Historic England

Selection strategies for archaeological archives: making archaeological archives sustainable

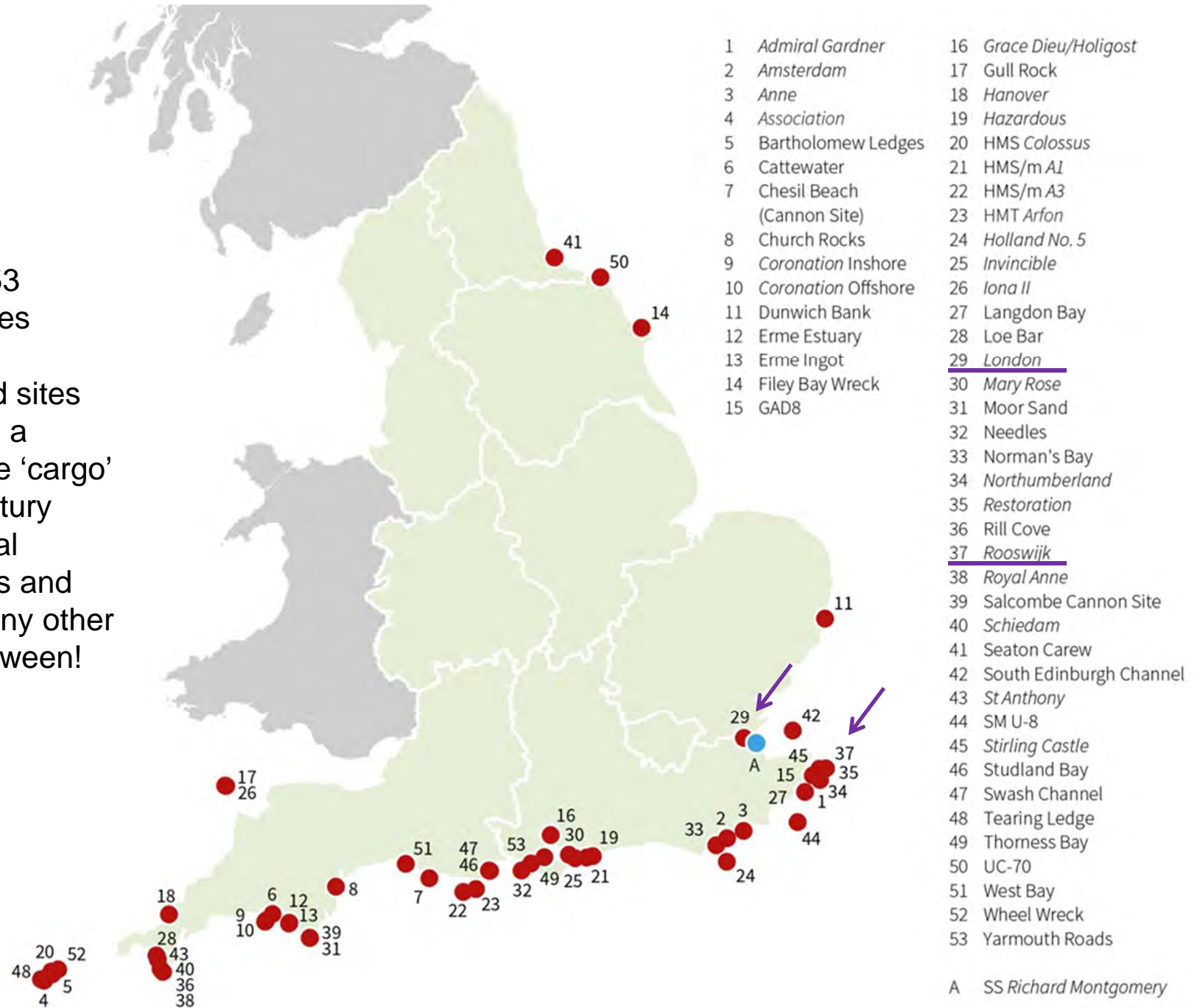CIfA AAG day conference and AGM programme 20 March 2019, Birmingham Midland Institute

