



Historic England

The world after PPG16: 21st-century challenges for archaeology

Appendix 3 Transcript of online discussions

Jan Wills

Published October 2018

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists is incorporated by Royal Charter.
Power Steele Building, Wessex Hall, Whiteknights Road, Earley, Reading, RG6 6DE

Appendix 3

Transcript of online discussions

The following transcripts from the six online discussions are presented verbatim apart from the removal of all participant names (except for those of the project team), in accordance with data protection requirements, and minor editing consequent upon that.

Contents	Page
1: Archaeological archives: new models for archive creation, deposition, storage, access and research. What can the sector do to redefine the archaeological archive and realise its public value?	4
2: Standards and Guidance. What are they for and who sets them?	29
3: Designation and management of the archaeological resource in the context of a changing planning system	40
4: New models for advisory services: potential future roles for local authority archaeology services and Historic England	50
5: Synthesis of information from developer-funded investigation to create new historical narratives	68
6: Challenges for archaeological publication in a digital age. Who are we writing this stuff for, anyway?	84

Online discussion 1

Archaeological archives: new models for archive creation, deposition, storage, access and research. What can the sector do to redefine the archaeological archive and realise its public value?

Historic England and ClfA project team discussion participants:

Edmund Lee	Knowledge Transfer Manager, and Project Assurance Officer, Historic England
Robin Page	Digital Coordinator, Research Group, Historic England; LinkedIn Group owner/Moderator
Barney Sloane	Head of Strategic Planning and Management, Research Group, Historic England
Steve Trow	Director of Research, Historic England
Jan Wills	ClfA Chair, and 21 st -century Challenges Project Manager

DAY 1

Robin Page: For those of you joining us today for this discussion we've already had two comments. **Contributor 7** draws attention to the question 'Who pays' - or who should pay - for archaeological archives.

Also **Contributor 12** posted to the original article saying: 'We need to factor in the research relevance of archives and bring in some professional honesty about what our current research parameters are. Using Big Data and research frameworks can help in this. We can't continue with current rate of archive creation and deposition. Archive creation (including discarding) needs to feature early on in archaeological project design. Bring in greater professional collaboration and lay audience engagement at project planning. Give more consideration to role and creation of digital archives. We need to demonstrate worth and value of archives (not just from research perspective) in social, cultural and economic terms. We have to find the right language to communicate this to a society outside of the historic environment sector that increasingly are not interested in boxes of stuff on shelves. Imaginative approaches to engagement and clear sense of need and added value needs to be expressed'.

Jan Wills: Following up one of **Contributor 12's** points: how do we better embed the creation and use of the archive into project planning and implementation? Are there some examples of how this has worked well? Or is the archive still an afterthought?

Contributor 1: One way would be for archaeological contractors to engage with museum curators (where they are still in post) to discuss selection/retention rather than deciding themselves at the

end of the project

Contributor 9: I think one problem is that we (i.e. museums) accept archives with very little understanding of their contents or how they could possibly be used for display or other museum activities. There's very little communication between depositors and recipients. Nobody goes, 'By the way this stuff is marvellous, you could do an exhibition about X or tie it into narratives about Y,' when they offload the archives. There's always potential there but it needs to be communicated: don't assume museum professionals inherently understand what they're being given.

Contributor 15: Could that not be addressed by simply adding a relevant box to deposition paperwork? Or having a phone conversation?

Contributor 14: My personal thoughts are that it is unclear to me if museums are the best repository for archives. For sure museums can use items from the archives to enhance their displays and collections but much of the archive is not useful for display. Spread across hundreds of museums with no coherent list of what is where is surely a major block to the archives being used for research - how do you find them and if you do then you may have to visit numerous locations, with resultant travel and time costs, to access them being another block. The debate about whether the content is useful as if it isn't accessed regularly cannot be equitably explored without equally exploring what is blocking the access and research. I would suggest exploring creation of a national index of archives - a daunting task but much of this information is already recorded, what is needed is a compilation of sources.

One suggestion to **Contributor 7's** point. A percentage of known excavation costs could be paid, at the outset of work, into a national trust fund which is managed to pay for ongoing costs of a deepstore archive facility. Costs of access are then born by whoever wants the access and the maintenance costs by the fund. Coupled with a national index of holdings this would provide storage, covers costs and be a national resource. Archives are too frequently characterised as a problem when they are in fact an under utilised resource. Use being blocked by many factors. Museums could still be involved in providing access points for recalled archives from their traditional collecting areas if they wished but could equally draw upon the resource for their own exhibition requirements.

Contributor 1: It is possible to record the location of archives in HERs. In our area, we are notified when archives are about to be deposited, ensuring that we have all of the required information relating to that piece of work in the HER. We can also record that the archive has been deposited, what type of archive, and we also record the types of finds included. There is potential here for HERs and Museums to develop closer working relationships which would result in benefits for both. However, we have to also be mindful of the pressures on Local Authority services and HERs but it could be possible?

Contributor 8: Some places do ask the contractors if they have anything displayable and some contractors do tell museums that there are objects or if it is a site where there are good images etc. But this is not common practice

Contributor 14: I am hoping that the forthcoming version of OASIS will help cover new sites but I don't think it will cover existing archive holdings nor am I clear where volunteer or non commercial research projects are recorded. We have gathered all of the archives for years but it is time to tie all this information together and see what it is telling us. There have been some notable projects in this direction in recent years but an archive deposition system that facilitates this type of research is still lacking.

Contributor 16: Current initiatives are attempting to address these issues, with communication required from the outset of a project so that the museum, planning archaeologist and contractor discuss not only the selection policy to be applied but also the value, significance and potential of the archive that will result from any given project. However, this is still not standard practice and yes Jan, many contractors (normally the smaller ones) I have spoken with still consider the archive an afterthought...if they consider it at all!

Contributor 13: I think we have started off discussion half way down the list. All the discussion about how to access archives presupposes that we know the answers to (in particular) the first part of question 1.

And I would say no - we don't know why we are creating and keeping archives anymore. When significant sites were the only ones ever investigated by gentleman antiquarians (and by significant I mean sites with lots of stuff on) then it seemed obvious that the archive should be kept, and that logic has been applied *carte blanche* to all sites. But it is questionable in the context of investigation of site of no archaeology (ie ones that find nothing) or of limited significance if that is still the right model.

Similarly, there is an assumption that we should keep stuff so it can be looked at later by future generations, but that actually happens very rarely in my experience, because as a discipline we're about finding and investigating new stuff, not re-examining old archives (somewhat paradoxically). And until we agree that basic idea – what are we keeping and why - everything else is smoke and mirrors because it all gets swamped by the sheer quantity of archives being generated and curated. So back to first principles – why do we keep archives?

