



Forum Dispatch

Inform, debate, represent



Newsletter 8
Winter 2012

The newsletter of the Diggers' Forum

Chair's introduction-a matter of numbers

Chiz Harward

The last quarter has been a very busy time for the Diggers' Forum. We started off with the DF AGM and the IfA elections where Geoff Morley, Sadie Watson and myself were elected onto IfA Council. The DF has a membership of over **400**, so we were hopeful that we would all get in, but were mindful of low voting rates - this year just over **100 IfA members** voted. That means at least **300 DF members** didn't bother supporting colleagues who are prepared to give up their time to support them and try and make archaeology a better profession.

Despite this, it was good to maintain our presence on Council, especially as Andy Towle was standing down as he had come to the end of his stint. I'm sure you'll join me in thanking Andy for all his dogged hard work on behalf of the DF on Council over the past **six years.**

Once we knew we still had members on Council we stepped up the preparations for the annual November minima debate, when Council decides whether to put up the IfA salary minima, and by how much. After zero-increases for the last **two** years we

were determined to get a good result for all archaeologists this year and prepared a good solid case backed up by hard facts to show that a good increase was affordable - and essential for the good of archaeologists, and archaeology.

We decided to propose an increase of **7.2%**, equivalent to **2%** over the October CPI rate. In the end the Council voted for **5.2%**, a result that given the economic situation we are happy with as the initial increase towards the **13% increases** in pay identified by the IfA.

5.2%

We're not resting on the minima vote, we'll keep badgering and working with the IfA over a multitude of issues that directly affect site workers. But to do that effectively we need more support from you, the members. We can't achieve anything like our potential if apathy and indifference prevail.

And finally we are bringing out the report on our survey of away work and travel. Its over **100 pages**, and contains the results from over **250 respondents**, plus over **20 employers**, so thank you to everyone who took part.

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



DF Committee:

Acting Chair and Newsletter Editor

Chiz Harward

chiz@urban-archaeology.co.uk

Secretary and membership secretary

Sadie Watson

MoLA

[swatson@](mailto:swatson@museumoflondon.org.uk)

museumoflondon.org.uk

Treasurer

Mary Neale

Berkshire Archaeology

heritage-advice@maryneale.co.uk

Diary editor

Gwilym Williams

John Moore Heritage Services

gwilymwilliams70@yahoo.co.uk

Geoff Morley

Moles Archaeology

moles-arch@hotmail.co.uk

Phil Richardson

Archaeology Scotland

p.richardson@archaeology

scotland.org.uk

Jez Taylor

MoLA

jtaylor@mola.org.uk

General email:

diggers@archaeologists.net

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

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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.



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

This issue marks a year since the Forum Dispatch was relaunched. Four issues that have highlighted what the DF is trying to achieve and have given you a chance to read what is happening within the IfA from a Diggers' perspective.

To me the newsletter is central to the DF, it connects the core activists with the wider membership, and provides a record of what has been achieved -and what hasn't. Over the last year we've published some good articles on a wide range of subjects, and we hope to continue to give you a range of articles, news and information on subjects that matter to, and interest you, the members. This issue is a bit slimmer than some previous ones so if you are interested in writing a piece for the newsletter do get in touch and help fill the pages and get yourslef heard.

You may have noticed a certain London-centric bias in some articles and reviews and wondered why this was the case? Well quite simply there are Diggers in London who are prepared to put pen to paper and contribute to their newsletter. I'd love to get more articles in from where I work here in the southwest, or from across the UK, but again its up to others to write them. Decent articles don't write themselves. But if you've got an idea for an article or review get in touch and we'll support you as much as we can to get that idea into print.



photograph © MoLA

When compared with the newsletters of other IfA Groups I think the DF newsletter is one of the best, but it needs your contributions to keep it that way, otherwise we may end up with blank pages....

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

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



and we did have a very useful get-together. Much of the time was spent of the usual AGM business- reports from the Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. Full details will be on our website shortly- we are waiting for the IfA to upload them. Chiz Harward (Acting Chair) thanked Chris Clarke as the outgoing Chair for all his sterling work for many years, both he and Jez Taylor have been on the DF Committee from the start and have steered us to where we are today. The good news on membership was that we have almost 400 members and a small army of volunteers on email who have contributed to our submissions to IfA Council, for which a big Thank You.

Our objectives for 2012 were ambitious: to recruit more members- we set a provisional total of 500, of which 50 should be non-IfA members. We feel that we are in the best place to recruit non-IfA members, as our potential membership is within the field teams, most of which are not in the IfA. We also aim to recruit more people onto the Committee and official positions. Work on the survey data and sending the results to the Professional Development and Practice Committee was a major objective (and the first we are likely to achieve!).

A primary objective remains, as it has always been, to commit Council to maintain the pay minima increases in the future, to try and claw back some of the losses since it was stalled. Ultimately we want to be heading towards the recommended starting salaries, (read on for progress to date).

We aim to hold a session at the Conference 2012 (Oxford), and possibly a social event, and would also like to be able to provide bursaries for DF members to attend Conference.

Another key aim is to increase our outreach activities- creating links with universities. This links in with CPD- the conference sessions could be made into smaller CPD sessions for DF reps to run on sites.

Thanks to all the DF members and Committee who could attend on the day, we look forward to seeing more next year. And if you want to help out, however much time you have to spare, please get in touch and see what you can do to make archaeology a better profession.

The big news since the last newsletter has been the IfA Council elections and minima debate, but first things first:

DF Annual General Meeting

Sadie Watson

The DF held our **Annual General Meeting** on the morning of 3rd October 2011, in the Society of Antiquaries in Piccadilly.

We didn't choose such salubrious surroundings ourselves, but decided to combine it on the same day as the IfA's AGM, held in the afternoon. The fact that it was a Monday morning and in London did mean that it was a small turnout- completely understandable and we would welcome suggestions or requests for a more accessible venue and time this year!

There were seven DF members there though,



IfA Annual General Meeting

The DF AGM was followed by the IfA AGM, which was rather better attended. The main item of interest was the results of the Council Elections, happily Chiz Harward, Geoff Morley and Sadie Watson were all elected, we now have three DF committee members on IfA council, plus support from other Council members. Its not as many as we would like. And with 400 DF members and only 100 odd IfA members voting in the election we could have swept the board. It is important that the IfA represents everyone in archaeology but we really should be bothering to vote. You pay our subs to the IfA so why not exercise your right to vote?

The business of the AGM is reported elsewhere, but the DF did raise questions about the proposed changes to the governance of the IfA -in particular the role of Special Interest Groups like the DF and how much say we might have in any new system, and about Chartership in relation to those archaeologists who are not members of the IfA. We will report back on what develops on these important issues.

IfA Council salary minima debate

Chiz Harward

Much of the point of getting DF members onto council is so that the voices of ordinary site workers can be heard. This is perhaps most important in the annual debate over the setting of the IfA salary minima.

In November the IfA Council met to debate the level of pay minima for the next year. DF committee members led by Sadie Watson and Mary Neale did a great deal of preparation work gathering figures and preparing arguments to make sure that we could back our calls for an above inflation increase to minima with hard economic facts. The three DF council members attended the meeting and Chiz Harward set out the reasoning behind the DF call for increased minima:

The benchmarking process agreed by the IfA Council required an increase of 13% over 5 years, that gap is now widening. In addition there had been no increases in IfA minima for the previous 3 years. Before November's vote the IfA minima were around 4.5% below BAJR rates; the figures for wages gathered by the DF showed that it is BAJR not the IfA that is setting the effective pay minima for UK archaeological jobs, with only a few exceptions paying below the BAJR rates. We argued strongly that if the IfA wants to represent the profession then it should be the organisation to set pay minima, and that meant increasing them to levels where organisations could not hide behind low minima. The current system protects those that pay least and penalises those that try to pay a better wage. Costs have gone up for Diggers and the lowest paid are paying the highest proportionate increases.