Making an informed choice: selecting wreck material for archive deposition

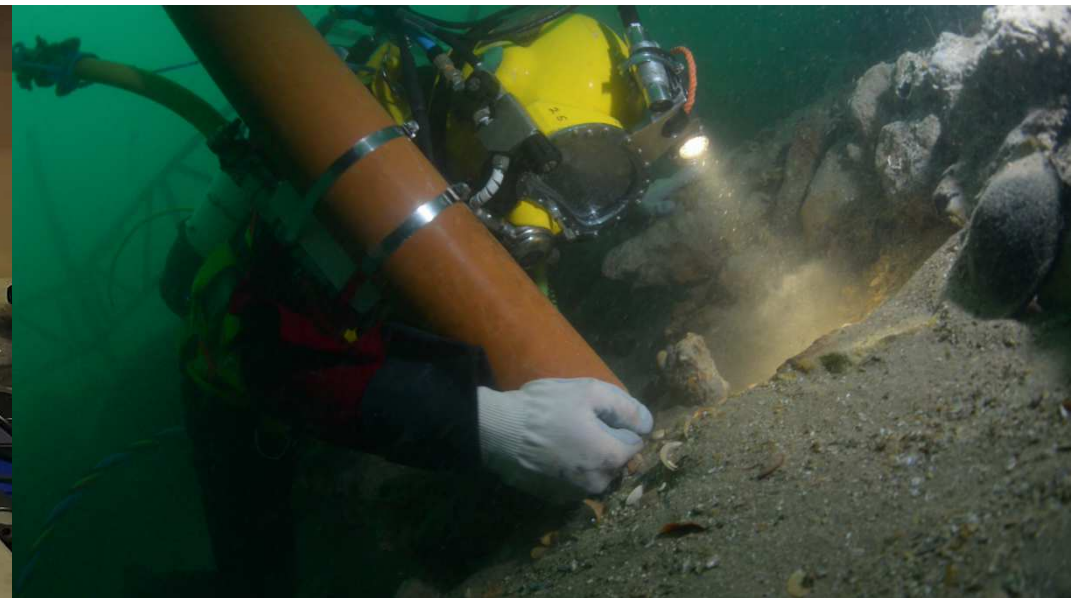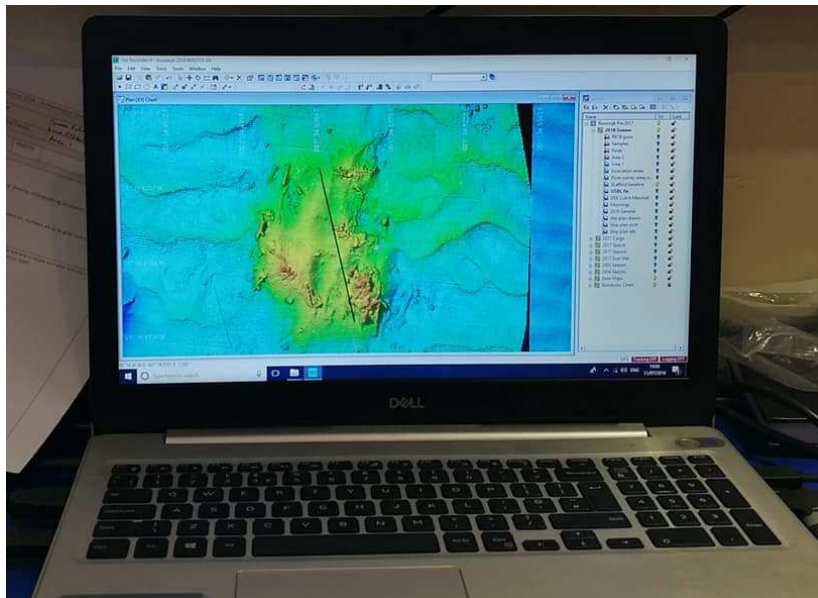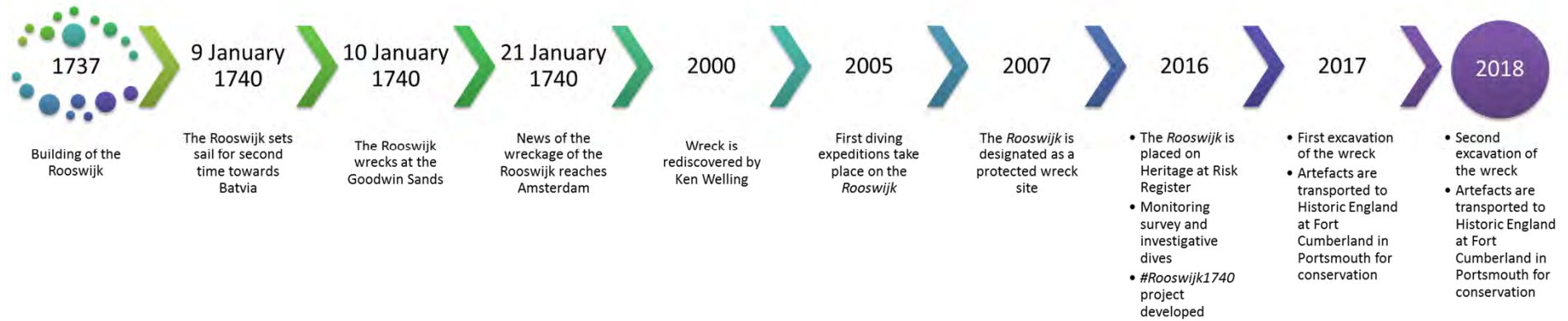Angela Middleton, Archaeological Conservator, Historic England
@AngyMiddleton