Contributor 10: As a contractor I would argue that the archive is never seen as an afterthought. At the end of the day it is the only physical evidence we have for the money spent by the client and everything we do from inception through to completion is focused on making sure that it is as useful as possible. Normally if there are any parts of it that warrant special attention then this is flagged up within the report and highlighted to the appropriate planning archaeologist, HER and where appropriate museum. In my mind would it not make more sense to have tighter integration between the HER and museums in the flow of information so that both services can improve. At present the

system seems to be relatively blinkered with each element only focused on how to improve its individual problems rather than looking at the wider picture of how we improve the whole and how each department can help the next. Our discipline in my mind grows organically and clumsy rather than in an organised and focused manner.

Contributor 13: I'd also suggest that, arguably PAS has defined a new paradigm for archiving. Many finds are fully recorded by PAS and then given back to finders to basically disappear for ever, so the only unit of study is that digital record. Is this a model that might be suitable for other types of archive material? i.e. sites which produce small numbers of finds or archive material - create a digital archive and bin the physical material? I would suggest it is.

The fact is we are spending lots of resources archiving stuff which will never be looked at, and essentially wasting those resources, as well as causing problems for museums. I think its time to think long and hard about that model and come up with one which is more fit for purpose

Contributor 1: I think we now keep archives because that is what we have always done. It's now come to the point where we, the sector, are addressing this (Archives SIG as well as the SMA and others). Archaeology as a whole is slow to change methodology especially as we have grown organically to a certain extent (as per the comment above). Do we need to keep archives from sites that result in no archaeology? Not necessarily, that's where digital archiving has a role to play as well as HERs - surely there's no need to generate a paper archive for these types of sites? However, we need firm and agreed digital archiving standards and guidance on a national level which can be applied across the sector.

Jan Wills: So project managers need to include in the commissioning of specialist analyses a retention/discard proposal, and aim to have, by the time of deposition, an assessment of the potential value of the resulting archive for research/display/education etc?

Contributor 1: Jan, I would agree as long as the PMs have had discussions with planning archaeologists/HERs/Museum curators. Without these discussions, there is the danger that selection/retention proposed by the contractor may not be appropriate for that particular area.

Contributor 14: When agreeing who chooses what to keep we need to be mindful of the pressures that body is under. PMs facing large deposition charges on a small remaining budget will be looking to reduce an archive to save costs. Museums without archaeological expertise may see no value in non display items and even those with archaeologists face huge pressures of space availability which is really nothing to do with the purpose of keeping an archive. By nature an evaluation archive is already a sample of a site. It is also important to distinguish documentary and material archives when discussing selection since reduction of objects may in fact require increasing documentation and reporting on what is discarded.

Contributor 1: If discussions are open, transparent and importantly, pragmatic then agreement can

be reached. But they need to happen first.

Contributor 14: I agree that replacing documentary archives with a well curated digital archive - even using scanned PdfA of hard copy to create a wholly digital archive where necessary is a sensible way forward where funds and proper curation of the digital data is done. Indeed accessible through a web address is more likely to increase its use and consultation than having to travel to visit its hard copy equivalent which is why ensuring it is available wholly in a digital medium is important. What use context sheets in hard copy in the museum but the relevant corresponding finds analysis and primary drawings in digital form at ADS or elsewhere such as the contractors server? Clear guidelines to digital archive content are needed.

There is no value to a hard copy *archive* of a negative site if that site has no features at all, an OASIS report upload, with images curated through the enhanced image feature if necessary, should be sufficient as long as the report has good plan locations in it defining the negative area. In some areas the site boundary is mapped through an HER GIS and this covers negative sites too. BUT we need a clear definition of what 'negative' means. At present there are some in the sector who would interpret it as a site with no artefacts even if there are features. In such cases where there are features a depositable archive would be needed alongside the report. This is where depositing a hard copy is often cheaper than depositing a digital copy with ADS and so the temptation to push for hard copy deposition is more significant for those paying the bill but adds to the space crisis in museums.

Contributor 16: I agree that selection has to be discussion between all the relevant parties and in some counties this is happening. However, someone always seems to have a problem with selection of archives: a non archaeological museum curator will say that the archaeologist should make the decisions, the contractor says they can't know what a museum will want (or that its cheaper to give the museum everything than go through the process of selection- even with increased box charges!), a specialist will refuse to apply a selection process as it all may be relevant in the future etc etc. I think that this comes back to **Contributor 14's** comment about if archaeological archives (in their current form) belong in museums, and the bigger questions of who should be leading on this and who should be paying. At the moment it is all rather piecemeal with museums taking the lead in the majority of projects which at their biggest are county wide. Should not the approach be national?

Contributor 13: I think the apparent expense of digital versus analogue archiving is more down to museums being bad at estimating the actual costs of archiving, than digital inherently costing more. I think this in part has contributed to the issue - archiving was for many years "free" to the developer, but was actually a hidden cost. The cost needs to be passed back to them.

Contributor 18: Just picking up a few points from your previous posts: 1) from my experience working with depositions with circa 30 counties, there is still a very local context of issues and ways forward-understandably. 2) The recession has hit hard a number of museums which in some cases lost up to 40% of their staff. So, yes, in some areas we are dealing with non-archaeological curators

nowadays who might not be interested perhaps? or fully confident about the contents of our boxes. 3) But equally I had to co-operate with museum curators on selection/retention who they decided to leave it to us mainly as it is long winded and our projects managers have overall view of each project in conjunction with our internal/external specialists.

In an ideal world of adequate resources either side as overall I hear the 'time and money ' argument we could co-operate better in order to achieve this at max. as we together can create a 'future proof' usable resource. 4) I do believe that we, the archaeologists, do access and re-visit archives may be in a smaller number compared to academics and I have encountered a number of cases over my time 5) on the public benefit front, a good number of commercial units have run community digs and do co-operate with the local archaeology groups-work experience and uni students - volunteers 6) communication and ways forward is the key and you can see it in good practice in counties where the Planning team works closely with the Museum curators. This is a strong foundation to deal with various issues of e.g. a major fieldwork project from beginning to final deposition - from our part is key to ensure all of our relevant colleagues are in touch with the county staff from day one (of project).

NB my numbering is not replying to the points above (of the brief) - it is to differentiate my various points to your previous posts

Contributor 1: So lack of consistency of approach across counties is clearly a problem. How do we resolve this? Do we need some sort of support system for those non-archaeological curators who feel that they can't comment on selection/retention? Can those policies be included in regional Research Frameworks? Again, it comes down to the issues of resources (staff and time) as well as funding. However, as **Contributor 13** points out above, why do we collect archives and do we need a fundamental shift in our thinking around how and why we collect archives before we can hope to achieve consensus on the rest?

