed to get the best out of the site. A knowledge of PX procedures will pay massive dividends on the next site they dig. Yes they will require training and refresher sessions, but if we want to make good archaeologists as well as good publications, then that investment must be made.

Whilst for some supervisory staff PX is a chore and best avoided, for many supervisors it is a welcome change from site work and a chance for some office time and the opportunity for a few weeks of predictable life at home. The year then assumes a rhythm between site and office work, each having its benefits and drawbacks: the claustrophobia of the office tempered by the easy hours and the chance to catch up on a life lost during those 5am starts. Invariably the slow grind of PX loses its attraction after a few weeks and the supervisor is suddenly desperate to get out on site -any site- now that those same 5am starts are a distant memory.

Got something to get off your chest?
Send it in to
diggers@archaeologists.net



The Diggers' Archive:

Dave Webb Interview

To most Diggers archaeological photography consists of endless shots of ditch sections interspersed with the odd painfully posed working shot. For the last thirty years Dave Webb has also taken another sort of image: documenting his friends and colleagues in their everyday surroundings: the mud and cold of site and site hut. We asked him about his work.

What is your background? Are you a professional photographer, or 'just another circuit digger'?

My background is both, I started as a professional photographer and became another circuit digger. My current job title is Photographic Supervisor with a unit in the east of England.

So what got you into photography, and how did this lead to archaeology?

I grew up in the sixties and other than family holidays and special occasions was never really involved in photography other than in the typical posed family group: the invisible father taking the photo and the rest of us attempting not to look daft (usually failed). It was not until after I started an Art foundation course at Fazley Street in Birmingham that I took a serious interest in photography. Initially I'd just started using the photographic media to record my 3D work, however I soon became more interested in documenting life around me. I switched to a course at Dorrington Road School of Photography, at the end of three years I had a bit of paper that qualified me as a photographer.

After leaving college I eventually got a job in the British Museum's Photographic Department. At that point in time I just saw the museum as a stepping stone in a career in photography, the job was in London and that was where I thought the best opportunities existed.



Brian, excavation at Kirkburn E. Yorks 1986

My first real involvement with fieldwork came with a trip up north to film the Chariot Burial excavations at Garton on the Wold being run by Ian Stead. Despite having to live under canvas, have the wind blow straight thru me and spending all day shovel-scraping chalk, I realised it was the most absorbing few weeks I'd ever spent with some of the most fascinating and occasionally weird people I'd come across – I was hooked.



Snettisham 1991

From then onwards I became involved in as much fieldwork as possible, at first I was satisfied spending time with the Stead Circus and other BM digs, however after a while I opted out of London, took a Masters at



Southampton and got a job with Wessex Archaeology. At that point I suppose my Job title changed from Photographer to Archaeologist – although if anybody had asked me what I was before then I'd probably have replied digger as by then I'd been involved with fieldwork for some 15 years.

I first saw your photos on Paul Everill's [Invisible Diggers](#) website, why did you start publishing on the net?

I met Paul at Dunragit in 1999, I was running a [daily web page diary](#) with running reports on the excavation. The site was an early experiment in communicating with digital media, it took most of the day and night to get text and images online, a job that could now be done in a few seconds via your phone. The site was rather eccentric, but then an online diary of a dig is likely to develop its own character however the Rat may have been a step too far.

You've got your own [website](#), what made you do it and what did you hope to achieve?

The diggers archive website was an extension of the photo galleries I'd shot at Dunragit, it was really the result of my frustration with the anonymous nature of diggers. At the time I felt that the people who contributed their lives, health and sanity to recovering the archaeological data that went into vast volumes with hardly a mention or no more of a representation than the back of their heads were somewhat under represented in the archaeological body. I'd hoped to at least to give diggers a voice and representation online by building a body of photographs with contributions of text by the diggers.



Frank, Willesden Bedsit project 1980's

Although I'd added text initially it soon became problematical in that, contributions were often promised but rarely forthcoming and on some

occasions requests were made to remove the contributions, so for the present this element has taken a back seat. I'd hoped the images would give a more realistic portrait of the people and conditions on the sharp end of the trowel. The "reality" of the images are always questionable as any posed form of image is a matter of artifice. I attempted to present what I thought was perhaps a closer truth, than say the sanitised site images presented in site reports of recent times. Placing the image online was an attempt to bring these images to a wider audience.



Laura and Alasdair, excavation Lincolnshire 2010

I suppose the website is really the result of why I take photographs and why I'm involved in archaeology. It's always amazed me that archaeologists go through so much training, not usually content with getting a degree but will push themselves thru Masters and beyond, just to put up with some of the worst pay and conditions for graduates around. Then to top it all they'll give talks, lectures and arrange other events in their own time.

Some Diggers do manage to get out of the field and find a cosy niche out of the cold in an office somewhere, but many more give up the profession when the demands of a family increase the financial burden or they get caught by the occasional culls brought on by a recession or other blip in the stock market. Can't really think of a better bunch of people to spend the evening in a pub with. So in some way the web site is to try to get some recognition for these backs of heads.

Any plans for the future for the website?

At present the site is on hold whilst I get to grips with being able to navigate thru sub pages in ASP net. I would like to expand the site with further images of diggers past and present, if possible I'd like to extend this part of the site to include photos of other long term excavations and sites. The problem with this is what images should be presented? If all images are included the site would become an extension of Facebook, alternatively if I was to select the images I would tend to feel a little uneasy imposing my judgement on other peoples work. I hope at some point to have more time and resources to spend on this project.

What is your 'image' of an archaeologist?

Not sure about creating an image of archaeologists. I'd hoped to simply reflect what I saw around me whilst working in archaeology, however the processes of taking photographs is a continual processes of selection, fuelled by a whole barrage of influences that frame a final image.



Simon, excavation West Cambridge 2010

It's not really possible to create a neutral image devoid of outside influence, no matter how hard you try to remain as an impartial observer, the processes of taking a photograph involves a whole sequence of choices about the subject to be taken, the angle of view, the lighting, what is good composition, and all of this is informed, manipulated by past experience and prejudices

as to what makes a "good" photograph or what we think of the subject.



If you want to know the theory I can suggest a good photographic theory course or a whole library of text books. My own point of view has always been to show the subject as an individual in their own right in a manner and form of representation that they are happy with, although I'm composing the image and taking the photo, it's still the subject's image that is being presented to the world. Although I try not to be swayed by appearance in what should make a good photo, I find that I've succumbed to the notion that the universal adoption of Health and Safety equipment has reduced the individuality of the work force, in full PPE everyone looks the same – well almost.

Who has influenced your photography?

A multitude of influences, the earliest influences were probably the Sunday supplements of the Observer and SundayTimes. By the time I got to Photographic College I was exposed to a much wider spectrum of photographers. There are numerous "great photographers" whose work I like such as Bill Brandt, Cartier Bresson, Ansell Adams, Larry Burrows, Diane Arbus, Robert Franks however I've never really tried to emulate their work, just admired it.

There are photographers whose work has perhaps influenced my work, these include August Sanders, Walker Evans, Robert Franks,



Humphrey Spender, Jimmy Forsyth, Tony Ray Jones -the influences may not be obvious in my work but then it's not necessarily a matter of copying their technique and style but following their attitudes to their subject. Humphrey Spender was involved in the [Mass Observation](#) project -a large scale social documentary project involving photography and other media in the 1930's, some of his emotive images can be seen [here](#). After being injured during the second world war whilst working in industry Jimmy Forsyth took up photography as a hobby and photographed the working class population of the [Scotswood Road](#) area of Newcastle Upon Tyne. He produced a superb archive recording the local population before major changes in social housing destroyed these communities in the mass rehousing schemes of the 60's.

In 1997 some of your photos were used in the IFA magazine and there was a bit of a rumpus, do you think the same thing would happen now?