Currently 53
English Sites

Designated sites
range from a
Bronze Age 'cargo'
to 20th Century
Royal Naval
submarines and
include many other
sites in between!

1	Admiral Gardner	16	Grace Dieu/Holigost
2	Amsterdam	17	Gull Rock
3	Anne	18	Hanover
4	Association	19	Hazardous
5	Bartholomew Ledges	20	HMS Colossus
6	Cattewater	21	HMS/m A1
7	Chesil Beach (Cannon Site)	22	HMS/m A3
8	Church Rocks	23	HMT Arfon
9	Coronation Inshore	24	Holland No. 5
10	Coronation Offshore	25	Invincible
11	Dunwich Bank	26	Iona II
12	Erme Estuary	27	Langdon Bay
13	Erme Ingot	28	Loe Bar
14	Filey Bay Wreck	29	London
15	GAD8	30	Mary Rose
		31	Moor Sand
		32	Needles
		33	Norman's Bay
		34	Northumberland
		35	Restoration
		36	Rill Cove
		37	Rooswijk
		38	Royal Anne
		39	Salcombe Cannon Site
		40	Schiedam
		41	Seaton Carew
		42	South Edinburgh Channel
		43	St Anthony
		44	SM U-8
		45	Stirling Castle
		46	Studland Bay
		47	Swash Channel
		48	Tearing Ledge
		49	Thorness Bay
		50	UC-70
		51	West Bay
		52	Wheel Wreck
		53	Yarmouth Roads

A	SS Richard Montgomery

Rooswijk (sank 1740)

1737 — Building of the Rooswijk

9 January 1740 — The Rooswijk sets sail for second time towards Batvia

10 January 1740 — The Rooswijk wrecks at the Goodwin Sands

21 January 1740 — News of the wreckage of the Rooswijk reaches Amsterdam

2000 — Wreck is rediscovered by Ken Welling

2005 — First diving expeditions take place on the *Rooswijk*

2007 — The *Rooswijk* is designated as a protected wreck site

2016
- The *Rooswijk* is placed on Heritage at Risk Register
- Monitoring survey and investigative dives
- #Rooswijk1740 project developed

2017
- First excavation of the wreck
- Artefacts are transported to Historic England at Fort Cumberland in Portsmouth for conservation

2018
- Second excavation of the wreck
- Artefacts are transported to Historic England at Fort Cumberland in Portsmouth for conservation

Cultural Heritage Agency of the Netherlands
Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