Robin Page: A personal view here: notwithstanding obstacles to this happening, one of arguments/ideals for collecting archives is so that the evidence can be reinterpreted. Can we say this should be the case?

Contributor 10: The argument for consistency is a very good one, I know from first hand how frustrated developers get when costs and requirements vary drastically from one site to the next based solely on geography. I would argue, and I am happy to be wrong, that policies of this sort should be organised at a national rather than regional level. I do believe that with the vast advances onsite with regards to digital recording will greatly affect the way archives are presented and stored. I am also cautious of who is responsible for the long term storage and file upkeep to make sure that archives are not corrupted and remain in a stable digital format that does not become obsolete.

Contributor 1: In answer to your question Robin, it is true that evidence can be reinterpreted. However, how much more information can be gained on sites where very little or nothing has been

found (in terms of artefacts)? How much more knowledge can be gained in those areas which are very clearly understood?

I don't believe that selection/retention policies can be imposed on a national level but could certainly perhaps be agreed on a regional level taking in account the character of each county? This would be a lot of work and would involve a lot of collaboration not to mention funding with regular updating. We do, however, need a national policy with regards to digital archiving. Digital archiving should also be subject to selection/retention.

Robin Page Just a slight digression back to something **Contributor 14** asked about earlier today. It is definitely part of the OASIS redevelopment plans to enhance the reporting of local society investigations and non-commercial research from universities and others. This has been informed by the initial user-needs work on HERALD to consider the requirements of such groups. There have already been some training sessions with local societies on the existing OASIS set up. The OASIS blog has a recent entry on community group engagement also has some information on some of the intended improvements for joining up the reporting of Archive deposition in the new system- <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/blog/oasis/?p=383>

Contributor 1: Following on from Robin's post, community, voluntary and academic research is also recorded in HERs. There is a problem with archives resulting from community work - Rob Hedge and Aisling Nash completed a HE funded project called 'Assessing the Value of Community Generated Research'

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/research-resources/assessing-community-generated-research/>

Contributor 13: But we still haven't answered the question - why are we keeping archives? Selection etc will flow from that - if you know why you want to keep archives, then you can work out which ones to keep.

Contributor 10: Surely we keep archives to allow for reinterpretation and comparison of sites over time. If you were to remove the archive then the report would need to contain everything and for anything above a small site would become an unwieldy document to use. There is no way any individual can state what is important at any given time, my boring undated field boundary at the edge of my site may turn out to be one wing of your ground breaking henge enclosure. Alternatively the ditch that I believe is identical to yours is in actuality, on comparison not. This is the reason that writing simply 'ditch' will not do on context sheets anymore, a truly good archive should allow any individual to be able to reinterpret a site regardless of them stepping on site and without prior biases or interpretations getting in the way.

Contributor 1: Then we surely need a different archive methodology for those sites that have no artefacts or features such as suggested above at the very least? Do we need to improve the standards of recording on site in order to ensure that really good archive? We somehow can't seem

to get away from the need to keep everything 'just in case'....

Contributor 10: Now one possible alternative to this would be that all archaeological works are undertaken in such a manner that it allows for that spatial data to be placed in a GIS style database along with all associated documentation so that this can be stored and compared in a HER database. Like a regional/national version of Intrasis, but that would require huge investment in time, money and cooperation between all elements of the heritage sector and at the end of the day how easy would that setup be to access and query? Its one option although I admit that I am not sure how viable it would be.

Contributor 10: Improving standards on site is one step and I feel in the last 15+ years many companies have done much to do this, likewise the advent and improvement in digital recording has also had an impact. In my mind it is not necessarily a case of what we keep so much as a question of how we choose to do so.

A radical concept as it may at first appear has anyone considered creating a unified software that flows from site, through the HER to the museums. At present we tend to use varying GIS based platforms that integrate and work with varying success. Is one answer to standardise the process across the sector?

Contributor 13: I am not going to be around tomorrow to continue the discussion so here are some of my thoughts to ponder on the questions posted. Before we decide to carrying on keeping everything we need some data on how much archives are actually used, how often, who by and why. That research needs to note what archives AREN'T looked at as well, to see if any conclusions can be drawn. It should probably include some research amongst archaeologists who might like to look at archives but don't, can't. That would help us work out why we are keeping stuff.

In relation to question 4 – almost certainly not anymore. I think we are wasting resources archiving stuff for completeness/just in case when those resources could be better used. I think for pragmatic reasons we have to move away from the idea of keeping everything for ever as a blanket response and think about coming up with criteria for what is kept (physically). Part of that might involve adopting a PAS type approach to recording – create a good digital record and then get rid of the actual object in some cases.

Who pays – the developer (in most cases) should. But that would mean actual archiving costs should better reflect the actual costs – and some research will probably be needed to try and work this out. How much does it cost a year to keep a box of pot? A bag of soil sample? A metal small find? Etc etc

We also need to actively encourage a culture of going back and examining archives. Unless we do this, the archives will just be stuff we haven't got round to discarding yet.

But we also need to think about how much more we can actually get out of archives - is there much

more to be actually gleaned from the physical archives? If on present techniques available (even if apparently too expensive now) there is, then it's probably worth keeping. If there isn't much, then consider sampling retention of archives for retention in case new techniques are developed

The key thing is – we can't ignore this, it's already at crisis point in many places, and that will only increase with time. And at the point when the archives are full, then sampling/selection will de facto happen, but on an essentially random basis – with poor value watching brief potentially being archived, but full excavations not, just because the WB happened before the archive was full.

Contributor 6: OK so have been out on business all day but will read all the comments that have been made and respond - one thing I will say immediately is that as a museum curator responsible for the long term care/access of over 100 years worth of excavated archives there are undoubtedly huge amounts of material that has been retained historically 'for the sake of it'. Many of the older long-lived research type projects undertaken over a number of years are guilty of this. The newer archives generated over the last 25 years are more considered - what we have to be mindful of is the need to retain enough material for further research - a digital record of an object will not enable it to be sampled. PAS is not necessarily a good analogy for an archive process since we can never go back to re-examine the real item when new questions/techniques arise that many of us will never have even imagined yet.

Contributor 4: Is the still buried archaeological archive under major threat from random but deliberate disturbance?

DAY 2

Steve Trow: Apologies for not joining the conversation yesterday. I was in a meeting in Edinburgh with colleagues who are the archaeological leads for Cadw, Historic Environment Scotland and the Historic Environment Division of Northern Ireland's Department for Communities. Amongst other things, we compared notes on the archive issue and agreed it certainly wasn't an England-only challenge.