The current IfA minima are widely seen as depressing wage levels and preventing the improvement of pay and conditions for archaeologists. Raising the minima was presented as a clear way of increasing the wages of the lowest paid archaeologists, whilst starting on the road to benchmarked salaries.

We argued that the current low levels of the minima are a significant 'black mark' against the IfA, allowing the perpetuation of a perception that the IfA Council and Exec do not care about levels of pay. We feel that low minima are one of the two main reasons for anti-IfA feeling, alongside the Disciplinary and Complaints system. If the IfA is serious about Chartering the profession then it must be for the good of all archaeologists, and must be seen to be making big steps to put the house in order to carry the membership and persuade non-members to join.

The DF identified CPI as the rate of inflation to beat, we asked for a CPI+2% increase: at October's CPI rate that would have been 7.2% increase. This would take into account the three years of frozen minima and the commitment to raise minima by 13% over 5 years.

Given that most units pay over the IfA minima it would only have meant a small increase in wages for many, but a 7.2% increase would have meant a real increase for most



archaeologists, and a significant step towards benchmarked salary rates. It would have brought IfA and BAJR rates into rough parity, and it would have sent a clear message that the IfA meant business over minima increases. It would also have meant that the 'playing field' would have been slightly more level, with the lowest payers having to bring their wages up to the new minima unless they wished to be exposed as paying shocking wages.

Whilst there was clear support for the DF proposal, in the end the IfA Council voted overwhelmingly for the minima to be increased by CPI, an increase of 5.2%. The DF members on Council supported this increase as it was clearly the best viable option and will give a real increase to many of the worst paid archaeologists. We know that for many it will not necessarily mean an immediate increase in wages, but we hope that they will appreciate that it is a start. We are not content to rest at 5.2% though, and will be arguing for a further increase above CPI this coming November, and every year after. The more of you that stand for Council, and that get out and vote, the more likely that is to be successful.

Jobscheck

We've continued checking both 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 any job that pays below the IfA rates then let us know and we'll see if there is anything we can do about it.

Complaints corner

We recently received tip-offs about one archaeological unit that the whistleblowers felt was paying well under the odds. We looked into the situation and discovered three problem areas.

Firstly the unit was hiring archaeologists as freelancers, however information from our sources suggested that this may have been questionable under HMRC guidelines.

The second problem was that the day rate was well below the equivalent IfA salary minima.

There was clearly a case to answer under the recent IfA policy statement on self-employment. However the third and final problem was that the unit wasn't a Registered Organisation, and the company bosses weren't members of the IfA.

The company in question obviously doesn't advertise for staff on the JIS or BAJR, relying on word-of-mouth to staff its sites. We've heard some good things about the company, however the pay is shocking! Unfortunately given that the bosses aren't in the IfA and its not an RO there's not a thing we can do.

But if you do know of a situation that is wrong, or a unit paying shocking wages, or not providing adequate welfare, get in touch and we can see what we can do. A quiet word may have an effect, or if a complaint is more serious we could instigate an official complaint on your behalf. Contact us via our personal emails (see page 2) and expect to be treated fairly, and in complete anonymity.

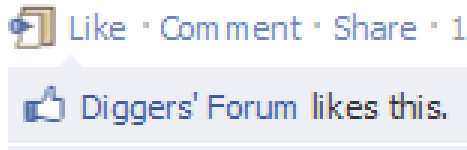
Diggers' Forum publicity

We're thinking of running off a few Diggers' Forum T-shirts and badges so that we can all advertise our support for the DF, and they can also serve as prizes for competitions. They would probably be plain cotton with the DF logo; if anyone can think of a suitable (printable) slogan for the back please get in touch.

So, if you think you'd like a DF button badge, or a Diggers' Forum T shirt, let us know and we'll look into prices.

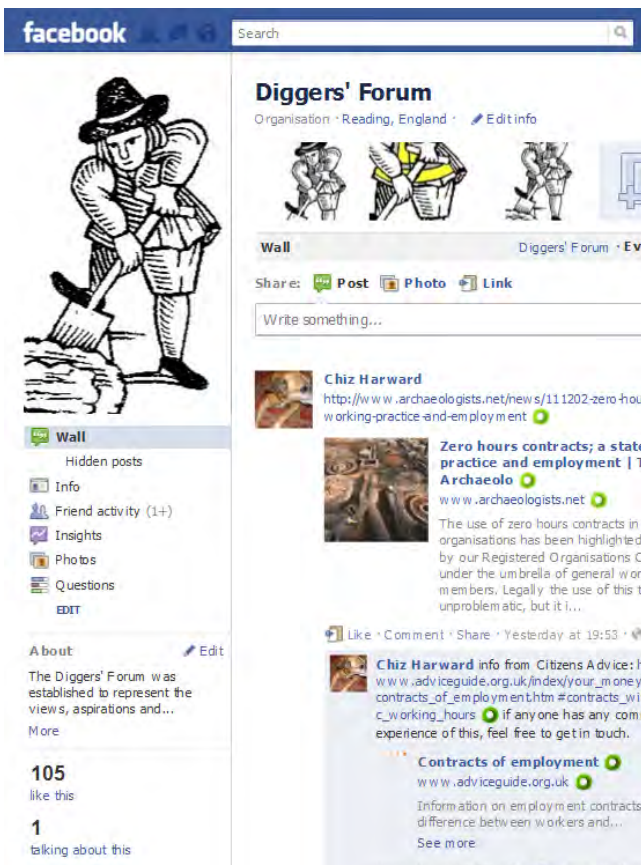


Diggers' Forum on Facebook



Since the launch of DF:FB back in the autumn we have seen a slow but steady rise in traffic, and are now 'liked' by over 100 people. You obviously don't have to be in the DF to read the page, or to 'like' it, and everyone is welcome, but we'd hope that once you see what we are trying to do for everyone out on site, that you might want to join and help us.

It would be good if this could become a two-way dialogue, with you all telling us what you think of what we are doing, and letting us know what we should be looking into.



We try and post useful and interesting items onto the page, as well as using the page to let you all know what we are planning and to occasionally ask for your help, so if you want to keep in touch with what the DF are up to then 'like' the page and keep up to date.

You can find the DF Facebook page at : <http://www.facebook.com/DiggersForum>



IfA Groups Forum

The IfA has started a Groups Forum for all of the various 'Special Interest Groups' (SIGs), of which the DF is one. The forum has met twice so far and has been discussing everything from writing newsletters to setting up CPD events. A future meeting of Groups representatives is planned for early 2012 and will concentrate on the IfA's complaints and disciplinary procedures. SIGs can already take forward complaints on behalf of members but we will be arguing that the complaints procedure needs to be more transparent, quicker, and give more protection to whistleblowers.

If the IfA moves to a new system of representative assembly with positions for the SIGs then the Groups, representing their members will have more say in the future shape of the IfA and how its policies are developed. The DF will continue to build closer links with other Groups to make sure that together we have a strong voice for our membership.

Please let us know if you have any comment on this, or any other aspect of IfA Group work.



Archaeology Branch of Prospect active again!