Historic England

MSDS Marine
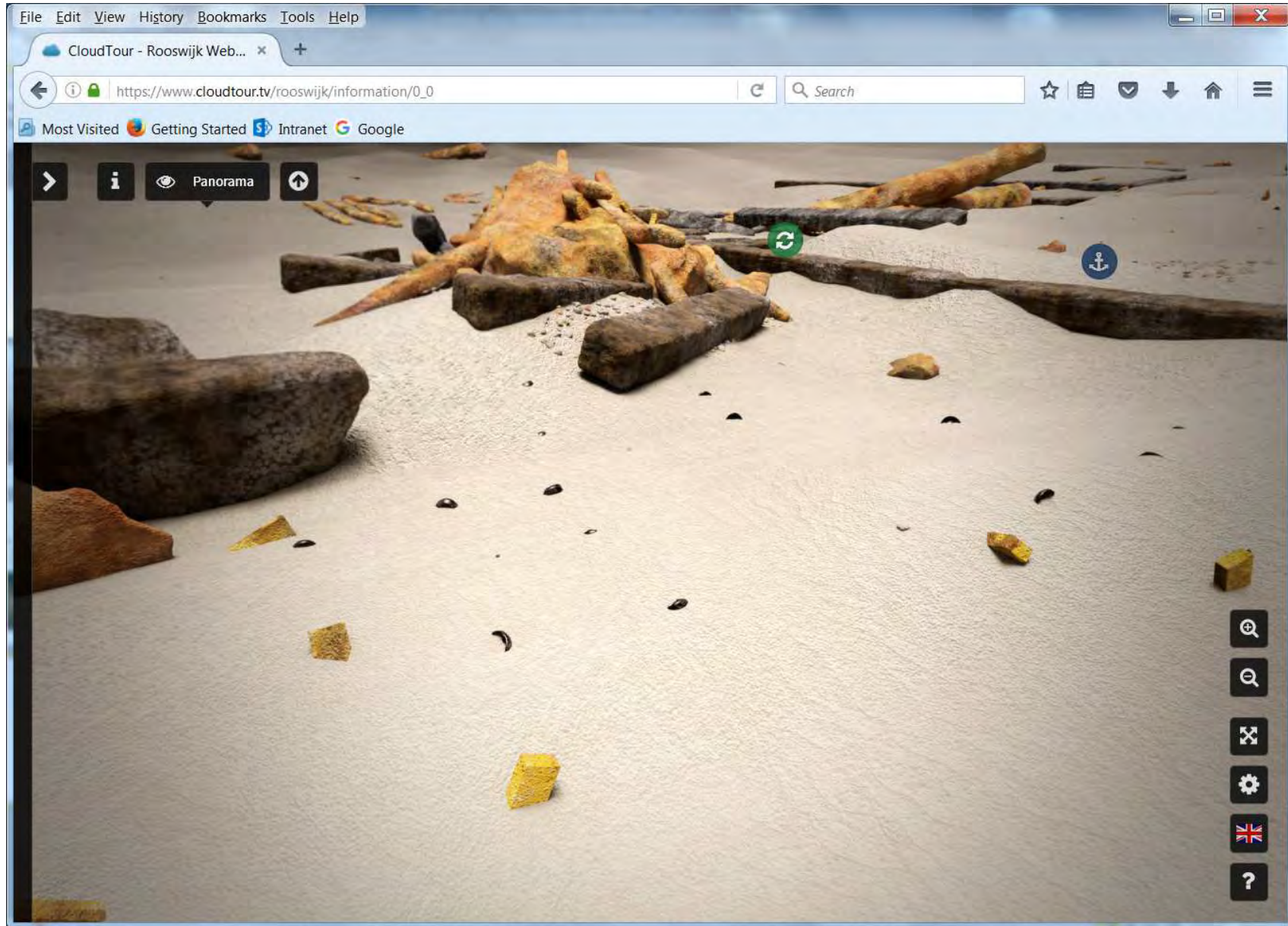
[Rooswijk virtual dive trail](#)

Material		Number of Objects
Inorganic	Ceramic – CBM*	36
	Ceramic - object	58
	Copper Alloy	96
	Flint	1
	Glass	54
	Iron	124
	Lead	50
	Pewter	23
	Silver	1350
	Slate	1
	Stone - worked	6
	Tin	1
	Sub-Total	1800
Organic material	Animal bone	5
	Charcoal	7
	Human remains	3
	Leather	8
	Plant Material**	4
	Rope	2
	Wood	84
	Sub-Total	113
Composite		33
Concretion		213
Unidentified		11
All finds		2170
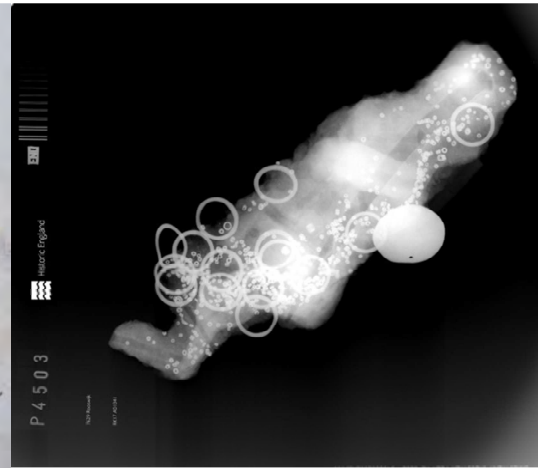
Post-Excavation   Assessment

		Potential and Significance	Action
■	Green	High potential and significance	Retain
■	Yellow	Low/medium potential and significance	Desirable to retain
■	Red	No potential and significance	Dispose