Thanks for the comments so far. There are some good issues for us to pursue. I certainly agree with points about the need to get a far better handle on who is using our archives, what in particular in those archives is being used, what for and how often. This would certainly help to improve thinking on retention policy.

By way of explanation...It may seem odd for the first in the series of '21st Century Challenges' workshops to address the issue of archives, generally the last lap in the archaeological fieldwork process. The practical reason for this is that the DCMS Museums Review is due to report in the summer. We hope that the issue of archaeological archives will feature amongst its recommendations as evidence was submitted from a number of organisations including Historic England. It is therefore timely for us to hold this conversation and workshop so that we are on the

front foot when the Review reports. The government may also find its conclusions helpful as it prepares to report.

Notwithstanding this practical reason for our timing, it also seems to me that archaeological archives are all-too-often the 'poor relation' in most discussions of the state of the archaeological process and profession. So, it is perhaps a good idea, for once, if we address this topic front and centre?

Robin Page: Thanks Steve for setting the scene for the second day of this discussion. I'd just like to briefly attempt to sum up in a couple of posts yesterday's discussion for the benefit of those joining the discussion for the first time today. On the initial question of why we continue to create and keep archaeological archives the main reasons were to allow sites /evidence to be reinterpreted and compared anew; and by inference because some elements of archives (but not all) can potentially be of wider public benefit via exhibitions and other display methods. Some contributors thought that there was not clear enough thought on why we do this and that more research into the use of archives is required.

We discussed the relationship between depositors and museums, a more rigorous process of hand over to explain the significance and possible uses of the given archives was suggested, as was the need for more consistent standards for creating and depositing archives. It was suggested that Research frameworks have a part to play in the selection/retention process for archives. We noted issues with (lack of) capacity for specialist archaeological curators some areas. Some contributors suggested alternative models for deposition at a regional /national level outside of museums. On the point of retention some have argued that we need to have a hard think about what we keep - based on significance/ usefulness before those hosting archives are overwhelmed and cannot accept even the 'significant' material. However others, also in an offline contribution, argue that we cannot in advance safely predict the significance of the archive.

Contributor 1: With regards to the argument that we cannot predict the significance of an archive in advance, this is true. However, I don't think that this is enough of a reason to keep everything *carte blanche*. The harsh truth is that we can't do that anymore. However, we can make pragmatic decisions once fieldwork has been completed with regards to whether an archive should be deposited or not. This already happens in some areas. I guess we should also address the question of whether all archives are included in this discussion or is it just the archives of commercial archaeology?

Barney Sloane: The SMA survey of 2012 has some really useful information if you have not seen it: http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archiveDS/archiveDownload?t=arch-381-1/dissemination/pdf/2012/1001589_Archaeological-archives-and-museums-2012.pdf

In particular Fig 3 shows the very significant reduction in the number of boxes of finds retained in recent decades compared to the 70s-90s. Whether this is a real trend is yet to be seen, but is a hopeful sign of more considered approaches. The current pilots HE are funding, exploring rationalising historic holdings, may show one way of creating some space in the short term. For bulk

finds (eg building ceramics, worked stone, animal bone), perhaps we can envisage tests for continued retention (secureness of context, existing level of recording etc) and for ceramics and petrology, a seed-bank approach (keeping small fabric samples along with metrics and imagery). Needs thought, but may provide best of both worlds: re-usability and space creation.

The comment yesterday about professional standards is also very pertinent. Standards will be examined in a separate workshop but it seems intuitively correct that if we can carry out our fieldwork and post-excavation analysis to higher standards this should allow more incisive decision making about what needs to be kept in the archive.

Contributor 18: Just to add a few replies to the main questions after reading all comments from yesterday : Q1: preservation by record is the final product of a staged process - excavation being one way process of retrieval before backfilling - which leads to final deposition - with today's framework - to a designated museum or repository (although in some areas I have come across small establishments run by the local archaeology group which do accept archives). An archive can carry regional or national significance /value and via PPG 16 the volume of fieldwork has completed the pieces to our knowledge 'puzzle' on both levels (regional and national) establishing research frameworks which are used both by commercial units and academics. Does not this demonstrate our contribution to the Heritage Industry? With our ClfA Archives group we held last week 'are archaeological archives relevant ' day and we had really good responses which you can read soon on our webpage - just as one example to Q1.

Contributor 14: Picking up on Steve's comment that the archive can be the poor relation in the archaeological process we perhaps also need to ask why we dug the site in the first place. If it is worth digging there should be some sort of archive. Selection and retention of quantity is a different matter. The latter also diverts us from issues surrounding the management of the retained archives. Not having a robust national solution is the main problem ultimately reducing, selecting etc are never going to solve the storage crisis nor the issues surrounding access and in my view sorting the latter is the priority.

Steve Trow: There is no doubt of the research and public engagement potential of archaeological archives in general and HE has funded important projects that demonstrate this. But this potential will vary based on the content and significance of any given archive. In our recent evidence to the DCMS Museums Review, HE reiterated the academic and social value of archives and pressed the case for Government to take a more strategic approach to the issue. However, recognising that public money is very limited (and likely to become more so for the foreseeable future) we also said that we believed it was incumbent on the archaeological profession to consider how it will manage demand for archive resources in the future. It is this management of demand on which we hope the workshop will focus, simply because this is the area that archaeologists are most able to influence directly. It is simply not realistic to assume that the taxpayer can pick up the bill for a limitless amount of archive storage.

Contributor 18: Q1 (cont): alternative uses of archives which I have encountered rather than museum storage: (parts of archives) open days/outreach - school handling kits - reference collections for county/unit/university /freelance specialists - sampling to test new methods for PhD theses/national or local projects - HB assemblages on loan to Unis instead of reburial - one artist has used bulk pottery after grinding it for a wall mural in the same town where this material was excavated - in a number of sites in the Med the bulk pottery and CBM have been used after grinding into the mix of mortar to maintain the walls of the standing buildings in situ - Q2: Under the current economic circumstances and storage crisis , the museums have responded either by rising the box fee (deposition) up to £300/box - I am told that the HE standard box is c.£30 today - or stopped receiving archives : this is a pattern across England as of the last 5 years or so.

Contributor 14: Does it have to be public taxpayers money? I refer to the suggestion I made yesterday. Also who currently pays for the museum storage if not public money? How is splitting the archive across hundreds of museum stores efficient and effective?

Steve Trow: Interestingly the 2016 EH/SMA survey to which Barney Sloane referred earlier suggested that only 55% of collecting museums that responded charge for deposition. If correct (and we assume it is), it suggests a lot of museums are neglecting a valuable potential revenue stream.