Sadie Watson

It has been some time since the Archaeology Branch had a meeting at Prospect HQ in Waterloo, London. This is largely due to the fact that the Chair Chris Clarke has been busy doing DF things (for which we owe him a big thanks!) as well as holding down a job. Chris has now thrown himself back in the fray and held a meeting late last year, attended by reps from several units as well as the IfA and Prospect. It was a positive meeting and people felt encouraged by the number of attendees and the supportive atmosphere.

These meetings are a great way to catch up with fellow archaeologists from across the country, swap stories and generally have a catch-up, so I would encourage any reps from other units to attend another meeting- Prospect pay travel expenses and if the union is recognised at your workplace you should be eligible for paid time to attend Branch meetings.

The DF have worked closely with Prospect and look forward to doing so again. Details of Prospect Arch Branch activities will be sent to members in due course, but in the meantime we recommend that everyone joins the union and add to the strength in numbers trying to improve the working lives of archaeologists.

The DF wishes Chris all the best

Prospect – Working for a Better Future for Archaeologists

Chris Clarke

Prospect is an independent and forward-looking Trade Union which represents hundreds of professional archaeologists around the country. Prospect advises, defends and supports members if they have a problem at work. This is in addition to negotiating with employers on pay and conditions, campaigning for jobs and standards, as well as offering valuable benefits and services to members.

We all know that the last four years has been some of the hardest that the archaeological profession has had to endure, with redundancies, pay freezes, and a reduction in employment conditions occurring across the industry. With this happening around us you have to ask yourself 'Can I afford not to be a member of Prospect?'. By joining Prospect you are getting someone fighting your corner, pushing for better pay and conditions, and working towards a stronger future for all professional archaeologists.



The Prospect Archaeology Committee is currently focusing its efforts on a number of issues. The most significant of these is working to co-ordinate a programme of national pay bargaining in order to push for wage increases for all members. This will aim not only to compliment the 5.2% increase to the IfA minimum pay levels recently voted in by the IfA Council, but also to push beyond it. We are also committed to making sure union members receive regular updates by e-mail and are informed on current events through the new newsletter. Work on the newsletter is under way, with work to update the archaeology area on the website underway.

The greater our membership, the stronger our voice, and together we will all make change for the better a reality.

For more details, including how to join, go to <http://www.prospect.org.uk> or contact me at chrisclarke600@hotmail.co.uk.

Chris Clarke, Acting Chair - Prospect Archaeology Committee



Central TAG 2011

Sadie Watson

There are often sessions on digging and even on occasion, Diggers, at TAG- the annual Conference of the Theoretical Archaeology Group and 2011 was no exception. Laura Evis's session 'Dig It! Intersections between Excavation Methods and Recording Systems' was intended to provoke discussion on interpretation on site, how our recording systems help or hinder interpretation and how this affects the data we recover. There were papers on methods from across the world and from different specialisms within archaeology.

DF member Kevin Wooldridge presented a paper on the Intras system of digital recording, and its use in Norway and the UK (by English Heritage). Another major UK unit has been developing its own digital recording method and we may see more of this on sites soon, although as Kevin pointed out, unless it is combined with effective post-excavation GIS systems and databases the data will not reach its potential. He also added that those most able to use the system were the younger members of the team, which made me think that they are also probably going to be the least experienced on site- so us oldies will need to get to grips with it to ensure the archive holds a complete reflection of what was excavated.

Another great paper was presented by Rebecca Hunt and Kevin Colls, of the University of Birmingham. Rebecca's Masters thesis had been on the primary site records and possible barriers to interpretation they may unwittingly contain. There was more than a hint of Ian Hodder's 'interpretation at the trowel's edge' concept here, and Rebecca gave a good account of the usefulness of both diggers and supervisors keeping site diaries to ensure the thought processes during excavation and interpretation are recorded.

A lively discussion followed, with both Martin Carver and Steve Roskams recalling items they had lodged

into site archives- not strictly 'archaeological' but relevant to the project nonetheless, although Martin may be in trouble if his client reads comments in one particular site diary.

Another paper referencing Ian Hodder was by Steve Roskams, of York University. Anyone who has worked in London since the late 1970s will be aware that Steve and other colleagues formulated the DUA recording manual, and Steve was also a founder member of the Interpreting Stratigraphy Group (who should really have a re-launch!) so an anti-reflexivity polemic was always going to be entertaining.

The central argument was that archaeologists have always been self-critical when excavating, and do provide interpretations having (usually!) carefully chosen their words and indicated uncertainty. The idea of multi-vocality and 'multiple stakeholders' was said to be encouraging vague conclusions and that archaeological recording needs structure. Is much of the additional 'reflexive' data merely disregarded during the serious post-ex work, and are site diaries and videos just 'allusions of power'? Satisfyingly, the landuse diagram was also given an honorary mention as an alternative way of presenting chronological narratives.

The DF's own Chiz Harward gave a paper on Diggers! He argued that some of the current methods used on site result in a disenchanting and deskilled workforce- and suggested ways in which we can remedy this. The solutions are, as always, fairly simple if given resources and time.

This session is exactly where the DF should be talking to other archaeologists and it was great to have both Kevin and Chiz there. We do need to talk more about what we do every day, and how we can do it better. Issues of training are obviously paramount, but there is also room for us to review our systems and keep challenging the assumptions that we have been working with since the rise of commercial archaeology.

It seems clear that the academic sector are doing this, but we need to engage with them so that both sides can benefit. There will be an opportunity to do this again very soon, as the DF and the IFA Finds SIG are holding a joint session with Laura at the 2012 Conference in Oxford.



IfA Annual Conference 2012: Diggers' Forum/Finds Group/Dig It! 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**, the **IfA Finds Group** and Laura Evis have joined forces to hold a joint session at the conference to be held in Oxford from 18-20 April.

This session aims to foster partnerships between field, finds, environmental and management specialists to encourage conversations and awareness between the different groups within the profession.

The session will 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.

This session will encourage partnerships, conversations and awareness between different groups of archaeological specialists. Archaeologists have continually developed new ways to excavate and record aspects of the archaeological record, but what has driven the changes introduced? Has commercialisation led to an increased emphasis on elaborate

systematic recording systems at the expense of critical methods? What drives new methods and strategies adopted?

Madness in our Methods?

IfA Conference, Oxford

Joint session of the IfA Finds group and Diggers Forum

Thursday 19th April between 9.30am - 12.45pm

Organisers: Dr Phil Mills, Laura Evis, Chiz Harward

We will critically address the methods and recording systems used in modern field archaeology and the impact they have across the whole project, looking at alternative methodologies and discussing the integration of all aspects of the 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.

The session will be on Thursday 19th April between 9.30am - 12.45pm, so come along! There are also plans for a Diggers' Forum party on the Thursday evening.

Details of the conference can be found at: <http://www.archaeologists.net/conferences>



Training Pages: Let's commit to training!

Mary Neale

Many of the skills gaps and shortages identified in the profession can be filled more effectively by existing employees. How? By investing in in-house training the outcome will be a multi-skilled workforce across all grades!

Training opportunities

As promised during the IfA conference last year, two members of the IfA team are working on a training toolkit for employers and employees. We introduced this to our readers in the Summer 2011 issue - in the article 'Skills and training in the archaeology profession – an overview'. You may remember recent surveys confirming that over a quarter of employers identified limited time for training as a reason their training needs remained unresolved.

Use of the IfA toolkit will reduce the costs to employers and the time taken to organise training. It is planned that the kit would include tools such as a framework to identify training priorities, learning plans and learning agreements. Much of this work is ongoing so we eagerly await the finished product. It is hoped that this toolkit will become available early next year.

What are the skills shortages?