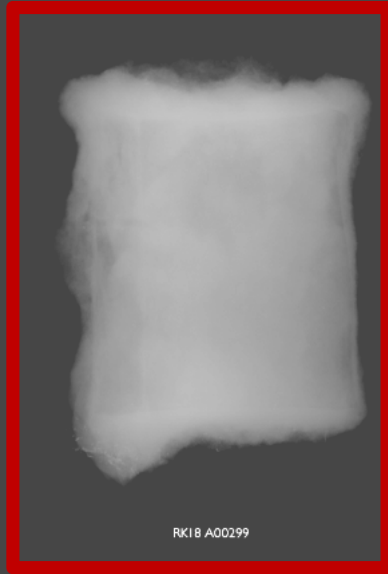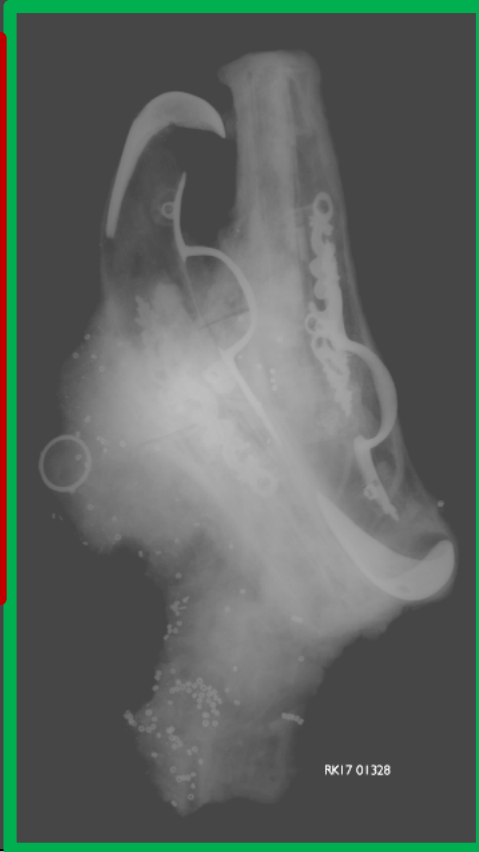| Numbers of artefacts X-rayed	255	
Retention/ Further investigation required*	77 artefacts	*proposed for retention to reveal artefacts/ remove concretion
To be confirmed**	89 artefacts	**discussion with finds specialist required
Disposal***	89 artefacts	***recommended for disposal, as these mainly contain voids, fragmentary artefact remains or glass beads

P4606

Historic England

Cultural Heritage Agency
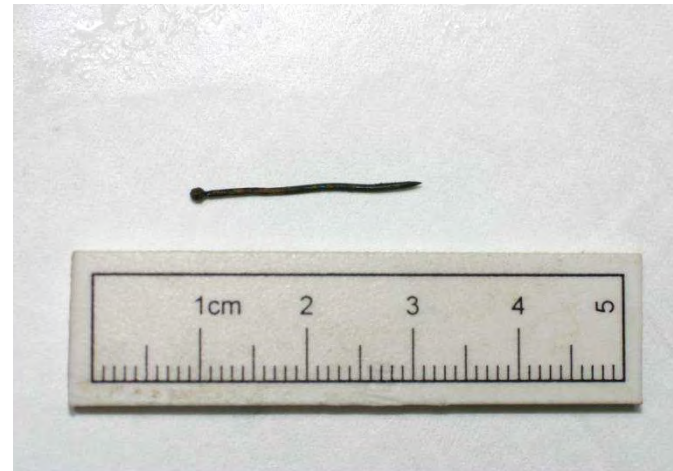Ministry of Education, Culture and Science

Rooswijk 7629

RKI8 A00299

RKI7 01328

London (sank 1665)

Multibeam Bathymetry image of Site 2 of the London
Showing the location of trenches 1 -3