Contributor 18: Q3: Archive should not be an afterthought, I have held sessions with my colleagues on post-excavation, final deposition and the issues by county to ensure that we do create a complete record in the field and under the guidelines we have to work with (by county) which will enable us to go through the post excavation stages smoothly. Due to the recession though, a good number of units have lost considerable numbers of experienced staff and so did the Museums and as we are now entering a new era of major infrastructure projects, we need to employ very fast big numbers of project assistants with varied backgrounds which will impact on the recording, I think. The Universities from what I hear they are providing less opportunities for excavation to current students although apparently a degree in Archaeology is considered very highly in a number of interviews outside the profession, I am being told.

On the analysis front, a good number of specialists have been sceptical about recommendations on selection depending on how long they have worked in the specific county, their experience and again about the future researchers debate. They would happily do so in most cases via a combined approach with the project manager, planning archaeologist and the Museum curator so we are hitting again the wall of 'time and money'. May be it will be good to publish the good practice examples from various counties who had dealt with the above successfully and see how this 'model' can be adopted by county?

Contributor 14: In terms of users of the archives are the museums who retain them being counted as users? Where objects from an archive are displayed are the visitors to the museum / exhibition

being counted as 'users' ?

Steve Trow: Good practice examples are a good idea. One other avenue we would like to explore is whether universities can become more engaged in the thinking about what we retain, how much we retain and how we retain it. We are aware of two current PhD studentships considering the management of archaeological archives (rather than the historical narratives to be derived from them): one at UCL, which is looking at ownership and title issues and another (that we are co-supervising) at Reading, which is looking at archaeological palaeoenvironmental archives. Colleagues may know of others? If we can encourage more work of this type it could really help to advance our thinking and it is a topic area with undoubted real-world 'impact': something universities increasing want to demonstrate.

Contributor 16: While selection of archives (whole or parts of) is now an accepted reality for many in the sector (though this does not mean it always happens in a standardised or productive way, if at all!), reducing the size or number of archives coming into a museum store does not solve their problem. According to the SMA survey a large percentage will still run out of space no matter how much 'selection' takes place. In the course of my research I have become more and more aware of how archaeological archives (in their current agreed form) do not really sit well within the majority of museums (a few however do make good use of AAs). We as archaeologists collect and produce archives with a very different set of parameters to the way a museum collects, provides access, displays and undertakes engagement etc. I am beginning to wonder if we need to either think very differently about what constitutes an archaeological archive in a museum, or if we should rethink where they should go altogether?

Steve Trow: The above comment reinforces the point made yesterday that we have very limited understanding or overview about how archives are used or by whom. We will pursue this further at the workshop.

Contributor 8: I agree that we have to make sure that archives are not seen as something we do at the end of a project. We need to ensure that they are considered at the beginning of a project from the brief, WSI and throughout the life of the project. We need to be considering the eventual archive throughout fieldwork as well as post ex and involving contractors, planning archaeologists, specialists and museums. If museums don't have the archaeological expertise then they should still be involved but given guidance

Barney Sloane: Relating to Q4: The European Archaeological Council (members are representatives of national archaeological agencies/ministries) has a working group dedicated to archaeological archives. A recent survey of their members suggested that the issue of archive storage pressure is by no means limited to the UK, so there may be a chance to consider the suggestion of case studies on a wider front. As the current UK rep on the Board, I will feed that idea back to the working group to see whether there are insights which would help us. HE are funding some work on the practicality and risks associated with the controlled reburial of some artefact types (sandstone, wood). These

are long-term studies but may also point to a mechanism for reducing pressure on 'active' storage.

Steve Trow: It is worth noting Barney Sloane's point earlier about studies to re-evaluate and rationalise 'historic' archaeological archives. This may have the potential to release some more storage space and to alleviate the immediate pressures, giving us time to consider alternative longer-term approaches. The 'Seeing the light of day' project may help us developing this and other approaches, see:

<https://2cultureassociates.com/2017/02/24/seeing-the-light-of-day-archaeological-archives/>

Contributor 16: P.S I am in my final year of PhD study on the value and sustainability of commercially derived archaeological archives in museums, specifically following museums who have undertaken reviews of their collections with the aim of assessing the significance of the collection with a view to rationalisation.

Contributor 17: Weighing in from the museum side of this discussion, I agree with some previous points. It can feel like we are an afterthought; I attended the ClfA conference in Birmingham last week and there was a huge variation in how the presenters interacted with and regarded museums. Many museums are struggling with funding and there is less focus on specific collections expertise but in spite of this museum storage is not where archives come to die! The 'alternative' uses of archives mentioned; outreach, open days, loans, input to larger research projects are actually what we do all the time, but once the archive is deposited there is no way to feed this back to excavators (assuming they are interested).

Steve Trow: That's helpful to know, **Contributor 16**. We would be interested to know more about your findings.

The 'cultural divide' issue raised by **Contributor 17** is not helped by policy for archaeological archives sitting uncomfortably on organisational 'fault lines' between the responsibilities of Arts Council England; the interests of Historic England and professional archaeologists working in the private sector; and the undoubted importance of the Heritage Lottery Fund. The issue also awkwardly straddles the cultural responsibilities of DCMS and the land-use planning role of CLG. These organisational arrangements are unlikely to change in the foreseeable future, but they could probably be made to work better? That will also be something we hope to explore at the forthcoming workshop.

Contributor 1: It's also not helped by the sector itself. In general (as there are always exceptions), people have been silo'ed into their roles. We need a more holistic approach (which is starting to happen) with greater collaboration among the different stakeholders.

Contributor 17: There is also an odd expectation that museums can do all of this for nothing, while everyone else in the process gets paid. Box fees represent skilled staff assisting the depositor,

cataloguing and checking the archive, maintaining reasonable conditions for storage, and processing, assessing and facilitating research requests in perpetuity. Although new fee structures are high in comparison to £0 they do not cover the actual costs of these activities. We are also often missed out of the planning stages of funded projects; instead of being seen as useful collaborators we are again often an afterthought (although not always). On a positive note I think there are lots of things we could do to improve the situation; be more vocal about the services we provide, the suggestion about a fuller handover on deposition is great. It's unlikely anyone's funding situation will improve soon, but by working together more closely we can maximise all of our skills to everyone's benefit.

Steve Trow: That's a key issue. And part of the answer may be to revisit professional archaeological standards and guidance to make sure that planning for the archive stage is always built into the project from the get-go. We can pick this up in the second workshop on Standards and Guidance, as well as the one on archives.

Contributor 1: There is definitely a need to get across that Museums are suffering chronic under funding same as local authority archaeological services. As you say a significant amount of time goes into maintaining archives not to mention things like racking etc. It's important that contractors factor these costs in correctly as well as the cost of digital archiving in any quote. Some do, some don't.