So let's review the skills shortages listed in the 2007-2008 Profiling the Profession report. These include surveys of historic buildings, geophysical survey, carrying out desk-based assessments, conservation and research of artefacts and ecofacts and IT (including GIS, web design and technical editing). Initial training for many of these skills is easy to find but gaining employment contracts based on that initial training may prove difficult. A proven

record of experience is often required in job specifications for such posts.

Undoubtedly it is very discouraging for those who have or wish to take the initiative to undertake training in a specialist skill but cannot find employment without first gaining experience. In-house training is needed to build experience in using the newly acquired skills. This can be achieved in a number of ways, including shadowing and assisting more experienced staff. Such a work ethic would certainly encourage Diggers to take the initiative in committing to training for specific skills. Likewise filling skills gaps should be undertaken as on-the-job training. Report writing is one area where employers could utilise their knowledgeable field staff.

Research skills – a skills gap?

Research skills are also often brought in from outside – but many archaeologists are not just graduates, many have an MA or MSc. Yet employers have stated that Diggers do not demonstrate good research skills. Beyond holding a degree it is difficult to prove or practice your research skills unless you are involved with a research project -the majority of diggers do not have this advantage as they spend most of their working lives on commercial digs

Some of the knowledge-based courses will be useful in proving your research ability and interest in a specific research area. This is certainly something to consider if the course content relates directly to a long-term project that your current employer is working on. It may prove helpful to approach the project manager and suggest that with this extra training you may be able to contribute to the research aspects of the project. If anyone has succeeded in gaining research experience by this means, please let us know!

Other skills

There are other skills that are being bought in that degree holders could most definitely develop as part of their CPD with in-house support, such as community outreach, fundraising and health and safety. It has been stated that some in-house training in these skills is being undertaken, but obviously not enough as such skills are still being brought in.



Reluctance to commit to training

Is the situation really as it appears from the surveys? It seems that there is a reluctance on the part of both employers and employees to commit to training.

If this is the case then the skills shortages and gaps identified will remain a self-perpetuating problem, and it will not be resolved until there is a commitment from both employers and employees. Employers need to commit to in-house training. And perhaps stating this in job advertisements would prove a useful way of attracting the employees that match the company ethic. Employees, in turn, will need to commit to undertaking training with the assurance from their employers that they are committed to providing opportunities that allow employees to use their new skills so that they can build up a portfolio of experience.

Certainly, the training tool kit that the IfA team are producing will support this process.

Current courses for specific skills

Specific skills and knowledge-based courses are currently being advertised by the University of Sussex, Birkbeck and UCL, among others. This includes CPD for those who wish to keep

their current skills up to date and longer courses useful in developing new skills that will be provided during the spring and summer, 2012.

Those who began a digging career without undertaking a BA or BSc in archaeology may wish to consider Oxford University's Undergraduate Certificate in Archaeology 2012-2014.

Non-field based heritage training

If you wish to explore non-field based training options then the following link is a starting point to access work-based training - <http://www.hlf.org.uk/HowToApply/programmes/Pages/SkillsfortheFutureprojects.aspx>

Community Archaeology Training Placements (CATPs) will be available in host organisations across the UK. The placement opportunities will be advertised around January each year – for more information please see - <http://www.britarch.ac.uk/community/bursaries>

Your view counts!

Please also tell us whether you tried any of the links provided in the Summer article, and if any of these were particularly useful.

The Workplace Learning Toolkit

The Workplace Learning Toolkit is one of the products being developed as part of the HLF funded IfA Workplace Learning Bursaries Scheme. It is, essentially, a resource pack designed to support employers seeking to implement structured workplace learning within their own organisations and is based on the model and tools that have supported the HLF placements over the last six years. It is being developed as we speak but will include:

- Introduction to workplace learning, including information about National Occupational Standards and NVQs, costs, benefits and risks,
- Guidance on how to set up a placement, writing a training plan, recruitment procedures, induction, setting up a learning agreement, monitoring progress etc.,
- Guidance on recruitment,
- Example documents to be adapted by employers, including sample job descriptions, person specs and adverts, sample training plans linked to National Occupational Standards, learning agreements and monitoring documentation,
- Case Studies,
- How to get help – information sheet with links to IfA, CC Skills, NOS etc.,

The toolkit will be supported by advice and guidance for IfA Registered Organisations on any aspect of setting up a training placement and will be publicised widely. It will be produced in hard copy and will also be available on CD.



Review: The People's War-Effort

Increasingly archaeologists are being called on to excavate and record sites that include relatively recent periods, but for some archaeologists even the post-medieval period is hardly 'archaeological', at a time when the Society for Post-Medieval Archaeology is discussing whether the present day is post-medieval (Dixon 2011, King 2011). But, as Gwilym Williams's review shows, archaeological work can come right into the realm of living memory. The site in question is clearly not your standard evaluation, or standing building record, but with a bit of imagination has created an interesting and valid project.

Gwilym Williams

Anyone who has read or seen Ben Macintyre's Agent Zigzag will be aware that in addition to the Royal Ordnance site at Enfield (birthplace of the Lee-Enfield rifle) there were other factories situated around London during WWII, such as the de Havilland factory at Hatfield manufacturing the Mosquito fast bomber. Indeed well into the 20th century the London region remained a hub of small industry – chemicals, engineering and many others which were to form part of the war effort after 1939.

During the pre-war years preparations for war were already in hand, and although these were largely half-hearted, what is remarkable is the speed at which the national crisis drew private firms into the war effort under direction of the Ministry of Supply. The military effort was paralleled from 1941 by the launching of CC41, also known as Utility furniture and clothing.

This handsome little book from Museum of London Archaeology concerns one of the former Royal Ordnance Factories, ROF Hayes, which is now the site of a distribution depot on the periphery of Heathrow, and is owned by Prologis who financed this publication. ROF Hayes was built between July 1940 and November 1941, manufacturing field and tank guns, as well as fitting the latter, with a peak workforce of 2442.



The book combines the results of the building recording and evaluation of the site carried out by the author, Nick Holder, with an oral history record carried out with the assistance of Museum of London Oral History Collection.

The book is less than 50 pages, with the vast majority containing at least one illustration; many of these are in colour, with the black and white images being archive photos dating from the 40s when the factory was in operation. Shots of Vera Lynn (inevitably) and visiting Russian trades unionists, comrades in the war effort, are interspersed with pictures of – largely – women carrying out the previously specialised work of gun manufacture and assembly.

During the war Fordian techniques simplifying complex tasks for a largely untrained workforce were applied to gun manufacture: increasing the number of operations and of people to carry them out to achieve the necessarily high production of howitzers, tank guns, field guns and anti-tank guns which peaked at hundreds per month at ROF Hayes. While women may not have entirely dominated the shop floor, they were a significant proportion of the work-force, specifically the unskilled workers, while men – in some cases not even with a munitions background – managed the work, both on the shop floor and in the offices.

While this book might be seen as just another addition to the canon of militaria, it is the oral history which



elevates this short book out of such a relatively limited forum of interest. The factory was largely staffed by conscripted women for whom the war postponed the inevitable marriage, while putting some money in their pockets. For others, volunteers, who were both mothers and determined to make their contribution to the war effort, ROF Hayes offered a view of work that was not subsequently to be widely experienced by women even in the last decades of the last century; with benefits such as nursery provision, a lunch hour in a works canteen, and visits on at least two occasions by celebrities such as Vera Lynn to record Worker's Playtime.

Although, as with much of the war effort, conscription cut across social boundaries the voices represented here are local, rather than those of conscientious objectors or Bohemians, such as Inez Holden, the author of two well-received novels – *Night Shift* and *There's No Story There* – about war-time factory workers. It is perhaps time to acknowledge the immense contribution of these conscripts to the war effort. This book would provide a marvellous hook for such an exhibition.