Historic England

Cotswold Archaeology

The London Shipwreck Trust

Southend MUSEUMS

Historic England

Licensee

Nominated Archaeologist

Project Manager

Archive Repository
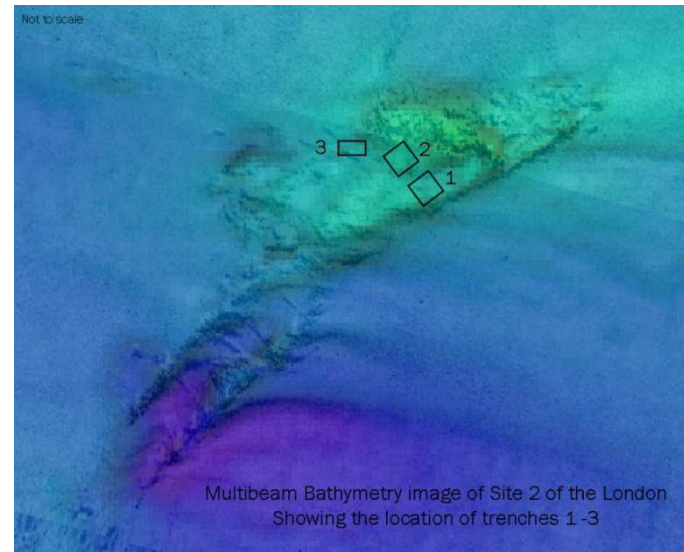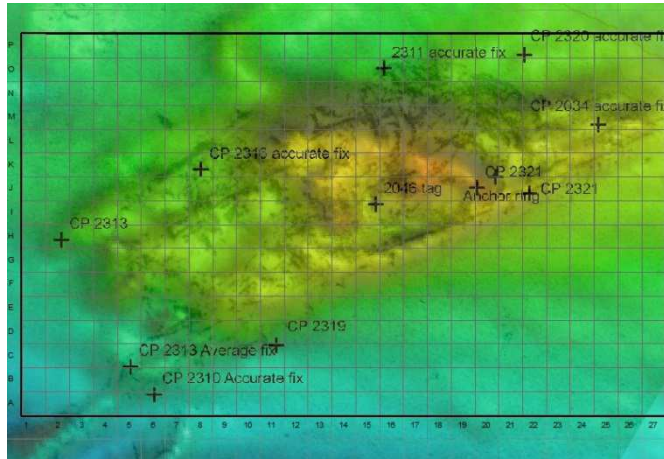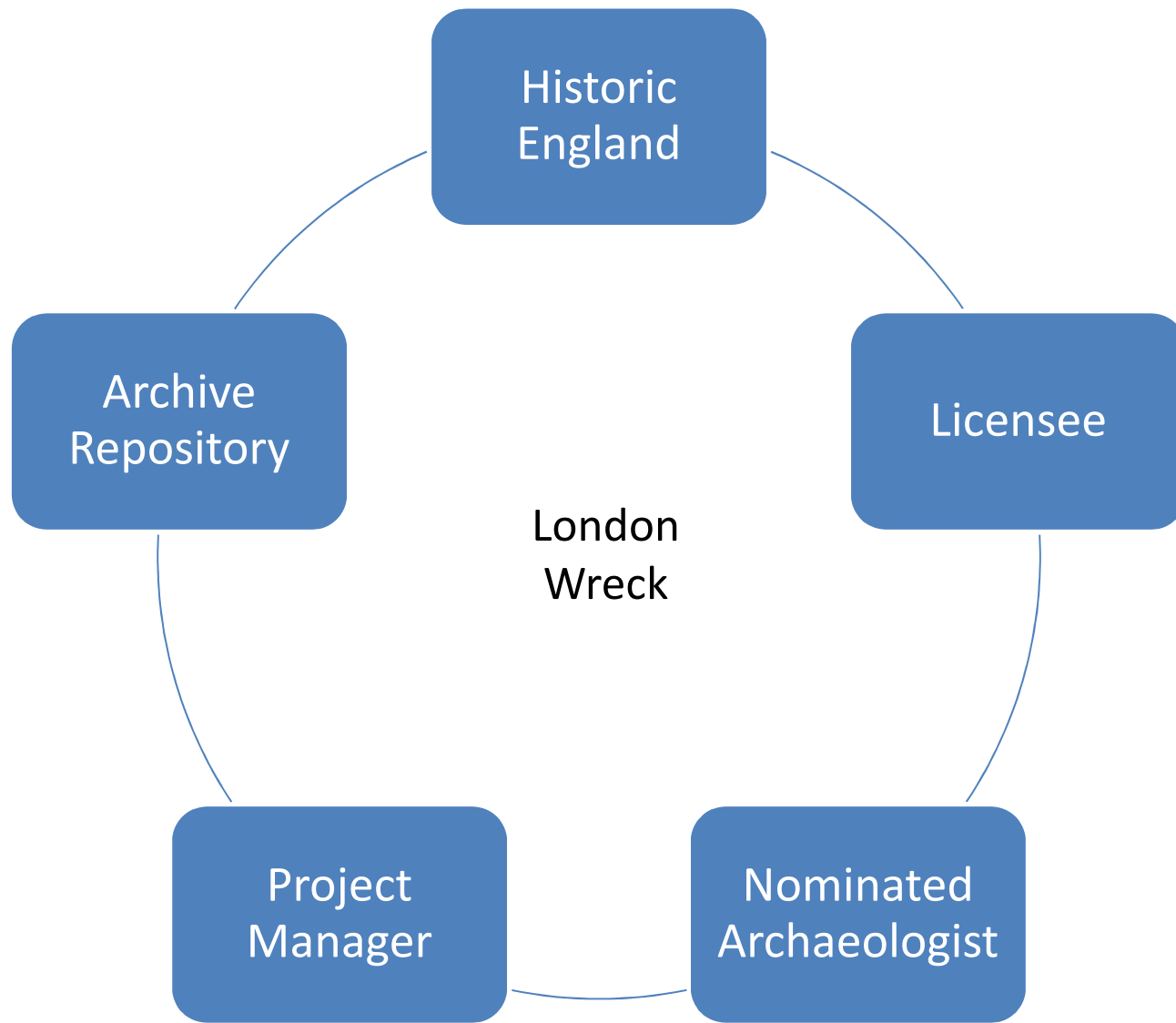
London Wreck