Getting on my soapbox, I believe that there is a real opportunity for Museums and HERs to work together more effectively as well as with other parts of the sector. HERs are often seen as an afterthought but there can be real value in building relationships with Museums.

Contributor 16: Steve Trow - my plan is to write up this year (along with all the other projects I have already agreed to do!) but hopefully I will have something ready for dissemination that can feed into all the other projects currently taking place.

Contributor 18: Q4: I know of 2 counties which have taken the decision not to accession and accept an archive with no finds. So it is now left to the commercial units discretion to assess these finds archives. There is 1 county which is thinking to implement for negative archives the scanning of the paper record and then again leaving to the units to assess their retention or not. It seems that the immediate answer is no we cannot keep everything anymore but we have to tackle a variety of issues on a county basis and it will be down to the teams (Planning - Unit/specialists - Museum - Local groups?) who operate in these counties to co-operate to take selection/retention decisions. I would very much like to see national approaches but after getting to know c. 30 counties structures, I have turned sceptical on how can one size fit all?

Contributor 1: I'm not sure one size can fit all. But I do think that there can be guidelines in relation to how we can work within different scenarios. Support networks could be built across regions for those museums without archaeological curators for example. We could have national guidelines in

relation to digital archiving and reach some sort of consensus with regards to what we archive digitally and what we don't.

Contributor 17: It's an excellent soapbox to be on! HER's are a great public resource but it's often difficult to connect their records with our archives. Admittedly this is a much worse problem with our older archives, where the location data is sometimes less structured/consistent. We're working with our HER to improve the situation but it's becoming clear that we need planning archaeologists and commercial companies to be on board for it to be successful. Watch this space...

Contributor 1: Great to hear. I'm working on it in my area too!

Steve Trow: I'm afraid that I have to leave this conversation now, but Barney Sloane and Robin Page will continue to be involved from the Historic England perspective. I'd like to say how constructive and thoughtful the contributions have been. I'd also like to reiterate one key point that follows on from the last few posts. It is really important that archaeologists assume responsibility for taking decisions on this issue, even if we find the process challenging and uncomfortable. If we fail to do this, or if our proposed solutions are unrealistic and unaffordable (particularly in the current difficult climate), our voice will be marginalised and others will simply take the decisions without involving us. This would be the worst possible result. Thanks all.

Jan Wills: Picking up your second paragraph about possibly re-thinking where archaeological archives should be curated and used: at the time of Southport (2011) we were proposing new resource centres for archives, linked to existing museums. Should we be reopening the debate about where archives are deposited?

Contributor 19: FAME undertook an extensive survey in 2012. There are 9000 homeless archives not accepted by a museum or other repository. The artefacts, analysis and records undertaken to comply with a condition of planning permission, are held in temporary storage indefinitely by commercial archaeology because too few museums or local authority stores have space, curators or requirement to accept these archaeological archives, resulting in the potential value of archaeological archives being denied to the nation. Scotland and Wales have national stores, in England and N Ireland no such strategic option is available. To ensure public benefit is achieved as intended within planning policy, national agencies and government departments responsible for heritage within the constituent countries of the UK need to resolve the current situation, and to ensure for the future a specific requirement for museums and appropriate repositories to take these archives for an appropriate fee from the applicants

Contributor 16: Hi Jan, yes I do but we all know that the talk of regional stores has been going on for years and they have not materialised (is there any money for them?). I think it is the bigger questions that need answering first - what is the purpose of the archives we produce and who are they for? There are many great arguments about future knowledge and preservation of the past etc but for who? The average museum visitor will only engage with the nicest hand axe that has ended

up on display but a researcher will want the whole flint archive including the debitage. Museums however report that the large majority of their archives are never accessed by researchers - but we as a profession say that is why the museum should be keeping them! If a museum attempts to 'pick and choose' what comes into their store to improve accessibility as they see it, there is an outcry from archaeologists (I have been to many conferences!). So are they a museum collection or a record of data for future research?

Contributor 1: That goes back to Steve's point above that we have to, as a profession, make a decision on archives rather than having the decision made for us. But will we ever reach a consensus?

It's an interesting question that you pose. Are they both?

Edmund Lee: On Q1 on improving access to archives, as Jonathan Webster commented, one issue is poor accessibility of site / context data. Better access for researchers to actively searchable context records (not just in data archives) would drive interest in the physical archive, and thus perceived value. One technical solution might be the Open Context system pioneered in the U.S. A UK example of this applied is at West Stow - see Pamela Crabtree's data at: <https://opencontext.org/projects/59E7BFBC-2557-4FE4-FC14-284ED10D903D>

Lots of organisational issues around common standards, but the technology is there to do this.

Contributor 8: The debate re regional stores has been going on for years and in an ideal world would be brilliant but also has she says we need to decide why and what we are archiving and work out a way to encourage their use. We need a way to let people know of their existence and that they can be seen, this will need money, as we cannot expect the museums to bear the cost of more access to them. I also hope that the new OASIS/HERALD will allow people to know what and where things are

Barney Sloane: There are some great examples of the re-use of archival material (eg Gathering Time's revisiting of archived carbon samples for high-precision dating of Neolithic causewayed enclosures), but I think we have to be clear that the permanent retention of substantial quantities (in aggregate) of low-significance or trace assemblages from evaluation exercises ought to go through a form of SWOT test. They are arguably neither a museum collection (in the form of something to be visited and used) nor a record of data for future research. Yes, there *may* be a research question answerable by this material which becomes unattainable because of the decision to de-accession and dispose. But how does this fare against the risk of strained local authority budgets triggering large scale museum closure? We must manage both supply and demand which involves everyone, not just the national agencies (*qv* comment above).

Contributor 2: on Q1 improving access to data...issues with physical archive and digital archive was brought up yesterday in the ClfA workshop on finds standards. Physical archive to museums (or not when they are closed) and digital data to.....? museums....? to be kept with physical collections (on servers or Cdroms) or curated by a digital repository eg the ADS.

Contributor 16: ideally they would be both (I think....). The archaeological profession has clearly assumed they are both for a very long time by expecting that museums will store, curate and conserve them in perpetuity - but in the form which is most relevant to archaeological researchers! But my research suggests that archives in their current form generally do not work well as museum collections. Obviously there are some museums with a more archaeologically focused remit where this is less of an issue and their stores are accessed regularly by researchers - even in those cases though they report that the same archives are accessed over and over while others are never touched. National register for archives- that may go some way to opening up the less known archives to research - often it is the published sites that get re-visited when it is those that have not been published that need the attention. (these boxes are too small !!!)