At the time I was doing an evening course in Archaeology at Birkbeck College with Harvey Sheldon and Hedley Swain, both had seen my work and been the subject, as a result Hedley asked me to contribute a personal portfolio to the IFA magazine. One image in particular that had been used for the cover raised concern that it presented the "wrong" image of the IFA, this was despite the fact that the supporting text made it clear that the set of images was a personal portfolio. Anyway Hedley wrote a [rebuttal in a later edition \(no. 30 1997\)](#), if anybody ever wants to follow the debate over the image of the IFA and old shoes get hold of vols Winter 1996 no. 27 thru to Winter 1997 no. 30 of the IFA journal and read the letters and articles.

I suspect that at present a personal portfolio would be unlikely to appear in the IFA journal, not because of the content but because individual content would not fit into the current format and style of the IFA journal. As to whether such content would spark a similar debate I'm not sure, I would hope not, but some organisations/employers seem more concerned with presenting a sanitised corporate image than keeping their staff dry and warm (I wholeheartedly exclude my current employers from this statement of course).

How has archaeology and archaeological photography changed over your career?

Site scaffolding towers have disappeared, probably a good thing when I think of some of the contraptions I've balanced on, but then on the other hand it can sometimes take several days now just to organise a site photo. Some elements of field work have improved and when backed by sufficient resources the job can be much more satisfying than it was, however it's not always the case.

Letters

As your editorial says, *The Archaeologist* is meant to represent all 'who do archaeology in fields, offices, planning departments and museums (*The Archaeologist* 27, Winter 1996, p 1). Universities are not mentioned.

The photograph on the cover of the first issue under the new name presents an extraordinary image of archaeologists and of the discipline of archaeology. This is precisely the kind of image which damages our profession. It reinforces stereotypes about archaeologists in the eyes of the general public and of other professionals, not least in the development and construction industries from which over 90 percent of archaeology's funding now comes.

No wonder colleagues from other academic fields can write things like, 'The illiterate in an anorak at the end of the lane with a ranging rod is the archaeologist', (quoted from memory from a review in the TLS).

This cover does not represent us and no-one working with us in the field for over 30 years has looked like that.

There are other points about the chosen image:

- 1 Where is the finds tray?
- 2 Where are the labels?
- 3 Gaping boots are dangerous on a flat site and even more so in a deep and untidy trench with ladders.
- 4 No gloves are worn when handling razor-sharp flints.
- 5 The helmet is not fastened.
- 6 Is the trench safe?

Yours ever

Professor Martin Biddle and Magister Birthe Kjøbye-Biddle

Letter to The Archaeologist concerning Dave's pictures, TA29

Too frequently of late everything has to come in under-budget, on a job that has been under-priced and under-resourced so as to remain competitive. Despite the shortcomings of commercial archaeology, many things have improved, technology, in theory even site huts, however I'm still looking for a pair of boots that don't turn into half a ton of wet concrete in winter.





the Corbridge excavations from 1906-1914 most taken by J.P. Gibson. The photos show a complete cross section of the excavation and the people involved with some really beautiful images, the answer I suppose is to look in the archives for good images rather than the publication.

Just an additional comment, if anybody is thinking of taking up archaeological photography for the money, glamour or fame, just remember this, on any building site you're probably going to be the lowest paid, the site hut will lack all the comforts the contractors have and twenty years later I'm still waiting for my best set of site photographs to be published, so you'd better do it for the love of the best job going.

All photographs © Dave Webb

What is your favourite archaeological photograph and why?

The problem is in defining what is an archaeological photograph? Photos of sections and features are normally 'record shots' with little creative input just good technique hopefully. With views of sites and photography of artifacts there is perhaps more latitude for creative input, however most archaeological photography has to fit into the straitjacket of supposed scientific objectivity where all subjects are clearly illuminated and treated so as to produce a "true" image. Occasionally some work escapes this straitjacket, however it rarely gets published. An exception perhaps is a small volume produced by English Heritage "Corstopitum An Edwardian Excavation", the volume includes a small selection of photos of



We asked Dave for some general advice on taking better archaeological photos

Different genres of photography tend to have different conventions which you can either follow or ignore. Conventions and techniques may be significant in one genre, but not in another. With site work and artefact photography it's probably best to stay close to the norm, however with documentary work use whatever methods you like as long as the image is not a lie. Site and studio work both benefit from a sharp focus and well-balanced, even lighting so the subject can be clearly seen, whereas a selective focus with dramatic, or unbalanced lighting can create an image that conveys an emotional impact more suitable for a reportage style of photography.

With site photography it makes sense to observe the normal conventions of the genre if you want to take photos that can be easily read and understood by others, however taking a good site photo does not just rely on good photographic technique. The most successful way of producing a good image is to do enough preparatory work before even pressing the shutter. Although I've heard arguments that the inclusion of clutter is more truthful, in reality such shots just look messy and usually fail to communicate the required detail.

So for good site photos, you need to prepare the site first. Make sure the section is straight, remove all superfluous spoil, just make sure everything is neat and tidy, and then take the shot. If you include info boards, north points etc try taking another shot with only the scale in: they look better in the publication without the clutter but with two shots you've still got one with the information.

If possible take photographs on overcast days as deep shadows hide details, if it's not possible get some old sheets to act as a sun shade. Some shots can benefit from harsh lighting, area shots of site with shallow ditches etc. To get tips on taking photos find the BAJR Guide 12. A Short Guide to Digital Photography in Archaeology.

What lenses do you use and for which type of shots?

Whatever suits the job: ideally images should be captured with a lens approximating a

“normal angle of view” to reproduce human vision, in 35mm terms this is a 50mm “standard” lens. The problem is that many situations that you meet on site require a wider view and if not used carefully they produce a severely distorted view. At present all I use is a Nikon D80 with a moderate wide to tele-zoom.

How can I make a posed working shot look less fake?

Don't pose it – try to avoid a staged static shot by letting the diggers get on with what they are doing, or keep talking to them so they relax and take several shots. It's not always possible to take the shot like this, sometimes posed shots are the only way. Go through a couple of dry runs of the actions you intend to record so you can work out the best angles and timing for the shots, this should also familiarise all involved with the process – so hopefully nothing unexpected happens and the results should not look too artificial.

What do you feel about the gradual disappearance of chemical photographs and the rise of digital images?

I suppose nostalgia, at present a medium-format negative reproduced on bromide paper will give a fuller and more subtle range of tones than a digital camera. To successfully produce and control images with conventional techniques required an understanding of the chemistry and physics of photography, the digital processes requires far less understanding, Photoshop can do wonders and you don't have to go home reeking of photographic chemicals. **The thing about the photographic process is that anyone can take a good photograph just by pressing the shutter at the “right moment”, the difference with all the training is to reduce the odds.**

In the end digital photography is just another technical aspect to master, some elements are made simpler by digitization others are made more complex by the need to learn another software package each time there is an upgrade. **The core of photography is understanding composition, lighting and the relation with the subject this doesn't change whether it's a conventional camera or a digital camera.**



Review: The Dig, photographs by Guy Hunt



'For months we live and work together intensely as a team and then at the end of the process, the archive is prepared for deposition and most traces of the hands that created this archive are lost. The team disappears and the dig lives on only in our memories.'

The first thing to say about this review is that I know which site 'The Dig' illustrates -I never worked there, although I knew of it. I know many of the people that worked there and their background and ethos. I know where the site was, what they found and where some are now working, and all of that colours my perception of this book.

But picking up this slim collection of photographs you are not instantly privy to any of that. The site name is discretely mentioned if you look for it, as is the unit name, but refreshingly there are no

corporate logos or lengthy messages from the developer. There is just a series of images. And very little text.

Gone is the context, all you are given is that this is an archaeological site, that it rained, that people laughed, and that someone took some photos. The rest is either unspoken or irrelevant.

The format is clean, spare and glossy; it is also nearly all monochrome (very monochrome) which somehow mirrors the lack of narrative and of text. It is simply a book of images. None of them are immediately classically brilliant photos, some aren't actually that good at all in isolation, but in this context (and context is all?) they work together. Photos of people -snaps in fact- imperfect pictures of life, work and tea breaks on a random site.