RECOVERY OF ARTEFACTS

7.1 When should artefacts be recovered?

7.1.1 The *London* is a nationally important historic wreck. This protocol has been written on the basis that artefacts should not be recovered from the site simply because they have been discovered.

7.1.2 Instead an artefact should only be recovered if the recovery is licensed and:
- It is 'at risk' and it is not practicable to preserve it *in situ*;

and/or
- It is required to answer questions generated by the site research framework;

and
- The Licensee, EH, the Museum and the Nominated Archaeologist agree that it is practicable to recover, conserve and curate the find.

RECOVERY OF ARTEFACTS

7.2 How to determine priorities?

7.2.1 Priorities should be considered on a case by case basis. As a matter of general principle, finds should be considered for surface recovery in the following order of priority:

- Artefacts that are at immediate risk of loss or serious damage.

- Artefacts that are 'at risk' and that are required to answer research framework questions.

- Artefacts that are 'at risk'.

- Artefacts that are required to answer research framework questions but are not 'at risk'.

The Recovery Tree

Is it a recoverable type of object? — **No** → Leave *in situ*; if it is exceptional discuss possible recovery with EH, nominated archaeologist and Southend Museum.

Yes ↓

Is it your opinion that it is likely to be damaged or destroyed if left *in situ*? — **No** → Is recovery required to answer a research question about the site? (discuss with nominated archaeologist) — **No** → Leave *in situ*.