Contributor 2: oops pressed send...and split away from the collections....this also feeds into the discussion of where all our stuff goes....

Edmund Lee: On Q2 the policy framework, while I agree with Steve Trow's point that we can't expect the taxpayer (national or local) to fund archives, we could, if we co-ordinated our lobbying, make better use of developer funding. Does the Community Infrastructure Levy offer us a route to, for example, fund the development of local / regional archaeological resource centres? <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/community-infrastructure-levy>. The campaign to reduce VAT reduction for listed buildings repairs could be a model.

Jan Wills: There are some promising initiatives on funding through the planning process e.g. I believe in E Sussex that S106 agreements have started to be used to obtain capital sums to pay for museum facilities for storage of archives from housing developments, and in Wiltshire there is an archaeology policy in the Local Plan covering heritage assets which makes specific reference to managing archives. We need to consider what can reasonably be asked of developers, and how this can be secured through the planning process.

Edmund Lee: On Q3 as others have commented, field practices (or indeed contract negotiation and project planning practices before going out into the field) could make a great difference. Let's commit ourselves to answering Michael Heaton 's question on the CIFA LinkedIn list a couple of years back. How much does it cost to excavate, analyse, publish and archive a cubic metre of archaeology in the UK? A proper Cost Information Service for archaeology, like the Building Cost Information Service <http://www.rics.org/uk/knowledge/bcis/online-products/bcis-online/> would give developers the ability to compare tenders on quality as well as just cost.

Contributor 1: We also need to consider how we get all counties in England to buy into initiatives such as securing funding within Section 106 as well as incorporating archiving into local plans. It can be difficult to argue in some areas especially in two tier authority areas. Perhaps some really good case studies that are easily accessible?

With regards to a national register of archives, perhaps a starting point could be recording the type of archives and locations in HERs. We're often the first point of contact for researchers, the archives could be highlighted in relevant records and touched on in the information sent to researchers? It would definitely act as a signpost.

Contributor 11: A modified version of the OASIS reporting system could be a better starting point for making connections between the reports, paper archives, material archive and digital archives - and creating an easily sharable information base of what's out there.

Contributor 10: In my mind it would be a better solution to integrate, 'standardise' and improve HERs rather than adapt OASIS. The HERs are already the first port of call for commercial units and that is where we go when undertaking a search of the dataset such as for DBA/HIA etc. The HERs also, from my point of view, has a closer link with the commercial unit, planning archaeologists and museums than OASIS and as such it would be easier to adapt them than to try and push OASIS into doing something the HERs are already in place to do.

Plus, in my mind, if we can charge the developer in a more formal and even way across the country for HER and archive deposition then it reduces their frustrations in an *ad hoc* system, makes it easier to justify such charges and include them in future fee proposals and, most importantly adds additional revenue into HERs and museums at a time of continual cuts and decline.

Contributor 11: Jan - there are some other examples of funding through the planning process, which we can report on through Seeing the Light of Day. S106 agreement money is contributing to the establishment of the new store in Wiltshire, and there are some other examples in the South West. We're also looking the possibility of seeking funding through Community Infrastructure Levies. Arguing the case can be difficult, given the pressure on funding and the different political discussions that go on at local and county level (in unitary authorities as well as the two tier areas). Greater transparency over the costs and case studies illustrating the access that we're trying to achieve should help.

Jan Wills: Robin and I are going to sign out around 5pm today but we will leave the discussion open till midday on Monday for any last thoughts. After that we plan to collate the contributions and feed them in to the archaeological archives workshop next Friday - which some of yesterday and today's contributors are attending.

I'd like to ask, by way of concluding comments, what would your priorities be for actions that could be taken by us, the sector, to address any of the issues raised in this discussion?

Contributor 10: Finally, in relation to the final part of the question asked above regarding releasing the potential of archives to a wider audience and particularly the public. HERs are in a much better place to do this as a physical space as opposed to OASIS which is more of an ethereal concept on the interweb.

Contributor 1: Determining how and if archives are being used. How to increase accessibility. Building case studies for funding regional storage centres as per your point above and Kate's. Digital archiving - going some way towards establishing national guidelines and good practice. How do we support those museums where there is no specialist curators?

Contributor 18: Just a comment on our current roles as archiving officers and Museum curators: I have suggested to the ClfA Archives group that I would like to collect the job spec of archiving officers from a number of contracting units so we can clearly see the level of responsibilities and expectations in the current framework, we already have a matrix for the group for validation with the ClfA Committee. May be on the same level, it would be interesting to find out what is expected from a Keeper of Archaeology nowadays so then we can see how pragmatic this is in the context of developer led archaeology and the volume of material generated. After this may be we are closer to what a Museum store is functioning as? As of this week I am being told by one county that 5% of the collections are really displayable

Due to Northamptonshire not having a county store despite the scale of development, I feel I have stepped into a Keeper of Archaeology shoes as we do retain and manage at least 70% of the counties archives. Hopefully due to HLF funding and a team from all relevant colleagues in our county we should reach the optimal solution for the future store, based on good and bad practices we have seen, we do hope we all get involved though.

Contributor 17: Supporting increased communication between museums and commercial contractors, HERs and planning archaeologists. Demonstrating the cost-benefit analysis of these relationships as standard, as opposed to relying on individuals to be open (or even enthusiastic) about it. I think the system can be improved and fixed without it being completely torn apart but these relationships need to be a given instead of being based on individuals being prepared to work together.

Jan Wills: Thanks very much, everyone, for your contributions. Lots of information to feed into the workshop next week. But please let me know what your priorities are - we want to come out of the workshop with some achievable action points. In saying this, I don't mean to underestimate the size, complexity and long-standing nature of the issues - but to emphasise that we do want to make a difference.

Have a good weekend!

Robin Page: I'd just like to echo Jan's thanks for all your contributions over the last two days!

Contributor 11: My comment about OASIS relating to improving access to information via a common reporting system, and using this to allow contractors, HERs and museums/archives to share data, and then re-using this to publicise the reports, digital and physical archives and making sure they're

connected. Using different reporting forms and repeating information for the various bodies involved must be very frustrating.

Contributor 2: I agree with **Contributor 11** that OASIS is not an alternative to HERs but is a way of reporting information to HERs and can link HER event and Museum Accession numbers. HERs are not digital archives or repositories nor physical archives/museums.... They are info points and key sign posting systems... we need to link the info better and develop sustainable digital and physical museum stores.