As archaeologists we want (and expect) labels, captions, scales and north arrows, but even the 'archaeological' photos of skeletons here are somehow subversive in their ignorance of conventions and their haphazard snappishness and wonky horizons. They are more like the photos we all take of a key feature –sneaking up to grab a shot on our phone after the 'official' photos are taken and before we are shooed back to work.





There are no captions or names, no hints of story beyond what is in the image. This is an incomplete book, there was obviously far more *there* than what is shown *here*. There is no profuse thanks or acknowledgements. The intro- text on the host website says that the photographs are a way of documenting the process of excavation, and to record the diggers that worked on the site. *But there are no names, there are no stories.* Are we as Diggers, and we as photographers, still too shy - or too scared- to lend our true identities to images of ourselves in books -whether an academic publication, or a friends e-book? The facelessness of academic monograph replaced by the anonymity of the photo-essay. The one thing I noticed in writing up the interview with Dave Webb, and in reviewing this book, is that although the images are great, the faces remain, by default, unacknowledged. This book serves a good purpose: to those that were there it will mean something, to Diggers who pick it up it will be of interest.

But there is still another book to write. And that book has words and pictures: images *and* stories.

The Dig has been produced using the [blurb](#) creative publishing services. This allows you to digitally layout a book, and then publish via print-on-demand. It is not cheap, but it is easy (apparently) and your print run can be as big or small as you like. It may be seen as a vanity project, but if I had worked on this Dig, I would treasure my copy –assuming my mugshot made the final cut!



All photographs in this review © Guy Hunt

You can order The Dig, or preview more of Guy's images, at <http://www.blurb.com/bookstore/detail/567620>

Events Diary October-December 2011

Gwilym Williams

We'd be grateful if people could send us details of exhibitions, open days, lectures, training events, and other events of interest to members. We're also happy to run any short news pieces that members would like to share. If you have any news, events or dates for the diary then please email the diary editor at gwilymwilliams70@yahoo.co.uk for inclusion in the next issue.

UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX

Programme in Practical Archaeology 2011/12

This part-time programme is ideal both for those who wish to begin in field archaeology, and also those who have experience as volunteers but who now wish to develop their practical skills and knowledge about how we can record and interpret the past from archaeological data.

The programme comprises two core courses, Archaeological Survey and Archaeological Excavation and Post-Excavation (main tutor: David Rudling), that introduce you to some of the main fieldwork, scientific and interpretative methods involved in practical archaeology. An option course taken in the summer enables you to broaden your range of both practical and academic skills.

Venue: University of Sussex at Falmer, Three or two terms (depending upon option chosen), Monday evenings, 7-9pm and some weekend day schools/field trips. Starting Monday 3 October 2011.

www.sussex.ac.uk/cce/practicalarchaeology

Programme in Buildings Archaeology 2011/12

This part-time programme is ideal both for those who wish to begin in buildings archaeology, and also those who have some experience but who now wish to develop their practical skills and knowledge about how we can record and interpret the past from standing buildings.

The programme comprises three courses: Understanding Historic Vernacular Buildings (tutor: Mike Standing), Recording Historic Vernacular Buildings in South-East England (David Martin), and The Archaeological Investigation of a Church (Robert Hutchinson). Those students who successfully complete the spring term course will have matched the English Heritage requirements for its 'Recording Level 3'. This Programme is recognised by the Institute of Historic Building Conservation for Continuing Professional Development.

Venues: University of Sussex, The Weald and Downland Open Air Museum at Singleton, and site visits. Three terms, various Saturdays, 10am-4 or 5pm. Starting Saturday 8 October 2011.

www.sussex.ac.uk/cce/buildingsarchaeology or T 01273 678300

Join us and make your voice heard!

The Diggers' Forum is the IfA Special Interest Group for field workers, that includes EVERYONE who primarily works at the sharp end of archaeology out on site.

The DF is open to all and represents field archaeologists at all levels -from a student considering professional archaeology to Project Officers running major excavations. The Diggers' Forum

represents YOUR views on a wide variety of matters within and beyond the IfA, we are the second largest SIG within the IfA and the bigger we are the bigger our voice.

If you are a member of the IfA membership of the Diggers' Forum is FREE, for non-members there is a subscription of £10 a year. To join email: groups@archaeologists.net



Taking the 'Con' out of Archaeological Consultancy

Andy Towle

Archaeological consultancy sometimes has a poor reputation within the digging fraternity, and to be honest I sometimes hesitate to describe myself as a "Consultant" when meeting fellow archaeologists it is often just easier to describe myself as an "Archaeologist". I don't worry too much about job titles when dealing with planners, architects, engineers or clients: whilst they may have their fair share of assumptions about archaeologists, they are less likely to distinguish between Consultants and the rest of the archaeological community. This article will hopefully go some way to dispel some of the myths concerning what Consultants do, and introduce the radical concept that Consultants may have a useful role to play in managing the historic environment. This is necessarily a series of personal observations, and I don't therefore claim to represent consultants in general, although I know a few who are similar in outlook.

It's all Me, Me, Me

Like most of us, I am motivated by a fascination with old stuff, and particularly in generating insights into the past. Over the years I have become increasingly interested in the process by which archaeological information is generated: from the legislative framework, planning policy and implementation, to the specifics of commissioning and organising the logistics of site work. I've always had a curiosity about why some strange decisions on site are made, and whilst I am happy knocking a section through a ditch on a cold autumn's morning, I don't like feeling vulnerable to the whims of others who decide the circumstances of my being there. Frustrations with the way archaeology is conducted has also prompted me to become involved in the IfA on the basis that it is better to try and do something about it than just whinge at tea-break.

What I do

I've ended up working for an organisation which has Consulting in its title, so it is difficult to avoid being regarded as a Consultant by my professional peers. But what do I do all day to earn my living wage?

Much of the work I undertake is similar to that taken

on by other archaeological organisations: meeting existing and potential clients, finding out the detail of their scheme and what they really want as an outcome, trying to figure out what services they might need to realise their commercial objectives and convincing them to commission this work from me. This work includes due diligence ahead of land purchases, desk-based assessments, environmental statements and project designs defining mitigation works or post-excavation programmes.

Often these activities will involve some negotiation with clients and curators around the scope and expected outcome of the archaeological work, and input into the detailed design of the development. This can be fascinating, you draw upon twenty-something years of experience and haphazardly accumulated knowledge of archaeology and development, hopefully leading to both a satisfied client and some new contribution to the sum of human knowledge. Many projects don't develop very far beyond the initial DBA or evaluation, but occasionally a full programme of archaeological work ensues.

There is another aspect of Consultancy which is somewhat drier than site work, but pretty essential- the whole legislation, guidance and policy stuff- not only pertaining to archaeology but also the wider historic environment: landscapes, Conservation Areas, Listed Buildings, parks and gardens, battlefields, hedgerows, Rights of Way, ancient woodlands, cultural heritage etc., as well as snippets of planning regulation, land quality and remediation phasing, options for engineering and construction design solutions -the list goes on! You need to be conversant with all of this to find a path through for your particular project, and it can be highly specific to the locale in the UK.

Trying to make a sensible statement on the impact of a wind farm on the setting of some unknown or invisible archaeology 5 miles away can lead to some iterative navel gazing. Even more difficult is to assess the impact of a development on historic characters and connections such as a coal-mine in D.H. Lawrence Country. More practical challenges include figuring out a sensible course of action when the "preserved" *in situ* remains are now starting to decay, and no-one is quite sure how to reverse the problem now there's a building on top of the site...

Clients

Clients can be highly variable- from the penny-pinching nightmares who resent paying anything at all to secure their access to a site, to enlightened individuals who recognise that Heritage is just another matter to be resolved, and one which might be harnessed to positive effect for the scheme. It *is*



possible to stereotype clients according to commercial sector, but it is probably best to avoid spelling it out here. Some clients will want to try and downplay the presence of the SAM within the development area, and seek to persuade you to change your conclusions in DBAs and environmental statements.