A further surprise, which also deserves more attention, was that the entire works was erected in less than 18 months and £545,000 under budget; that is 23% below the anticipated budget of £2,360,000, and this despite the contractor MacAlpine over-ordering structural steels which were to lie round the site for the following 60 years. Some might say that there is a lesson in both productivity and solidarity which needs relearning. Additionally, I would have liked to learn more on how things were not done as they should – Albert Thurling, delivery boy for the Co-op, commented that he was rarely challenged by security; the gap between how things are done in theory and how they actually are is a key area in archaeology. Archaeological traces of these sorts of practices, such as the MacAlpine abandonment of structural steels, is another example of the sort of thing worth deeper investigation or explanation.

As a book it raises so many more questions than its small size permits it to answer. If any criticism could be levelled it is that as a popular book, rather than a more academic or detailed analytical study, the reader comes away feeling that more flesh could be added to these bones. The limited detail on the archaeological recording of the former factory site has inevitably required the author to focus on the oral and documentary sources more than is usual in an archaeological publication. Comparison can be made with Linda Monckton's paper (2006) on Bletchley Park which focussed on more a traditional archaeological presentation of a historic building recording action; Monckton shows how a sequence of buildings was developed following the initial construction of huts for the code-breakers and other intelligence staff: phases of construction, modification



© MOLA

of buildings and changes of use are all duly set out. Despite Monckton thanking the staff at Bletchley there is an absence of people in her report, in contrast to Holder's book.

The archive and grey literature report, along with the specially recorded oral history project, are all lodged at Museum of London's London Archaeological Archive and Resource Centre (LAARC). The project appears to have been a worthwhile experience on the part of MOLA staff – certainly David Bowsher who managed the project at MOLA felt that it was a methodology to be revisited – as well as on the part of the client Prologis. Surely with so much of this recent part of London's and indeed Britain's heritage aging and dying in the case of the workers, or, in the case of buildings, being replaced, this book indicates that there is much material that needs recording before, like all finite resources, it is no more. Although short, this book offers food for thought on how to present modern archaeology, and the need to integrate an oral record into any such report.

The Royal Ordnance Factory At Hayes by Nick Holder
2011 Museum of London Archaeology

ISBN 978-1-901992-88-5

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Experiences of field archaeology in London from a non field archaeologist in London

Richard Meager

I think there are many truths in archaeology. One of course is that every single archaeologist is the best archaeologist that the world has ever seen. I think F. Scott Fitzgerald defined genius as 'the successful expression of personality' so there must be plenty of geniuses in archaeology. I have always considered archaeology to be an art, rather than a science, so perhaps it should be further defined as a 'self expressed art'.

As a consultant, my role in archaeology principally entails the quantification and organisation of fieldwork, often in a warm office awash in sugared tea. Together with curators and project managers, my contact with field archaeology is typically restricted to site visits, so I was fortunate to be given the opportunity back in early December 2003 to do a week's digging at the Babe Ruth bath house site with PCA, under the supervision of Alistair Douglas.

I understand that any reluctance on Alistair's part to have me on site as an addition to his well organised team, together with my initial clumsiness, was eventually overcome by my willingness to do whatever he needed me to do. I still owe him a tape measure though. I think I was late for all five days I was on site, and I do not recall ever being so cold or filthy either before or since. I think there had been a dye-works on the site and we were digging through significant quantities of ink impregnated soil. The

archaeology was amazing though, with Roman masonry standing well over a metre high, and a bath house complex which has to be one of the most important finds of recent years.

I also spent three days in 2003 digging with the Time Team at the Maritime Museum in Greenwich, looking for Henry VIII's armoury and tilt yard. I don't think we found the armoury, but avid watchers of the programme may remember more. I do recall a lot of machine down time during filming, and Phil Harding's popularity with the general public, but every time they filmed near me it rained.

Years later in the summer of 2009 I spent a bucolic day's watching brief monitoring site investigation works at St Mary's Old Church Stoke Newington. Identifying human bone in a sunlit churchyard was about as far removed from the Babe Ruth experience as it is possible to get, and the structured mayhem of the Time Team shoot.

I realise that my physical interaction with field archaeology in London is esoteric at best. I always bear in mind that field archaeology is an essential data gathering exercise upon which the whole of the rest of the profession depends. I never forget the demanding physical working conditions placed (inflicted?) upon the digging profession, along with the pay scales, the absence of job security and so on. A lot of blood, sweat, tears and beer is invested in the results we all rely on, whether we're increasing our knowledge base or just signing off that planning condition, and it can be easy to lose sight of that if you're in a nice warm office.

Richard wins the copy of the new Londinium map from last issue's competition, courtesy of MoLA

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



Events Diary

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, thanks to Hayley McParland for sending in some additional dates.

'The problem of Ham Hill. How do you interpret the largest hillfort in Britain?' Niall Sharples (Cardiff University)
26th January, 19:30,
Exeter. Devon Archaeological Society & Prehistoric Society

'Conquering the North: early humans at Happisburgh'
Dr Nick Ashton (British Museum)
4th February, 14:30,
Norwich. Norfolk & Norwich Archaeological Society & Prehistoric Society Lecture

Introduction to the Moundbuilders Pete Topping (English Heritage)
15th February, 18:00,
Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House,
London. Prehistoric Society Lecture

The Long View: Place and Prehistory in the Thames Valley
25th February,
Society of Antiquaries, Burlington House,
London. Prehistoric Society Conference

Identifying and Recording Clay Tobacco Pipes Study Day
Jacqui Pearce
17th March and 21st April
London Archaeological Archive and Research Centre

Where the wild things are: Recent Advances in Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Research
24th-25th March
University of Durham. Conference

Oxyrhynchus: the city and its texts
3rd April, 17h00
Woburn Suite, Senate House In association

with the Hellenic Society and Egypt Exploration Society Conference

IfA Conference
18th-20th April,
Oxford

Madness in our Methods?
Joint session of the IfA Finds group and Diggers Forum
Organisers: Dr Phil Mills, Laura Evis, Chiz Harward
Thursday 19th April between 9.30am - 12.45pm

AEA Spring Conference: New trends in Environmental Archaeology
21st April
Plymouth University

Early Farmers: the view from Archaeology and Science
14th-16th May
Cardiff University

AEA Autumn Conference: Environmental Archaeologies of Neolithisation
10th-12th November
University of Reading

The Prehistoric Society Europa Postgraduate Conference
8th June,
Reading.

Europa Conference
9th June,
Reading



Zero hours contracts; a statement on working practice and employment

Amanda Forster, IfA

The use of zero hours contracts in archaeological organisations has been highlighted as an area of concern by our Registered Organisations Committee and also falls under the umbrella of general working practice for all our members. Legally the use of this type of contract is unproblematic, but it is important that IfA members and Registered Organisations who are using zero hours contracts are complying with Principle 5 of the Code of conduct.

Although IfA has not received any formal complaints against Registered Organisations regarding the use of such contracts, we have followed up specific cases where certain contracts have come to light (such as in job adverts). In these cases, it does appear that the use of such contracts has not undermined either the quality of work or the employment rights of the employee – and in the case of the latter, employees were in fact subject to the same levels of employment benefits, training and induction that core staff received.

However, the issue does remain an area of concern and we are keen that all Registered Organisations and members do ensure that they are aware of their obligations under Principle 5 of the IfA Code of conduct. IfA expects all its Registered Organisations and members to give due regard to employment legislation, welfare of employees in relation to terms and conditions of service, IfA minimum remuneration package and reasonable consideration to cumulative service etc in relation to pay rates and employment benefits -

which means contractual terms appropriate to the nature, duration, frequency etc of the work in question.

