Minutes of the meeting of the CIfA Finds Special Interest Group

Held: Thursday 28th September, 2017 at CGMS offices, Bastion House, 140 London Wall, EC2Y 5DN

Present: Phil Mills (PM, Chair) , Duncan Brown (DB), Ruth Pelling (RP), Mags Felter (MF), Alex Beeby (AB)

Action points:

PM to draft statement re Chartership to send round to the committee.
PM to contact Kerry Wiggins re stand at AEA conference, copying RP in
PM to contact committee members and Kerry Wiggins about who is leaving committee and query the constitution on committee membership
Everyone to think of suitable papers/speakers for CifA Finds Group AGM day-conference.
DB to email LR re 7090
PM to send out old survey paperwork to committee
PM to ask Kerry Wiggins what the state of play is with members of finds group who are not CIfA members with a view to getting list of specialists together.
KMB to email committee with confirmed booking for next meeting.

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| Agenda item |  | Action points |
| 1. Apologies for absence | Marie Claire Rackham-Mann, Rowena Hart , Louise Rayner\*, Kayt Marter Brown \*(\* phoned into the meeting via conference call) |  |
| 2. Minutes of last meeting | These had not been circulated at present. |  |
| 3. Matters arising (not covered elsewhere) | None  |  |
| 4. Finds issues  | Internal to CIfA A discussion was held about the FSIG response to individual chartered status and if we need to put together a formal response. PM would like CIfA to talk to specialist groups as it will not just be a case of migrating MIfAs to chartered status but will involve evidenced cpd, which will need to be peer reviewed . 2017 AGM – members will be asked to comment. Who will oversee the chartered status testing? Would we have to rejig the competency matrices? Duncan read out statement from Cifa. Some form of further assessment in the chartered status - we need to outline what we need those criteria to be. RP – concern is there are so many different specialists. We need to put a statement in by 27th October (2017). Phil to draft statement re chartership to go to CIfA.External (AEA, ICON, Other groups etc)RP has talked to Becky Nicholson about standards in environmental specialism. She feels there needs to be its own specialist group. Need to look at competency matrix for finds and see how this fits with Becky’s and if it works for environmental specialisms. If it is so similar that it’s not worth pursuing – may need to tweak the current finds compentency matrix to include environmental. RP said a separate group may attract more environmental archaeologists. DB – worth finding out how many environmental archaeologists are already members of the Finds Group. RP – most environmental archaeologists are not members. DB – we may need to promote ourselves a bit better. RP – worth raising at the next AEA conference –beginning of December in Edinburgh – we should have a stand and promote ourselves. Ruth is already attending and will man a stand. It was agreed that a stand should be manned as just leaflets will not have impact. Phil to contact Kerry Wiggins to ask advice and copying Ruth in. | Phil to draft statement re chartership to send round to the committee.Phil to contact Kerry re stand at AEA conference, copying Ruth in |
| 5. Training | Held a day meeting in Birmingham at AGM 17th May – very successful. Want to hold another similar one at next AGM at similar time of year. Follow up to the assessment session at AGM? Or similar theme to last one with broad theme of ‘Interpreting Finds’. Mixed papers. Focus on types of material, type of site, or environmental theme – everyone agreed this would be a good idea. RP suggested a title of ‘Environmental evidence as finds’ or PM suggested ‘Artefacting ecofacts’! Everyone to think of suitable speakers or papers. | Everyone to think of suitable papers/speakers for CifA Finds Group AGM day-conference. |
| 6. | Committee membershipPM and DB to step down from committee at next AGM. Need a new Chair and ordinary member. Check constitution to see how long you can serve on committee. Put forward a proposal to change constitution if you can only be on the committee for 6 years. Ask Kerry Wiggins who is due to leave? DB may raise it at the CIfA AGM as part of AOB. |  |
| 7. FSIG Events | CIfA Conference 2018Session has been accepted.Send email to Project Management group to ask for a speaker? PM to contact this group.Wait to see what comes out of the call for papers. Have agreed speaker from ALGAO. Historical Overview of MAPII and Morphe is probably needed. A call for papers might bring someone, if not, one of the committee can give an overview. Have to finalise speakers by mid-February 2018. It was suggested we have 3-4 speakers with set topics/key questions we want to cover. Want to make it outward looking and collaborative.Papers first, then small groups go off to discuss the key questions, then come back for panel discussion.Possible topics:What are assessments meant to achieve/what is an assessment/what gets includedWhen can be achieved?How are assessments currently used: HE example contrasting with a commercial exampleWhat to do with the data?Are assessments too expensive? At end of session we want a document stating what we think assessments are for and should include. We need to discuss if the assessment is worthwhile. How divergent from standard guidelines current practice is. Tied to archives.State what our aims are in the session abstract.We wait for outcome of call of papers. KMB will Tweet this too.  |  |
| 8. Projects | Project 7090 update (LR phoned in). LR has done a bit of teaching but other than that not much has happened. What are the expectations? Feedback on twitter but not much else. DB– we do need to follow it up. LR – do we want to take recommendations and criteria and email them directly to people like ALGAO to get direct feedback. Key sectors that we need to get this on board to. DB – worth asking Historic England to fund further work to put together an explanation sheet/manual. PM – standing committee willing to take this forward. Duncan to have a word with Cath Buxton to see if it is likely they can fund this. Kate Geary to be involved. DB and LR to take this forward.SurveyThe survey of finds practice last completed in 2007. Needs updating and sending out again to all archaeological units. PM to forward his notes to the rest of the committee. Hoping to achieve a state of play of finds practice and leading to recommendations. Evidence base for what training the sector need.RP, MF and AB to pull together old report and update questions. Hope to discuss outcome at next Finds Group AGM 2018.Glossary of termsDuncan sent these out. Whole committee to read these and come up with outcomes. | DB to email LR PM to send out old Survey paperwork to committee. |
| 9. Communication | Website A long discussion was held about how to go about making a list of specialists, centered around whether members of the Finds Group who are not members of CIfA should have the opportunity to be included on a published List of Specialists, endorsed by CIfA.It was concluded that we need to find out how many of the Finds Group members are not also members of CIfA and take it from there.RP said her name is not on list of committee members on website. PM to email Kerry Wiggins.Social media134 followers on twitter – we get re-tweeted quite often. KMB asked committee members to tweet and retweet FSIG material if they are on Twitter.#Finds Friday to be used more by KMB.Artefact recording – feedback on Badger – some people suggested that it made their specialists look bad. Some people criticised that a definition of what a specialist is had not been included. There had also been some positive feedback on the outcome document/criteria. NewsletterStill being edited by Steven Brunning. Content to be sent to him. | Phil to ask Kerry what the state of play is with members of finds group who are not Cifa Members with a view to getting list of specialists together.PM to mention this to Kerry. |
| 10. Any Other Business | KMB stated that a new specialist group on Human Remains is being put together. BAO gave their go- ahead as long as their work did not overlap too much with the work they are doing. DB informed the committee that the Archaeological Archives SIG are trying to develop toolkit for how to produce and initiate a selection strategy for archive during the course of an archaeological projects. This has proven difficult – everyone has a different view on what should be included. DB suggested what AG could do is to put in to HE for funding to form a working group to get something down on paper. Maybe this should be in conjunction with Finds Group as this would help with selection of finds as part of that. Committee thought this would be a good idea. Who from the FG would take this on? PM may be able to do this. DB will be involved as part of HE anyway. DB will take this to AAG next meeting. |  |
| 11. Date of next meeting | Thursday 18th January pencilled in. KMB to confirm booking at CGMS. | KMB to email with confirmed booking. |