This is the toughest problem faced by Consultants- your capacity to negotiate the scope of works with Local Authority curators is predicated on having some sort of credibility. If you are making judgements in your documentation which are clearly sound and proportionate to the significance of archaeological remains, then a curator is more likely to consider you and your client's arguments for a particular course of action (such as type of mitigation strategy). If a Consultant is simply a mouthpiece for a client, and constructs elaborate arguments for why the SAM should be destroyed during a development without any mitigation works, the Consultant ends up looking foolish to the curator, and whilst taking the cheque from the client, is unlikely to secure the desired outcome (planning and SAM consent/discharge of condition). I've read some submissions from other archaeologists (as well as architects specialising in conservation) which are toe-curlingly embarrassing in their sycophantic presentation of a client's case, such a course of action devalues the only currency a Consultant has- their capacity to make sound judgements when offering advice and negotiating and organising a response to the heritage constraints on a client's scheme.

Access to Clients and Conflicts of Interest

The central reason why clients will pay for consultancy advice, rather than going directly to a contracting unit, is the perception that a contracting unit has a vested interest in talking up the archaeological liability during negotiations, in the hope of reaping a large commission to undertake any mitigation works. This is partly a matter of perception rather than reality- there are equally a range of better and worse unit project managers, some of whom are quite capable of telling the client what they think the client wants to hear in order to secure the job, only to increase the costs later. However, the Consultant does meet the client without the baggage of a (hungry and badly-paid) field team to support.

Perhaps more importantly is the timing of when archaeologist and client collide. The Consultant is more likely to be meeting the client early on in a project's life. Not only does this make it more likely that the (Consultant) archaeologist is able to influence the design and trajectory of a scheme, but if the archaeologist is negotiating fees at the same time as the planners, lawyers, architects and engineers, then it is slightly easier to ask for more



Andy Towle, Archaeological Consultant: one of us?

than the minimum wage. If an archaeologist is being introduced to the project at the same time as the unskilled site labourers, when budgets have been fossilized and promised to backers, then you are left with crumbs rather than a small slice of the cake. If you are a Consultant working within a multidisciplinary planning or engineering organisation, you are more likely to be introduced to the client at an optimal point (for all concerned).

Curators

Curators are almost without exception over-worked, and struggling to keep on top of complex work loads of live projects and new planning applications requiring comment, in addition to advising on draft policies and responding to local authority bureaucratic demands. At least I guess this is the case... Given the cuts in government expenditure, this is likely to be the situation for a while. Consultants are therefore in a position to influence the way in which planning constraints are implemented.

Consultants operating in this space aren't inherently bad- both good and bad archaeological decision-making is possible anywhere within the process. If a bad judgement is made by a Consultant and endorsed by the curator, it is more likely to manifest itself in dreadful fieldwork where the dismayed diggers will want to know which idiot is responsible. Who is the easiest person to blame in such circumstances?

Subbies

I arrange for sub-contractors or sub-consultants to undertake geophysical surveys, fieldwork and post-excavation reporting. This can be a relationship



directly with the client or via my company, it depends upon the project and the preference of the client. The relationship with subbies can be fraught as you are often asking them to deliver something on your behalf for the client at very short notice. The upside is that it is possible to negotiate prices above IfA minima, so that the self-employed specialists involved have some compensation for the short-term work you send their way.

You build interesting relationships with your subbies and are reliant on their ability to pull you out of the proverbial when something goes wrong, but if a subbie drops you in it by going directly to the client or curator with a problem, then you may end up falling out with them.

Dirty Hands

This archaeological Consultant quite likes archaeological fieldwork, occasionally I'll get a run-out for a few days doing a small piece of work for an established client, or helping out on a larger project we are managing. I'd argue that exposure to archaeological practise informs the advice given to clients. In fact, as soon as you stop doing fieldwork, then your relationship to implementing good and bad project designs becomes ever more remote. So I'm keeping it real by doing a bit of shovelling when the weather is good... Project managers at traditional units face the same dilemma, they may love excavating and recording, but it becomes increasingly difficult to justify the cost of being on site.

What does confuse me is when I meet Consultants who have a year's worth of post-graduation digging experience, and hated it so much they decided to become Consultants. A twenty-something in a sharp suit (see below) is unlikely to have the breadth of experience to make informed decisions. Or maybe I'm just becoming a grumpy old sod?

Adding Value

Life as a Consultant isn't easy- you still have to demonstrate you are adding value (as well as cost) with your activities, and that your fees are justified. The days of organisations maintaining Consultant archaeologists as window dressing for larger schemes did not survive the recession. This means securing work and knocking out those reports as furiously as you ever bashed a section through ditches. Someone extracting surplus value from your labour is something Consultants and Diggers share.

Wearing a Nice Suit

You don't have to wear a sharp suit to be a Consultant. Of course, if you turn up to a design team meeting (with the architects in black polo

necks, engineers in blue shirt and tie combos and the client in a black silk suit) dressed like Swampy and smelling of unwashed waterproofs, no-one will take your opinion seriously. It might be unfair, but you have to understand the context. As an archaeologist you will know that this is an important skill.

Becoming a Suit

If you think being an Archaeological Consultant may be for you then ideally you need to have spent a few years getting lots of varied digging experience, but equally importantly you need to avoid stalling at this point. There are many Diggers who never really develop their skills beyond becoming excellent excavators and as a consequence their careers can stagnate. If you feel there is more to life than digging yet another ditch and you want to see the Big Picture then you will almost certainly have to gain experience of report writing.

Many employers will provide *ad hoc* opportunities for Diggers to write WSIs and even client reports for small sites and watching briefs, usually these are based on a standard template and aren't as difficult as you may think. Ask whether you can help write up the site you are working on –even data entry, or cutting-and-pasting all the front-end blurb from the WSI to the eval report is useful, and grab any secondments going.

Knocking out grey literature reports and DBAs will feed positively into your own excavation and recording, as the rationale behind reporting informs your digging. The overview of the process gives you an insight into archaeological decision-making, and these are some of the skills you'll need when convincing an organisation that you are qualified to be a Consultant. Alternatively you could just buy a really nice suit and talk to an international engineering/environmental company...

In the end, like Diggers, Consultants also have a precarious existence - better than sleeping in the back of a van whilst working on a pipeline, but precarious nonetheless. So the next time you are cursing your site's project design as you have to excavate and record 2.5 m³ of complex urban stratigraphy every day, spare a thought for the Consultant who negotiated the arrangement. He/she may now be unemployed, and without the company car they have only their pristine waterproofs and shiny safety boots to show for their efforts.

Doesn't that make you feel better?



Review:

Londinium, a new map and guide to Roman London, (Museum of London Archaeology, £6.25)



image © MoLA

The publication of a new map of Roman London is a major cause for celebration, and this map is certainly worthy of praise. It has taken many years to produce the map, and builds on decades of work across London. London is one of those cities that can be truly called a single site, the hundreds of excavations and watching briefs (so many that they are running out of site codes!) all being trenches within the overall site.

The map is available in traditional printed form, whilst for technophiles there is a related free [iphone/ipad app](#) that will guide you around London. The map is part of MoLA's 'popular' publications series, designed for the interested layman, but also invaluable for the professional.

This map was developed as a replacement for the previous OS map of *Londinium*, produced in 1981. The previous map was much loved by London's archaeologists and was an absolutely invaluable tool in working out how your site fitted into the rest of the City. In the days before CAD and GIS it was almost the only way of getting an overview of how it all fitted together.

The map was largely based on Merrifield's 1965 map of Roman London and used Dave Bentley's work on contours and hydrology to create a 3-D map of London. For reasons best forgotten Southwark was completely missed off the original map -there was a real north-south divide in those days- but it is thankfully to be found on the new map, an addition that sets *Londinium* in its proper context.

The map is well presented and printed on good quality paper which folds out to reveal the modern street layout of the City and Southwark overlain by the Roman contours, hydrology and townscape. This allows you to navigate via either the modern streets or the Roman roads. Individual Roman buildings and monuments are located and identified via a key or annotations on the map. On the reverse is an illustrated history and thematic run-through of *Londinium*.

Visually the map looks good: the mapping is clear and clean and the key is easy to follow, although the reverse side may have benefited from clearer navigation between the text blocks as it can be hard to follow the historic narrative. The images are well produced and of MoLA's usual high standard, although many will be familiar to keen students of London archaeology.