Should a complaint be made against an organisation or an allegation against a member, it will be investigated in accordance with the provisions of the relevant IfA regulations. We would encourage any archaeologist who feels that they are being unfairly employed by a Registered Organisation to consider making a complaint if they are unable to resolve their concerns with their employer.

More information about how to make a complaint can be found on our website pages (www.archaeologists.net/regulation/complaints) and Diggers' Forum Newsletter 5 (Winter 2010) offers a very helpful guide to the procedure and how to begin a complaint (www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/node-files/DFnewsletter5web.pdf).

Diggers' Forum will offer advice and support to its members who wish to discuss making a complaint, but who may wish to remain anonymous and not contact IfA directly in the first instance. A disciplinary procedure also exists to investigate allegations of malpractice against individual members, the process for which can be found on the above link.

First posted on IfA news page 2nd December 2011



Diggers' Forum Report on Away work and Travel in UK Commercial Archaeology

Chiz Harward

The long awaited Diggers' Forum report on away work and travel is now out. You should all have a copy of the report in your email inbox (let us know if you haven't received a copy, or if you need a hard copy). The report is the culmination of months of hard work by the Diggers' Forum and represents a significant step forward in understanding the nature of our profession.

The survey was first mooted back in early 2009, when the idea of a comparable website holding details of pay and conditions was raised. This developed into the idea of a survey, and the IfA were invited to carry out such a survey, but declined. The DF were also approached and were broadly supportive, but nothing happened for several months until the new, reinvigorated DF committee supported the idea and the survey was launched.

The results of the survey are clear: travel and away work are a significant part of the modern archaeologist's life, and affect many badly. This much we already knew? But, for the first time we have figures and details of the hours spent driving and the money paid in duplicate accommodation.

There are many surprises within the data: a far higher proportion of owner-occupiers than we would have guessed, and a potential bias to older archaeologists hints at the possibility that the recession is preventing new graduates from starting their careers.

The report contains two sets of

recommendations: one on advertising jobs, and another on travel and away work. These are listed below, we have already talked to BAJR about the advertising recommendations and David Connolly will be working with us to ensure that archaeological jobs are advertised in a fair and transparent way where you can see exactly what you get paid for and what you don't! We hope that other advertisers and employers will follow suit.

The next step is that we are calling on everyone in the archaeological profession to discuss the findings and work towards making the recommendations a reality.

We want you to take the time to read and digest the report, and to let us know what you think. We really do want to hear from you all. Do you think the report was worth it? Do you think it will make any difference, tell us what you think.

Compare the Units.com

One area we want to work on is providing Diggers with the tools to allow us to understand exactly what different employers' pay and conditions mean in monetary terms. We are hoping to develop two separate, but complimentary tools: the first is an online register of Terms & Conditions, we doubt it will be popular with employers, just as price comparison websites aren't popular with energy companies or insurers, but if we are going to live in a free market we have the right to be able to choose who to work for. To scorn the poor payers and applaud the best employers. It's the same principle as comparing car insurance, so why not make it work for us?

The second tool will be an online App allowing you to work out what your income and costs will be for any potential job. You punch in your hours, rates of pay, travel pay, mileage or subs, and add your costs, and it will tell you how much you will get at the end of the month. For the first time you'll be able to see whether the grass is really greener at your mate's employers, and whether those extra hours are worth it.

Let us know if you think this will be a good idea, or a dud.



Summary

This report outlines the results of the recent Diggers' Forum surveys on work-related travel and away work in UK commercial archaeology. Two comprehensive anonymous internet surveys were carried out during 2011, the first gathered information from over 250 employees, whilst a second survey targeted archaeological employers. The resultant sample represents approximately 8% of working archaeological site staff at the time of survey, and approximately 10% of the employers. The employee sample appears to be in line with latest figures on the make up of the profession, although it is possible that a potential bias to older respondents is related to the recession restricting access to new entrants (Section 2.8).

The results of the survey are given and discussed in detail within the report. The profile of the respondents is analysed in Section 2. Section 3 looks at advertising of archaeological jobs: where employees look for work, and what is important to them, and to employers, this information was used to create a set of recommendations on advertising archaeological jobs.

Section 4 considers the current jobs of the respondents and the types of employers for whom they work. Away work is analysed in Section 5, with detailed figures on the number of nights spent away from home considered alongside the views of employees and employers. The nature, type and provision of accommodation is considered in Section 6, with subsistence payments covered in Section 7.

Section 8 gives a detailed breakdown of the travel done by archaeologists –both normal commuting and work-related travel. Section 9 covers working hours, both the basic contractual hours and the extra travel hours that staff are expected to work. This section also covers the various levels of remuneration for travel time. The views of the respondents on travel and away work are highlighted in Section 10, with the effect of away work on financial, professional and personal life considered.

Section 11 presents a series of employee scenarios: examples demonstrating the effect of variable travel pay, away work and costs on

an archaeologist's income. The simple figures underline the importance of travel costs and pay to archaeologists' incomes.

Section 12 discusses various elements of the current situation and highlights the need for clarity in advertising archaeological jobs, a register or website listing all archaeological terms and conditions is proposed to allow archaeologists to choose the best payers and avoid the worst.

Two sets of recommendations are made in the report; the first relates to advertising of commercial archaeological jobs and sets out a simple and achievable set of standards to ensure clarity in what terms and conditions are being offered (Section 3.1). This is essential to allow potential employees to know what they are really being offered, and is intended to act as a mechanism to allow potential, and existing employees, to understand the actual relative benefits and costs of each employment. It is hoped that moves towards transparent advertising will allow those employers who treat staff well will benefit from their actions, whilst those that have poor terms and conditions are exposed.

The principle recommendations on transparent advertising are:

- Details of the starting salary available to a new starter, avoiding use of incremental pay ranges that may make salaries appear greater than they could be for a new starter.
- State what level of experience is required for the post.
- Any probationary period.
- Details of sick pay, holiday entitlement and pension provision including any qualification periods.
- The length of the working week and whether any compulsory overtime may be required.
- Where the job will be based and whether away work is envisaged.
- Whether a driving licence or specific skills card is required.
- Indicate whether accommodation will be provided if the contract is a short term



appointment and whether there is any charge for this.

- Indicate whether there are any subsistence allowances for away work and how much these are and when they are paid.
- Give details of pay for travelling time for both drivers and passengers, clearly stating that travel time is not paid if that is the case.

The second set of recommendations outlines the areas in relation to travel and away work where the Diggers' Forum feels that improvements can be made (Section 13). The basic principle is that you should be paid for the hours that you work. None of the employers stated that their wages covered a travel component, and none of the wages were sufficiently high to cover the costs of travelling as part of the salary.

There are many complex and differing ways of paying staff for travel, and the DF acknowledge that it will be difficult to harmonise all aspects. However it does hope that all employers will work towards the spirit of the recommendations. The principal recommendations include:

- All travel time outside of core hours should be paid to all staff, or the equivalent TOIL accrued: this should be paid to all drivers and passengers. Staff should be paid for their hours.
- All driving and passenger time on Saturdays should be paid in full at time and a half, or the equivalent TOIL accrued; all driving and passenger time on Sundays should be paid in full at double time or the equivalent TOIL accrued.
- Mileage should be paid to all employees who use their own vehicles for work-related travel. Where company fuel cards are used a payment should be made to cover running costs, wear and tear and depreciation on a pro-rata monthly rate.
- Mileage rate of at least 40p per mile, reviewed annually and increased in line with the RAC Cost of Motoring Index or a similar index.