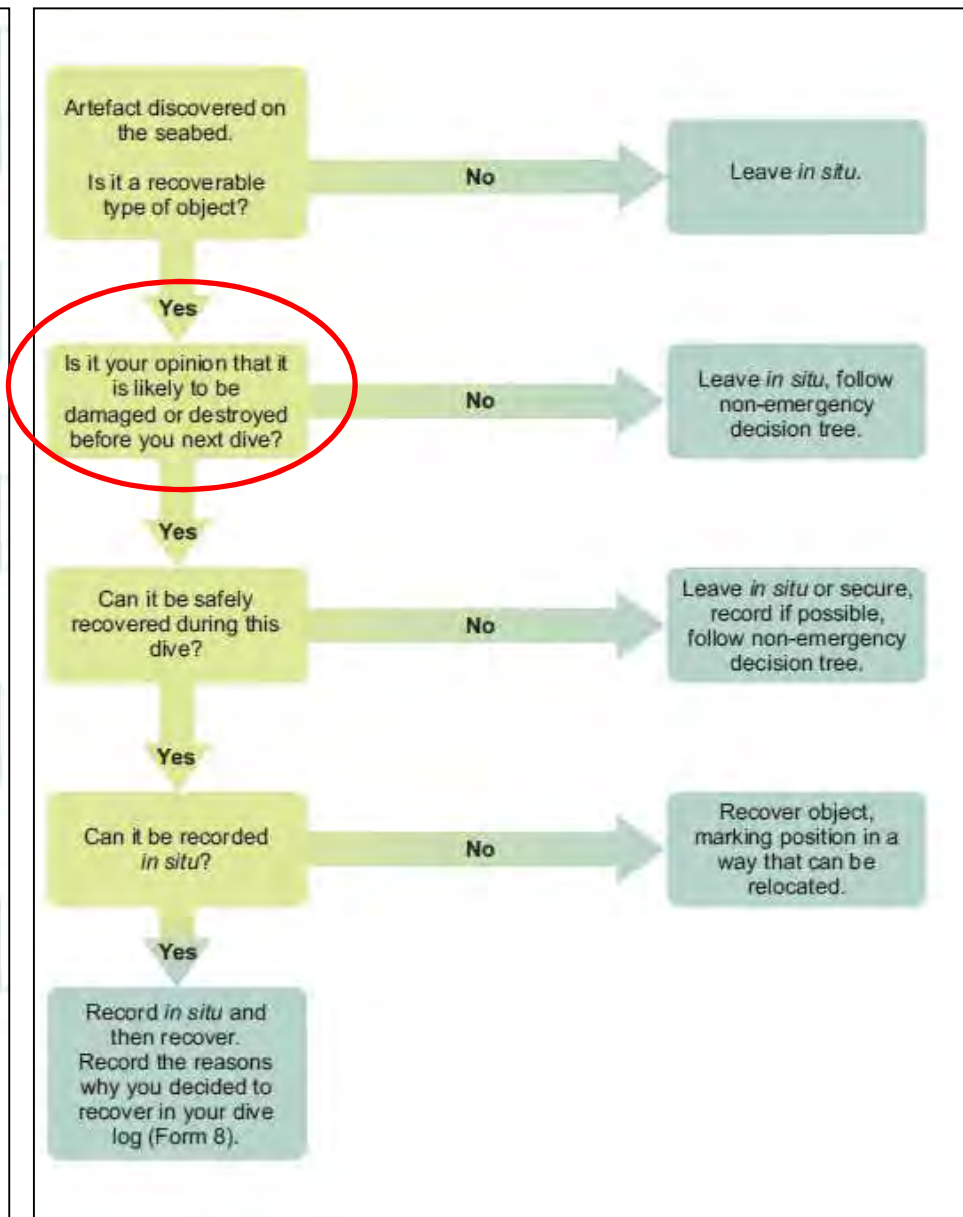**Yes** ↓   /   **Yes** →

Can it be safely recovered? — **No** → Leave *in situ*.

Yes ↓

Will it require conservation that has not already been provided for? — **Yes or not sure** → Discuss possibility of recovering with EH and nominated archaeologist.

No ↓

Is it possible to obtain all the information needed from the object on the seabed? — **Yes or not sure** → Discuss possibility of leaving it *in situ* with the nominated archaeologist.

No ↓

Record *in situ* and then recover. Record the reasons why you decided to recover in your dive log (Form 8).

The Emergency Recovery Tree

Artefact discovered on the seabed. Is it a recoverable type of object? — **No** → Leave *in situ*.

Yes ↓

Is it your opinion that it is likely to be damaged or destroyed before you next dive? — **No** → Leave *in situ*, follow non-emergency decision tree.

Yes ↓

Can it be safely recovered during this dive? — **No** → Leave *in situ* or secure, record if possible, follow non-emergency decision tree.

Yes ↓

Can it be recorded *in situ*? — **No** → Recover object, marking position in a way that can be relocated.

Yes ↓

Record *in situ* and then recover. Record the reasons why you decided to recover in your dive log (Form 8).

Material		Number of Objects
Inorganic	Copper alloy	18
	Iron	1
	Lead	46
	Pewter	13
	Silver	?
	Concretion	18
	Ceramic (incl clay pipes)	81
	Glass	22
	Other	1
	Total	**200**
Organic material	Animal bone - unworked	6
	Animal bone - worked	2
	Fibre (Rope)	25
	Human remains	36
	Leather	75
	Wood	357
	Other (Coal?)	3
	Total	**504**
Composite		3
Unidentified		10
All finds		**717**

Assessment – Consultation – Selection

- **Stakeholders**

Project Management - Cotswald Archaeology
Project Specialists   - Finds Specialists
                       - Conservator
Archive Repository   - Southend Museum

- **Questions**

What is the artefact (identification, function)?
What can we learn from it?
What can it tell us about the London, the site, the period?

Retain (**R**) Unsure (**U**) Discard (**D**)

Material		Number of Objects	Discard (D)
Inorganic	Copper alloy	18	
	Iron	1	
	Lead	46	
	Pewter	13	
	Silver	?	
	Concretion	18	**13**
	Ceramic (incl clay pipes)	81	**3**
	Glass	22	
	Other	1	
	Total	**200**	
Organic material	Animal bone - unworked	6	
	Animal bone - worked	2	
	Fibre (Rope)	25	**7**
	Human remains	36	
	Leather	75	
	Wood	357	**33**
	Other (Coal?)	3	
	Total	**504**	
Composite		3	
Unidentified		10	**9**
All finds		**717**	**65 (9%)**

FRAGMENT (WOOD?)
ASSOCIATED WITH THE
WRECK

3365

THE LONDON