Niggles? With a bit of shuffling the map could have had the whole of the City on one side of the central fold, and Southwark on the other which would make handling the map easier, but perhaps there has been too much division between north and south, DUA/SLAEC/DoGLA, and MoLA/PCA.

I would have liked to have seen a sequence of smaller figures mapping the development of *Londinium* from its early settlement to the later walled town: the masonry walls have a strong influence on our perception of *Londinium*, even though they weren't there for much of the settlement's history. There is still a lack of



indication of any extramural development along the roads and rivers, although we do know that there was early settlement outside of the later wall in the Upper Walbrook.

There are some omissions of course, as is inevitable on a work of this scale (in both senses of the word): the distribution of wells and mosaics is incomplete, and there are many missing sites (this is freely acknowledged in the text). The cemetery areas are shown as simple stippling and give no indication of the density of the burials in each area despite advances in our understanding of *Londinium's* cemeteries. But these are mere niggles, overall the map gives an excellent account of our knowledge of Roman London and is as up to date as is possible at this scale.

For those interested in London's past the map is an excellent addition, the combination of map and text means that there are many ways of using the map from poring over the photographs and text, to walking the streets, to using the map to set new discoveries in their topographical context. For the active London archaeologist the map is an essential addition and should be displayed on every site hut wall. The inclusion of site boundaries would have been very useful for archaeologists and would have shown just how much work has been carried out in and around the City, although it may have cluttered the map.

This map shows that developer-funded archaeology can produce excellent results on a landscape scale as well as on a site by site basis. The ongoing publication program of MoLA, PCA and others means that more and more is known about the site of *Londinium*, and increasingly archaeologists should feel confident to take their interpretation beyond the site limit.

The various funding bodies are to be congratulated on for backing this map as are the team of archaeologists who put this map together. It is personally gratifying to see sites that I worked on finally added to the official map of *Londinium* and overall the map shows how much thirty years of excavations has added, but also where the tempting gaps remain.

In some ways what is of course needed is a new text overview of Roman London adding in

all that has emerged since Perring's 1991 Roman London. Such a book may well be on its way, but any text describing our state of knowledge of *Londinium* will always date quickly as new sites are excavated.

The future of these maps should of course be a web-based GIS of some form, and the potential of London in this regard is huge: on top of the antiquarian observations and findings we have nearly 40 years of excavations, the majority of which have been recorded using a single recording system and with a single system of analysis and with the majority of finds and samples recorded using a single database format.

It is good to note that MoLA may release some of the mapping data via the web: given the grant-funded nature of the work it is good to see that other researchers may be able to share the information. Harnessing the wealth of data buried in the archives is certainly possible, and hopefully will become a reality over the next ten years. We will then be truly able to talk of *Londinium* as one site. This map helps point the way.

Chiz Harward

Pete Rowsome worked at the Museum of London for thirty years, here he tells us about the development of the new map:

Although the term can be overused, work on producing this new map of Roman London really was a 'team effort' by both archaeologists and funding bodies, reflecting the particular challenges of undertaking synthetic research and the added value of collating already analysed site data.

In 2001 everyone agreed that the old Ordnance Survey map of Roman London should be replaced – it was both out of date and out of print – but making it happen was not easy. The amount of Roman London map data that would require consideration, filtering and digitisation for a new map was massive. Either a six-figure budget or a pragmatic, product-focused approach would be required, and the former was clearly not possible. However, I was able to string together successful applications for relatively small amounts of funding from three different organisations: the City of London Archaeological Trust (CoLAT), the London and



Middlesex Archaeological Society (LAMAS) and the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Excavation Committee (SLAEC). The formal funding was enhanced by support-in-kind from the Museum of London's archaeological service (MoLA), the LAARC and other contractors such as Pre-Construct Archaeology (PCA).

The limited funding may have turned out to be a blessing. Attempts to carry out a fully digitised deposit survey of the area of Roman London might well have defeated us, even if the funds had been available. Instead our goal, given the limited time and money available, would be to create a single map – primarily for traditional paper distribution - backed up by selected digital data, for use by archaeologists, museum visitors and the general public. Even these limited goals took nearly a decade to complete, given the intermittent availability of staff, with much of the work fitted into gaps between other projects. The map that has resulted from this work could be seen as a pilot study for a much larger project, while providing what we hope is a valuable and useful tool for the here and now.

The new map graphically presents our up to date knowledge of the Roman city's topography, plan and appearance, with selected remains accurately located and superimposed on the modern street plan. The accompanying guide, on the reverse of the map, provides a descriptive history of *Londinium* and illustrations of important sites and finds. Fair enough, but what this doesn't say is that the work required a high level of subjective decision-making about what to include and how much conjecture to show. There were up to eight phases of Roman building at some sites and decisions on which ones to depict on the map often came down to 'biggest is best'. The map is therefore a 'tip of the iceberg' depiction of Roman London's structures. Very few of the thousands of domestic earth-and-timber roadside buildings recorded during excavations are shown on the map – at a scale of 1:3000 they are simply too small.

Identifying and selecting information for inclusion in the map project required a lot of 'local knowledge' as well as development of protocols. London's archive may be unusually well-organised and consistent but it is so big that searching it for the best data is difficult and only the past 15 years or so of more than two centuries of archaeological records are accessibly digitised. When starting work on the map we knew that the 19th-century mapping, some of it hugely important, would not be as accurately geo-referenced as recent material. In fact anything pre-1990 proved difficult to locate on a map without accepting the need for some best-fit wobble room. Even the city defensive wall, much of

it still standing, lacked an up to date survey.

And despite there being thousands of observations and hundreds of carefully excavated sites within an area of only a couple of square miles, many parts of the canvas remain stubbornly blank or open to interpretation. A case in point relates to identifying the contours of the surface of natural – full geo-referencing and digitisation of data points would demand a large project of its own – our map has avoided this hurdle by using 3-foot contours derived from an 1841 sewer survey allied with a combination of archaeological evidence and information on mean high and low tide levels. While it would be lovely to have a detailed 'go-to' survey of Roman ground levels and deposit survival, that will also have to wait for a future life, given the time and expense required to produce such a thing.

We never felt that the map should be concerned just with a dry presentation of found remains. Other important purposes were to explain the changing topography of the area over time and try to bring Roman London to life for the map user by describing the 'lay of the land' - asking everyone to use their imagination to overcome the general lack of visible remains. I also wanted to promote debate about the town's layout through the bold use of conjecture, some of which may well turn out to be incorrect, and I look forward to archaeologists telling me that their excavations have shown that we were wrong in predicting a certain street alignment or stream course.

Peter Rowsome

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Win a copy of the map!

We have a copy of the new *Londinium* map to give away to a DF member courtesy of MoLA, all you have to do is write a short piece on *Londinium* or London's archaeology and what it means to you. The best entry will get a free copy of the map and will be printed in the next issue of the newsletter -so keep it clean!

Entries to diggers@archaeologists.net by 31st November



Trouble in the Fens



On the evening of 21st June 2011 a little known ex-brickie and district councillor stood up to make a keynote speech to an audience of developers in East Anglia. Councillor Alan Melton, leader of Fengate District Council, was about to spark off a huge furore in the professional archaeological world with his intention to unilaterally scrap development-led archaeological works in his district. His speech was reported in the local press, and within a day news had spread like wildfire amongst archaeologists. They were aghast at what was proposed, but what seemed to really get everyone angry was his language: accusing archaeologists of being 'bunny huggers' and 'historic lefties'.

Within hours of [the reporting of Melton's speech](#) in the [Eastern Daily Press](#) various individuals and organisations started to react to what they read. For established groups like the IfA and Rescue it was yet another threat to archaeology and heritage services to be dealt with, but for some individuals it was somehow something new and they decided to act themselves. Dave Bonner, a professional archaeologist, set up a Facebook group, the snappily titled '[Oppose Plans to scrap archaeology in the Fens](#)' and petition, and within hours the word was spreading via Facebook, Twitter, blogs and web-fora such as BAJR and Britarch as hundreds of archaeologists shared their disbelief at what Melton had said. The scrapping of archaeology was about

to become a very minor cause célèbre.