- Away work to be triggered after a drive of a maximum of 1.5 hours unless it is for a short duration (1-2 nights maximum), and all staff are happy to travel.
- National minimum sub of £15 a night for stays in B&B, rising to £20 a night in April 2013 to reflect inflation.
- Minimum notice period for away work of two weeks except when absolutely unavoidable, possibility of 'on-call' and 'off-call' system for last minute away jobs.
- Rotation of staff on away jobs in a transparent manner.
- Rotation of drivers to prevent fatigue and ensure driving pay is spread around the team.
- National register of terms and conditions relating to travel and away work allowing employees to compare different employers.

The Diggers' Forum calls on archaeological employers, employees, trade unions, professional and trade bodies to comment on this report and to join in discussions to agree a way forward to address the issues raised in this report, and to sign up to the twin sets of recommendations.

The first step is to be open and transparent about what is currently being paid -and what is not being paid; the next step is to accept or develop the recommendations and raise standards to an acceptable level. By giving Diggers the information to compare units we can improve the current system for all employees, and allow employers to bid for work on an even footing with each other.

At present many employers are attempting to pay their staff properly for the long hours spent travelling on work business, or living away from home and family; these employers are losing contracts to those companies that choose to not pay any travel time, but demand the same long hours. The Diggers' Forum believes that the employees, already suffering on low wages, should not be the ones to suffer further financial distress for the benefit of their employers.

We as Diggers need to stand up to bad employers, not be grateful for any work at all.



There is a price to poor wages and conditions, and it is paid for in our colleague's abandoned careers. By making this issue public, and by continuing to shine a light on poor employers we will strive to level the field so that contracts can be won on standards and quality of work, not who is prepared to rip off their employees the most.

The Digger's Forum aspires to a sustainable and financially viable career for all archaeologists. This survey has shown that differences in travel and away pay seriously affect archaeologists' income, and the archaeologists themselves on both personal and professional levels. We recognise that many people in the UK travel long distances to work, and that for many this is a normal part of everyday life which is increasing as work opportunities get scarcer. We are not demanding special pleading for archaeologists, we are asking for clarity and fairness for the

good of the individuals, the employers and the profession at large.

The ultimate question must be asked, what kind of profession do we want to leave to future generations of archaeologists? Do we want to maintain the current system of disposable, deskilled workers living often hand-to-mouth and travelling across the country in the hope of just keeping going? Do we want to maintain a kind of two-tier system between those that have permanent jobs and those that are on short contracts; between those working as Site Assistants and those who have climbed the ladder to Supervisor and beyond?

If this survey has shown anything, it is hopefully that by simply levelling the field regarding travel and accommodation conditions we can make commercial archaeology a less dysfunctional and self-abusing profession and significantly improve the profession for all.

The Invisible Diggers... then and now

Paul Everill

It was while working for MoLAS on the 'Blossoms Inn' excavation in the winter of 2000/1 that I started developing ideas that would eventually become my PhD. I found myself in private, and in discussion with friends, wondering exactly what it was about the job that kept us motivated when so many aspects of it seemed stacked against us – primarily poor pay, and poor job security, but also the physical impact of hard manual work in all conditions.

For me, and I think for many diggers, there was/ is just something wonderful about the liberal-minded nature of the profession, and the camaraderie that came from sharing the

obvious hardships – often expressed through a mantra of work hard/ play hard. There is, of course, also the archaeology itself, which never ceases to thrill and inspire (though sometimes in equal measure it might also frustrate and confuse), and a sense that I was genuinely privileged to have the opportunity to investigate it. But there remained a dis-satisfaction, a feeling that no matter how much I cared about the job it might not be a reciprocal arrangement. My friends and I were simply enthusiastic, graduate labourers. Grist to the mill of commercial practice. Disenfranchised. Invisible.

My research, published by Oxbow Books as 'The Invisible Diggers' in 2009, received something of a mixed reception in the various archaeological sectors. One academic reviewer described the book as 'angry', a misunderstanding of what I was trying to do which still makes me chuckle. But on the whole its impact was positive. It produced data (in the form of a survey, a set of extensive interviews and a period of 'participant observation' - effectively an undercover report - on a large urban excavation) that challenged some of the two dimensional pictures that were being produced by other surveys, and gave added significance to previously anecdotal evidence.

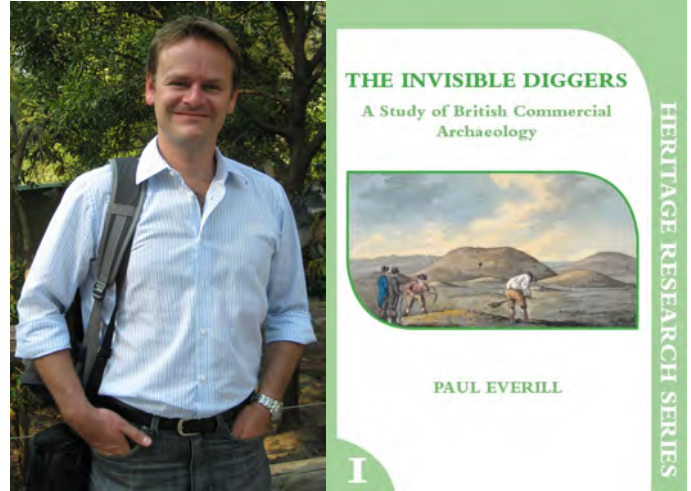


That data is, of course, ageing fast. It's now over six years since it was collected and the profession is facing new challenges – some of which none of us could have foreseen even just a few years ago. The data coming out of the recent Diggers' Forum survey on 'away work' – the first significant study since my own to actually explore the impact of commercial working practices on those employed within the sector – is a fascinating addition to our understanding of the profession. All too often such work draws on headline figures provided by employers and, while that data can be useful, I firmly believe that to say anything meaningful about the impact on individuals it is important to actually ask them. Invisibility in the workplace is one thing, without having further layers of obscurity added through our own professional surveys! I also appreciate the difficulties of undertaking such an important piece of work alongside a full-time job, and applaud the hard work and dedication of those involved.

I am planning to launch a new "Invisible Diggers 2" online survey in the near future, which will replicate the questions from the original with some additional new topics, in part building on DF's own excellent piece of work.

With the support of Digger's Forum I hope that we can generate a significant response, and move a step closer towards greater 'visibility' for those employed in commercial archaeology. Keep your eyes peeled for more information, and if you have any thoughts on this or related topics please feel free to drop me a line at Paul.Everill@winchester.ac.uk.

We'll keep you updated on Paul's plans to carry out the new research to update Invisible Diggers



How we were, in 2005

The average British commercial archaeologist was a white male, 32.37 years old, with a degree and 7.49 years of 'contract' field experience. The survey portrayed a profession with an exceedingly high turnover of staff, many of whom become disillusioned and choose to leave after about five years. It also vividly indicated a core of staff remaining from the Manpower Services era. It showed, for the first time, the true level of discontent with the current system. 40.73% of contract archaeologists believed their profession was already in crisis, and a further 35.87% believed that a crisis was inevitable unless changes were made.

'This overwhelming response cannot be ignored if the profession is to mature and yet, with both the IFA and the unions failing to recruit effectively from under represented sections of the profession, it can be no surprise that this message is not being heard.'
(Everill 2009: 79)

Everill, P. 2009 *The Invisible Diggers: A study of British commercial archaeology*. Oxbow Books



Bookmarks

EngineerSurveyor

<http://www.engineersurveyor.com/utilities/index.htm>



Very useful page for anyone interested in surveying. Brush up on your knowledge of trigonometry or browse through interesting PDF files including Leica user guides and freeware CAD programs.