Having been tipped off about the article and first checked the facts, the CBA, FAME, IfA and other bodies in The Archaeology Forum wrote to Fenland District Council setting out where Melton was wrong, and why he simply couldn't do what he said he would. I don't think it helped that this included EU legislation! Further letters from the likes of English Heritage followed along with a letter to [The Times](#). Melton appeared on [Radio 4](#), where Mike Heyworth of the CBA calmly set out the value of archaeology, and it seemed that Melton finally had to think about what he had been saying.

In the end the Bunnygate affair ended in a damp squib. Melton had enjoyed his 15 minutes of fame, with mentions in [Private Eye](#) and notoriety amongst archaeologists, but the PR machine kicked in with a retraction and an insistence that all he wanted was a 'debate'. He got that debate in an event hosted by the [Mortimer](#) organisation but no details are available over a month after the debate and many felt that having won the argument giving Melton the oxygen of publicity was ill-judged.

Much of the initial outrage over the speech is surely due to the character of Melton himself, dubbed 'The Fool from the Fens' by one wag, he was a total gift for his opponents who seized on his every word: 'I don't believe the Polar Bears will be floating down the Nene in my life time or indeed my children's' was one favourite quote. His lack of understanding of archaeology and its place in the planning process seemed to anger archaeologists more than previous attacks on heritage services, Dave Bonner: *'I should say that what most angered me about Cllr Melton's statement was not his various insults and dismissals but his completely misguided understanding of archaeology and the planning process'*. This was not a cash-strapped council making a tough decision over whether to cut libraries or HER provision. Here was the leader of a district council who just happened to be a construction project manager scrapping archaeological surveys because he felt they got in the way with development. We all knew times were tough and we had seen over cuts and closures around the country, but this was different, was this a sign of things to come?

Chris Cumberpatch (Vice-chair, Rescue): *'Personally I felt that Cllr. Melton was expressing the view of those who see making money as the highest good and regard most other considerations as secondary to this objective. One often gets the impression that such views are widespread in the political and development communities and in this regard his statements were not a complete surprise.'*



The IfA believe that the Melton affair shows there may be more planning authority Councillors who are unaware of their responsibilities, or are reluctant to carry out these responsibilities, and that as Local Authority budgets are set there will be many more Historic Environment Services (HESs) put under extreme budgetary pressure and needing our support. The IfA does though feel that Melton may have been a distraction from the real issues: the NPPF and the Localism Bill.

There is a wide sense of unease amongst many archaeologists about the direction we are heading in. Whilst many had reservations about PPG16, and we have hardly got used to PPS5 we are now about to get a double whammy of the National Planning Policy Framework with its talk of assumption in favour of sustainable development and the Localism Bill. Combined with the cuts imposed by central government on local authorities this has seriously worried many archaeologists: even if some system of developer-led archaeology survives the combined effects of the NPPF and Localism Bill what if the effect of the cuts mean that there is no-one left to implement and monitor the work? Chris Cumberpatch: *The mere existence of PPS5/NPPF is useless if there is no one to enforce it. The same applies to the Valetta Convention... We need, as a matter of urgency, a statutory obligation on local authorities to maintain an effective level of monitoring and curatorship. This was almost achieved under the previous government via the Heritage Bill – that this was scrapped at the last moment was a disaster and paved the way for the current crisis.'*

Melton's speech underlines the potential threat: his belief was that archaeology was a brake on development and therefore on jobs, growth and the economy. FAME suggest that his *'is merely an extreme expression of a more widespread dissatisfaction with archaeological requirements raised by a growing number of clients'* and that there will continue to be calls for changes in how local government provides advice and how archaeology fits within the planning system.

Chris Cumberpatch adds: *'The Melton affair highlighted an attitude that has an unknown level of influence within the development community – that archaeology is a threat to development. I wonder which option developers would choose if the choice was between an unregulated system in which local pressure groups would [campaign against development when it was] thought to threaten sites of archaeological or historical importance, or... a system in which the... financial costs were to a high degree regulated and calculable and which forms part of the planning system which they already have to deal with? There is a sense in which this is an argument which*

is being revisited because people have forgotten the fact that we have already had it. A decision was made in the 1970s that archaeology and heritage should be a material consideration within the planning process and we have been through several systems (the County Archaeologist / County Unit system, replaced by PPG16 and later by PPS5 and, in the future by the NPPF) in pursuit of one which gives appropriate balance to the demands of heritage and the demands of development. Whether we have that under PPS5/NPPF is another debate.

In fact, the evidence of the building boom of the 1990s/early 2000s should show that archaeology poses no significant impediment to the progress of development with both greenfield and brownfield sites generally being investigated quickly and efficiently by archaeologists in advance of development (and at astonishingly little cost to developers, given the low level of wages, salaries and fees within commercial archaeology; compare civil engineering, law and architecture with archaeology ...). If Melton's views are widespread ... then they are both disturbing and based on a misunderstanding of the relationship between development and commercial archaeology.'

So archaeology is not a threat to development or growth, in addition to its academic, tourism and community value archaeology of course also creates jobs, although the low wages mean that archaeology is not as big a sector as it should be. Another reason to put up salaries!

Lobbying

Whilst the IfA and FAME lobby government over the NPPF and Localism, the cuts continue to HES's and to museums and archaeological services across the country. What can be done and what can we do?

Dave Bonner again: *'For me the general response to the Melton incident showed that while archaeological interest groups like the CBA, IfA and RESCUE do a significant amount of work behind the scenes, lobbying and advising, there is often a significant disconnection in communication with those people on the ground who they are supposed to be representing or who's support they could be capitalising on.'*

Connecting with the *'people on the ground'* is the holy grail of campaign groups. Getting people to identify with a cause enough that they will not only sign e-petitions and join Facebook groups, but write letters and turn up at council meetings. And then do it again the next week. The IfA publicises some of its public lobbying activity on its website and has started to add a request to local members to write in and support their local service. That is a start, and



the IfA acknowledges it must engage more with members –but that is a two-way street with members also having to engage and assist.

Groups, despite the fancy letterheads are in reality very small (Rescue has one part-time office assistant, the IfA a handful of office staff) and rely on a small number of volunteers, whether it is committee members or activists. For every hundred who sign a petition how many forward it on? And how many write a letter to their MP, and how many then keep writing? To make it easy for people to get involved takes time and takes organisation, so even amongst the more anarchic collections of individuals on Facebook –many of whom would never join the IfA or Rescue- there are those who were stepping up and leading: providing draft letters, spreading advice to fellow campaigners, publicising the campaign with T shirts and badges, and writing to press and political contacts to get the story up the agenda. Numbers are important, but clicking 'Like' is never going to be enough.

What can you do?

What can you do then as an individual? This may depend on your own position –student, professional archaeologist, academic or interested member of the public - but there is always *something* you can do. As an individual you can write letters to the local or national press, or write to your MP or Councillor. All those letters really make a difference and there is lots of guidance available to help draft your letter –just remember that a few minutes personalising a stock-letter is well worth the effort. Make sure that you explain why the threatened service is so important –you can now find good figures and arguments on the IfA and Rescue websites. *Its no good just saying NO, you need to explain why.* Individual action can even be done before there is a real threat –write to your local paper saying how much you enjoyed your visit to your local museum.

You can also join local or national bodies that care about the historic environment, whether that be the IfA, Rescue, the CBA or your local archaeological society. And once you're a member you can ask what they are doing about particular issues, and you can even offer to help co-ordinate or assist in their campaigns. All organisations are short of active members who are prepared to help out.

Social networking is an effective way of spreading news of threats and of organising and mobilising, and it can make individuals feel that their actions matter and is therefore empowering. There is often a perception that organisations like the IfA or CBA aren't doing *anything* because there is not a constant stream of press releases and web-chatter: organisations work in different ways to individuals and a combined approach may often be the best:

'Much of IfA's advocacy depends on behind-the-scenes lobbying, and for that we have to work really hard to ensure that our corporate views are always authoritative, fair and measured. Individuals have less to lose (and are not accountable to a membership), and can work in a different way. The art is to get the right synergy of organisational and mass-action activity. IfA can get better at this'.