10 simple steps to better archaeological management

<http://10simplesteps.blogspot.com/>

An enlightening blog of different problems in archaeological and management practice. Some inspiring stuff although some bits, by nature of a blog, are out of date.

English Heritage Guidelines

<http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/publications/guidelines-and-standards/>

If there's nothing to do outside when it's cold and windy or you're working towards a project, here is the total collection of guidelines and standards from English Heritage.

BAJR and Past Horizons

<http://bajr.org/> <http://www.pasthorizons.com/>

I'll assume you've not had a computer if you haven't heard of these before. Perhaps the online sanctuary for all archaeologists?

Got useful links or websites you'd like to share? Send them to us by email or on Facebook. Go on, we're only a few clicks away!

Tom Elliot

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.

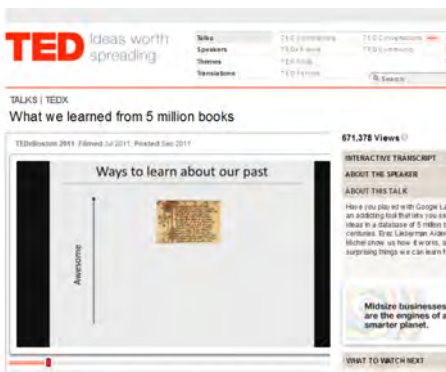
British Library EThOS

<http://ethos.bl.uk/Home.do>

Online library of digitised theses from a variety of institutions. Handy if you're working towards an academic qualification or just plain interested in something specific.

TED

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



Not archaeology, but definitely inspiring. Get ready to lose hours of time watching these interesting videos. Try:
http://www.ted.com/talks/what_we_learned_from_5_million_books.html

PPS5

<http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/planningandbuilding/pps5>

If you haven't had a chance to read or haven't found the document here it is.



Tools of the trade: Groundhog/OASIS units

Chiz Harward

Site accommodation is an issue close to every Digger's heart. For every site with a stack of heated cabins with drying rooms and on-site greasy spoon, there are scores where you will be living out of the back of a van in a muddy field.

By law you **must** be given adequate welfare on site, and this should include toilet facilities, hot water for washing, and somewhere dry and warm to eat, rest and change clothes. A hedge and an Escort van may be deemed acceptable for a fleeting site walkover, but if you are digging holes for more than a day or two you should insist on decent welfare.

In addition to the legal requirements its more efficient to have somewhere to store your tools and do the paperwork, and productivity will definitely be up with a heated cabin compared to an over-crowded transit van stuffed full of Diggers.

Groundhog or Armadillo units are like a modern, armoured version of the caravans that used to grace archaeological sites years ago. They can be towed into position by a 4WD, and contain all the essentials for life on site: a generator for heat and power, a small amount of storage space and a drying area in with the genny, a chemical toilet and a main compartment with bench seats, table, lights and power points, heater, sink, and plumbed in water heater and drinking water butts. Most will also have a microwave and you can often get a kettle if you ask.

The unit can normally be delivered to site, and whilst you won't get them across a freshly ploughed field they can get towed across fairly rough ground -although that will depend on your delivery driver as much as anything!

Once delivered hydraulic jacks lower the unit flush to the ground, preventing anyone from just hitching it up and driving off with it. The doors all lock as do the windows which have steel shutters, but even so we wouldn't recommend leaving your site archive and GPS in there overnight!



© Genquip

The smaller units are not the most spacious accommodation, but larger units are available that allegedly seat up to 10. Of course if it has been raining they can become just as squalid as those old site caravans, but for a short evaluation or small site with just a handful of Diggers they are an ideal and relatively cheap way of making life more pleasant for teams out on site, and fulfilling your employer's responsibilities under the Health and Safety at Work Act.

OASIS units are similar to Groundhogs, but need to be delivered on a low-loader, which is not as useful for short-duration jobs and you can only really site them within a Hi-ab's reach from a decent track.

A new development on some remote or very large sites are welfare vans: converted transit type vans with seats, table, kitchen area and toilet that can be driven around the site. These vans mean you can not only drive to site, but also take your accommodation to the point of work, saving on time lost at breaks getting back to the cabin and making sure you can always get a nice cup of tea -and time to drink it.

With relatively cheap mobile cabins that don't necessarily need a low loader and can be ordered for next day delivery, there is no excuse for employers to break the HSE requirements and not give staff decent welfare.

Thanks to [GenQuip](#) for photography.



Changes to IfA subscription fees 2012/13

A new basis

The Institute's subscription structure has been a topic of discussion for many years. There have long been concerns about the appropriateness of the income bands that it has been based on. In an attempt to streamline the current system and make it clearer, the subscription structure will be amended from April 2012.

At present subscription rates for Corporate grades are linked to a member's income – making it both complicated for members and time-consuming from an administrative perspective. From April 2012, subscription bands will be based on grade of membership. Members on lower incomes can still apply for a reduced subscription rate and those who earn less than the recommended minimum salary for their grade of membership will also pay a reduced rate. The subscription rates for each grade of membership can be found in the table.

Applying for concessionary rates

Applying for a concessionary subscription rates is very straightforward. It involves providing a statement in writing (via post or email) and/or sending in a copy of your annual P60, Job Seekers allowance statement etc. This process has already been in place for a number of years with the previous subscription structure and has been taken up by members whose circumstances qualify.

You may want to apply for a concessionary rate for a number of reasons. For example, you may be an Associate (AlfA) member of the Institute and expected to pay an annual fee of £150. But if you are employed in a post that has PlfA-level responsibility and pay, you would then be able to apply for a reduction in your subscription fee to the rate paid by a PlfA member (£110). If you are earning less than the PlfA recommended minimum salary then you can apply for a further reduction to the PlfA concessionary rate of £67. If you work part-time you would also be eligible for a concessionary rate if your income does not meet the relevant recommended scale - as outlined above you would need to provide details of your income. The subscription rate for those who are not currently in employment will be £20.

Benefits of the new structure

The new subscription structure makes the whole process more transparent. New members will find it

easier to predict their subscription rates before they apply and it will make it much simpler for the office to administrate. This will hopefully speed up the subscription renewal process and require less work hours overall – allowing staff to spend more time on our strategic objectives. In addition to this we will be able to better monitor members' salaries in relation to our recommended minimum salaries.

A detailed letter explaining the rates for the new structure will be sent out to all members in February with the annual subscription renewal. In the meantime, if you have any queries about the changes please contact subscriptions@archaeologists.net.

charged by grade based on rec. minima		earnings
PIfA concessionary rate	£20	> £10,000
*AIfA concessionary rate	£67	PlfA min
*MIfA concessionary rate	£110	AlfA min
AIfA	£150	MIfA min
MIfA	£190	MIfA start
MIfA upper	£220	
Affiliate	£50	
Retired	£50	
Student	£20	



Membership form

Please complete in block capitals

Full name(s) and title.....

Address.....

Post code.....

Tel No.....

E-mail address.....

Current post/employment.....

IfA membership number (if applicable).....

Signature.....

Date.....

Subscription fee

The Diggers' Forum is a group within the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA). Membership of the IfA is not a prerequisite for membership of the Diggers' Forum

**Membership of the Diggers' Forum is free to IfA members (all grades)
The annual subscription fee for non-IfA members is £10 (Not subject to VAT).**

Payment should be made by cheque, bank draft or international money order (in £ sterling), payable to the Institute for Archaeologists

- Please find enclosed a cheque,
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The Diggers' Forum