Organisations backed by local support can show politicians that there are votes at stake. National organisations like the IfA only have a handful of staff; they cannot cover every meeting and react to every development. That has to be down to us.

If there are council meetings then organise and attend. Councillors start getting worried when 30 people turn up at a previously unattended meeting. It shows commitment to the cause: it is easy to click on an e-petition or join a Facebook group, but actually turning up speaks volumes about how much an issue means.

Raw numbers do make a difference, you can bet that the politicians keep an eye on the numbers in Facebook groups and petitions, so get involved and get your friends and family to lend their support. There simply aren't enough archaeologists to create a groundswell of opposition, but if we network beyond our own profession then might we get significant numbers?

The public

And of course to be truly successful we need to engage the public, the huge mass of people who are interested in what we do, but whom we too often keep on the other side of the hoarding. Forestry workers didn't stop the Forestry Commission sell-off, the public did. How can we tap into the huge number of history buffs and archaeology enthusiasts, the audience of Time Team? That is where the numbers lie.

We can be proud that 4,467 people signed a petition against Melton's proposals, but how many of them were *not* archaeologists? And how many were actually local to Fenland? The discrepancy in size and organisational capabilities between the National Trust (3.6 million members, 55,000 volunteers) and the CBA, IfA, and Rescue combined (several thousand members) speaks for itself in how they can approach dealing with government and the influence they have.

At the very least we need to engage and build links with academic archaeologists, museums groups, other heritage professionals to share information and support each other. Most of all we need to motivate the vast number of local history and archaeology groups across the country that this is important, and that they can act. We will support them in their campaigns as they support us in ours.



If we can engage the public then we will have more of a chance, and that means re-addressing what archaeology does and how it does it –hence the Southport group report. It may however be too late.

As we all know cuts and cutbacks are not new, however in the current economic situation, and with a government intent on cutting expenditure wherever it can, the threats to the survival of commercial archaeology heritage services and museums alike are grave. If we are to survive this current round of threats and cuts we need to all make a commitment to pull together to do what we can and make archaeology less of an easy target. We need in fact to do our job as archaeologists: to promote archaeology and to let the wider public know what it is we do, and let them see what we have found. We need to turn outwards, and whilst not taking our eye off of our internal problems, we have to make sure that the value of archaeology is seen and understood by those whose archaeology it is.

So what is the legacy of Melton? Has the anger and outrage dissipated back to apathy, or has it marked the point where archaeologists have decided to put their case more forcefully by taking many individual actions alongside the 'big' organisations? The potential is there in social networking to share information and resources between loosely structured groupings of individuals. It is whether we carry on doing it.

It is up to all of us in the end. If you feel that your heritage and your profession is worth saving, then is it too much to ask to send the occasional email to the local paper, write to your MP, lobby council meetings and write in support of your colleagues? Each of us should make a commitment to do what we can to help protect archaeological services, it may take a few minutes of your time, but isn't it worth it?

Web Resources:

To find your MP use this link:

<http://findyourmp.parliament.uk/>

And to keep tabs on what they are up to:

<http://www.theyworkforyou.com/>



The IfA have a page on the advocacy section of their website giving information on what you can do, and useful paragraphs to include in letters, their news pages carry details of the latest letters they have written:

<http://www.archaeologists.net/advocacy/protectingservices>

There is also The Archaeology Forum's briefing document Why Local Government needs Archaeological Advisors:

http://www.britarch.ac.uk/archforum/Why_LAs_need_an_archaeologist_Short.pdf



Rescue have produced the most comprehensive resource, their document Fighting Back lists what you can do, and how to do it. Essential reading.

<http://www.rescue-archaeology.org.uk/2011/07/31/rescue-publish-fighting-back/>



The Rescue [Cuts Map](#) is a good way of keeping up with what is going on, and their [Facebook Group](#) will also keep you up to date –or you could even join Rescue, its only £15 a year!

<http://www.rescue-archaeology.org.uk/map4/>

The Fenland Facebook group is another good place to keep on top of latest news and coverage in the press:

<http://www.facebook.com/groups/supportfenlandheritage/>

Chiz Harward would like to thanks all those that contributed to this article, in particular Chris Cumberpatch, Dave Bonner, David Connolly, the IfA and FAME



Beyond Bunnygate, SYAS: successful campaign reverses Council decision



Iain McIntyre

Confronted by the combined opposition of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), [a Facebook campaign](#) and the Joint Advisory Committee for South Yorkshire Archaeology Services (JAC), Sheffield County Council (SCC) has backed down from its plans to implement a 50% cut in its funding for the South Yorkshire Archaeological Service (SYAS).

SYAS was already facing a 15% funding cut from its four contributing authorities (Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield) but earlier this year was informed that SCC was seeking a total of 50% reduction in its funding to the service. This follows on from cuts already seen in other local authorities such as at Gloucester City Council, Essex County Council and the complete withdrawal of funding for the Merseyside Archaeological Service. The IfA wrote a detailed [letter](#) to the council expressing their concerns over the proposed cuts.

Angered by this latest threat to UK heritage, local Yorkshire archaeologists Bill Beven and Jennifer Marchant utilised Facebook to create a protest group. Its aims: to disseminate information regarding the funding cut; to urge

people to email the sitting members of the JAC and SCC and; urge people to attend an opening meeting of the JAC.

The Facebook group's members included both professional and academic archaeologists, students and members of the non-archaeological community and highlighted that archaeology and heritage was still important to many even in these times of austerity.

The JAC open meeting of the 21st July attracted a high turnout of people from interested parties including members of the public and local contracting units. In attendance one of the creators of the Facebook group Mr Bill Beven asked where was SCC's justification for its 50% funding cut and why was it being implemented without consultation from the other three authorities? A question neatly side-stepped by the continued response that this was only an advisory board. Also in attendance Anna Badcock of ArcHeritage, a Sheffield-based archaeological contractor, read out a statement in support of SYAS highlighting that archaeology was a non-renewable asset and that experience needed to be retained to ensure that it was properly managed and preserved. Though not read out during the meeting a letter of support for local government archaeological services from Peter Hinton, Chief Executive of the IfA, had been sent to the JAC pointing out the level of inward investment that planning archaeologists bring in to their regions.

The JAC decided that in their view SCC could not make this unilateral cut, as the decision making body for this service lies with the Joint Leaders Committee and not individual authorities, recommending that the South Yorkshire Leaders instigate only the 15% cut for all four authorities. This advice was taken on board by the South Yorkshire Leaders meeting on the following day - despite earlier comments that there was no way the decision to implement 50% cuts could be overturned - and agreed that 15% would be honoured. As a result SCC will now reinstate £21k of the £30k cut.





Doncaster cremation cemetery open-day - hugely popular with the public. If SYAS had not been able to advise, a major nationally important archaeological site would have been lost. (Photo credit: ArchHeritage)

When asked about the impact of the Facebook group and the email campaign on the final decision by the South Yorkshire Leaders, Mr Beven said it was difficult question to answer:

"I think it was important people went to the Joint Advisory Committee meeting. Councillors don't like people breathing down their backs and having to explain themselves in person. Having Facebook as a resource to communicate, co-ordinate and keep momentum was another important factor I'm sure."

It is clear that all who are concerned with the future of the UK's heritage need to stand up and act, whether it's contacting your local councillors or MPs or more importantly showing up at meetings, not just sitting back and

bemoaning a "failing" system. With further assaults on the public funding of UK heritage sure to come, Mr Beven added:

"I think it was the co-ordinated combination of local voters and council tax payers and national bodies that was important. I think this combined approach was important and will be important in other regions."



Bookmarks

amount of free content can be downloaded as well as sync'd between devices.

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<http://bookboon.com/uk/textbooks>

Recently featured on BBC's *Click* program, this website has a range of free .pdfs and ebooks catering mainly at engineering other fields than archaeology, but a range of guides to career development make for an interesting read.

Dropbox

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A very simple and easy to use cloud based server program that can be sync'ed between different devices. Handy for having that .pdf to hand on site without it being printed out. Free up to 2GB. You can send links to friends and colleagues from the seperate public folder, keeping personal files... personal.

Intute

<http://www.intute.ac.uk/>

A useful site for brushing up on your research skills. Includes free research tutorials.

Leaf trading post

<http://www.leaftradingpost.com/index.htm>

A very simple site for buying products such as antler for flintknapping or other unique gifts. Native American drum anyone?

The Lithics site

<http://wings.buffalo.edu/anthropology/Lithics/index2.html>

An extensive site for links for those interested or researching lithics.

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Tom Elliott

Each issue we bring you a selection of useful web resources to bookmark, in this issue we've got a variety of links that will help you at work, in research, and in reconstruction/experimental archaeology.

Postcode to Lat/Long / Nat Grid ref

<http://www.nearby.org.uk/>

A very handy website to use when trying to find a location or convert from a coordinate or postcode to a grid reference and vice versa. Very useful when combined with Google Earth as you can then pinpoint findspots and sites.

Google Earth

http://www.google.co.uk/intl/en_uk/earth/index.html

If you haven't heard of this program I'm assuming you've been buried in finds in a storeroom somewhere or living under a rock in a trench. Google Earth is a very powerful tool which can be used to locate sites and which can then be looked at in Google Maps and Street view. Sites and locations can be saved as Placemarks which can be grouped into files. Add layers and maps and polygons and all sorts of fun can be had. The great aerial photography can be really useful in finding cropmarks or just for looking at how your local area has changed over the years. Also includes a flight simulator if you're really bored, as well as a constellation viewer.

Kindle software

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If you're looking for free things to read at break times or on away jobs look into Kindle software and 'app' for laptops and mobiles. A large



From the finds tray:

Bones, Bones and Worked bones and never the twain shall meet

Matilda Holmes

In my capacity as an archaeozoologist it is not unusual to find, amid the debris of ancient mealtime waste, animal bones that have been modified in ways that are not consistent with butchery, cooking or eating. These include, amongst others, the 'worked bone offcuts', the 'polished shafts', and the 'pierced – probably not canid' descriptions given to bones which have seen processing outside the remit of domestic, butchery, tanning, or horner's waste which are the origins of the majority of assemblages analysed by bone specialists.

When worked bones do get misplaced, it provides a tantalising glimpse into the world of the small find expert, who is the recipient of the specialised collections of more obviously worked bones from domestic, craft worker and industrial contexts. This is, after all, the right place for the worked bones – I may not know an awl from a hairpin, a whorl from a bead blank, or a skate from a comb (well, hopefully the latter), but I would very much like to understand what anatomical elements are used for these objects and from which species. The apparent omission of particular species or anatomy can have a significant impact on the interpretation of animal bone assemblages.

For example, it has been demonstrated that bones used in workshops in Saxon Hamwic favoured cattle and horse long bones,

predominantly metapodials but also a lot of radii, and furthermore that those from mature animals were preferred (Driver, 1984). The reasons for this relate to the density of the bone and the presentation of a good surface for working. What it also implies is that bone workers were being deliberately provided with specific bones which produces a bias in the bones recorded in the non-worked assemblages from other areas of the settlement. While it may be correctly surmised that the absence of cattle metapodials in general refuse deposits resulted from redistribution of raw materials, it is the under-representation of horses and old animals that may also occur that cannot be so easily reconciled. Instead, it may be suggested that horses were uncommon on urban sites, and that cattle were younger, culled at prime meat age when they are just maturing; when in reality the bones of horses and older cattle are being chosen specifically for bone working by artisans. At the same time, small find specialists will gain from a more complete picture of the types of bones, animals and age groups targeted by the craftsmen of the past.

This is not intended as a criticism of inter-specialist relationships, as some units do include the worked bone with non-worked bone as standard. Rather it is a reminder about the value of working together for a more holistic approach. This is invariably less of a problem for teams of in-house specialists that can compare and discuss unusual findings from a settlement, but it has greater repercussions for freelance consultants. It is likely to become more of a problem, given the increasing outsourcing in the current commercial climate. So this is a plea for field staff and post-excavation officers alike to keep together worked bone and antler and their offcuts together with the more mundane refuse, at least until they have been catalogued by the animal bone specialist.

Driver, J. C. (1984) Zooarchaeological analysis of raw material selection by a Saxon artisan. *Journal of Field Archaeology* 11: 397-403.



Tools of the trade:

A-frame gantry hoist

Chiz Harward

Although not often seen much outside of deep urban sites, the A-frame gantry hoist is a great bit of kit and can be the best way of getting spoil out of a deep excavation and is *far* preferable to using buckets and a bit of rope!

These hoists are ideal for sites where the excavation will proceed to some depth and a steady supply of spoil needs to be removed from the excavation area, but it is not practicable to use a machine to muck-out. They have been successfully used on shafts up to 7m depth.

The hoist is erected on site and should take about half an hour to assemble -assuming all the bolts are there. The frame is bolted together and carried to its intended position, counterweights are placed in bins attached to the back of the hoist and it is often best to attach the hoist to any edge protection system such as scaffolding. The motor unit is then lifted onto the gantry beam: this is the hardest bit of assembly as the beams can get warped and the motor unit is very heavy, lifting plan required! Once the motor unit is in place stop-bolts prevent the unit running off the back of the gantry. The hoists run on 110V power, usually at 32A as the power can drop if using long extension leads and you may need a separate transformer for each hoist.

To lift the spoil a steel 80 litre skip is far better than a barrow hoist -where chains are attached to the barrow and lift the entire barrow.



*So, how **are** you going to get your spoil out?*

Obviously this system depends entirely on the integrity of the barrow, a worrying thought given the state of some barrows. 80l is handily the same volume as a full barrow. The hoist can also be used to carry tools, finds and paperwork into and out of the excavation -you definitely shouldn't be carrying tools up and down ladders.

You will need to write site-specific method statements for the installation and use of the hoist, and have a clear system of safe working - especially making sure that the skip is not put back into the trench whilst people are working there -accidents have happened. Everything needs to be recorded and all staff need training in **all** the procedures you have put in place. The hoist and all related equipment should be checked before each shift, and a record kept, it is wise to use a permit to work system for excavations that use a hoist.

Bear in mind that your excavation may be considered a confined space and you may need a written escape plan and means of emergency access/egress plus a designated Topman, gas monitors, harnesses and possibly breathing apparatus sets.





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If it is deemed suitable by a properly competent person then the hoist *might* be able to be used as a means of rescue if a worker needs evacuation from the excavation -so they will need to wear a body harness so they can be winched out. You will need to indicate on the rescue plan if you intend to use the hoist as a means of rescue, and of course train everyone in its use, and of course, record this.

As we have seen, there is a fair amount of paperwork involved with using these hoists -but much of this would be required anyway given that you are likely to be working at depth. The benefits of safely getting tools in and spoil out far outweigh the paperwork and a hoist or some similar mechanised method should always be used instead of 'buckets up ladders'.

It is possible to muck out an excavation using a skip attached to chains on the arm of a 360° digger, or to shovel into the bucket of the machine, however this requires far more care than using a hoist, plus small 360°s don't have a particularly deep reach and are very awkward to operate safely in a confined trench. The consequences of a machine strike on the shoring or on a person in the trench are grave

indeed. In addition if you are going to be working in a deep excavation then having a hoist will usually be a cheaper option than a dedicated 360° digger for spoil muck-away, If he or she is a fellow archaeologist then the hoist operator can help with taking levels, filling out context sheets, bagging finds and taking photos.

Small tracked cranes can also be used, combining the benefits of mobility with the ability to lift vertically.

Conveyor belts have been used successfully to get spoil out of deep excavations, although they seem to frequently break down, and there is a danger of spoil falling off the side. They also require a lot of room as they cannot be at a steep angle.

Whatever particular system is best for your site will depend on your specific circumstances: the A-frame hoist is certainly tried and tested for archaeological works and has been successfully used for many years.



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