Priorities as requested by **Jan Wills**. Ok, new sustainable model for keeping archaeological archives. The present system is unsustainable. We want to keep arch collections for ever... but what for...ok some great research projects as highlighted above but compare these small amount of projects to the total costs of keeping all the archives I'm sure this is no way cost effective way of researching.. we don't dig everything up from a site so we shouldn't keep it all...we need to think what we keep is driven by research questions... these may change with time and so therefore should our collecting policies. Bottom line is we can't afford to keep it all just in case someone may want to research it in the future.....unless we change the funding model....

Contributor 3: News of the closure of another archaeological contractor - http://www.edp24.co.uk/news/fears_of_a_disaster_in_norfolk_archaeology_because_of_closure_of_expert_unit_1_4957719

Contributor 20: Many good points above. I agree with the need for wider dissemination of information regarding what the museums currently hold, whether that be via HERs/OASIS or something else. I haven't seen any discussion regarding using cold store; for what it's worth I think this is kicking the problem a decade or two down the road to a time when there definitely won't be any developer funding once contracts with cold store expire. I'd also say that there needs to be more discussion regarding what we need to do with digital archives. The current guidelines are perhaps overly onerous for most interventions, having been designed for major research projects. They also seem to cause particular problems (regarding expense) for geophysical surveyors.

Contributor 2: Last post weekend thoughts - priorities for me are:

- 1 Working out a sustainable model for funding archiving (physical and digital) - could be standard cost % from developers for museum archiving (a levy?)
- 2 Better consistency and standardisation in the project management flow from excavation, post ex and archiving,
- 3 Greater involvement of museums at the outset of a project to discuss archiving with contractors/consultants/developers - this would benefit not just archiving but public engagement etc... contractors may engage with communities during the process, but it is museums that engage with the new home owners/school kids etc....

In fact that last point is very relevant for the whole issue - it is the museums who deal with the future of archives and communities that are created from say new housing developments, therefore

they must have a much larger say in the decision making that is taking place.

Contributor 18: Replying to the last question of Jan: I know that a few counties asked all the contractors to submit the volume of archives they hold and the reason/s why they are not deposited yet (audit of the arch collection of the county). This will be a good opportunity of collaborations per county and for the curators to inform the units about the use of the arch collections and the audiences but similarly how can they work together on the storage crisis. On that front, how the experts operating in the county can work together on a project design to solve the issues with the resources available or potential - apply for funding. Still think it will be useful to publish success stories here.

On a second matter, digital data deposition needs to be taken on a national level even from each county as this is above any county's local issues really. Good news from one county: the curator will set a day from which on all archives will be deposited by ADS and all the developers will be informed of the new added costs in advance. Otherwise the archive is not to be accepted for deposition. So understanding the collection: the volume and the issues which this carries and what are the ways forward but to discuss realistic solutions that can be put to action soon based on achievable funding and collaboration of experts teams operating in the county.

Contributor 11: priorities as requested by **Jan Wills**. A cost model for archaeological archives that allows the long term costs of archiving to be understood and different approaches to be compared. The model would need to cover the full range of activities (processing, documentation, preparation for storage, management and access), the full range of archives (paper, finds, digital, etc) and costs (labour, building space, storage, archive systems, IT, access facilities etc.)... and some variables (shared access, virtual resource centres, physical spaces). How about a grant programme for Endangered Archives (cf. <http://eap.bl.uk/>) to enable archives to be rationalised, digitised and made more accessible for research and community uses?

Steve Trow: Here is a personal viewpoint from me, divided (over two posts) between the supply of archive storage space and demand management by archaeologists.

Firstly, in terms of enhancing the supply of storage space:

Selective provision of resource centres (a matter for consideration by ACE/HLF/Local Authorities)

Assistance for museums to review existing 'historic' archaeological archive holdings: selective disposal to create short-term storage 'headroom'

Periodic review of 'supply' in order to guide strategic decision-making (this is already in place for two more years through the HE/SMA annual review project).

Secondly, on managing demand:

Develop better understanding of the current patterns of archive use (by whom, for what, how often?)

Develop clear guidance and procedures on 'transfer of title'

Develop a transparent and justified national schedule for storage costs to be adopted by all collecting museums to support revenue costs.

Importance of planning for selective archive deposition to be built into all appropriate professional archaeological guidance.

Current technical guidance on retention to be supported by readily available case studies and training materials.

University-led studies on sampling-for-storage approaches to different material types; on the likely long-term research potential of different material types; and on the potential of digital v's physical storage.

Further work on material reburial options

Consideration of the practicality of time-limited retention policies.

Consideration of the potential of improved fieldwork standards to reduce the demand for retention.

Contributions by email

Contributor 22:

1. Do we know why we are creating and keeping archives, what their archaeological value is and how they are actually being used? What is their potential for future research, display, public access?

In relation to 'how they are actually being used', no doubt record keeping of such activities is what is required and some organisations do this, like the HERs at the Archaeological Trusts in Wales (or they should be). Such methods can be applied across the board with some updating and refining no doubt. The people to ask as a group are archaeologist, historians, librarians and bring in a social scientist who knows how to create questionnaires. In my experience as a trained social scientist and historian (social psychology etc before becoming an archaeologist) one of the things that I always notice is the lack of ability to create sound questionnaires or record keeping about human behaviour in archaeology or the use of archives - especially those carry out research on archaeology in the public sphere or on archaeologists themselves. I have spent some time correcting students' questionnaires that come to my notice via Facebook, archaeology chat groups etc (in a nice way of course) and those of my colleagues. I am happy to participate in any exercise like this, having been trained and worked in libraries, archives, as an historian, as an archaeologist, as a psychologist and as a social and physical scientist.

2. Is the existing legal and policy framework sufficient to enable the archaeological archive to be created, deposited and curated?

In regards to the last two points, the answer is a resounding no. This is primarily linked to the issue of storage of 'hard copies' and the misguided trendy idea that scanning and/or having digital copies of everything is the answer to deposition and storage in the future. The digitising and scanning of all archives is an excellent way to share archives with the public and interested parties (of any kind)

around the World, there is no doubt about that. However, it seems many archival record keeping assessments have been deciding over the last 10 years that scanning hard copies and then sometimes throwing away some of the hard copies maybe what is required as a solution to lack of storage (a solution for some groups). This has been made clear by the number of books that libraries around the UK have been throwing out (sometimes secretly; and has certainly happened here in Australia, also).

Other issues include the idea that Central Storage is the way forward of the archives we have. I would say absolutely not, though access is so much easier this way. But even if the UK organises some single underground massive nuclear bunker I would say this is not the answer. Why? Because if that storage unit is targeted or an accidental fire occurs everything is potentially destroyed all at once (as we have seen in ancient history and even today). These were the sorts of things being discussed by the HER Officers within Wales with the RCAHMW, National Museum and Libraries when I was there in 2005-2006. Personally, I believe such things must be paid for by the government and the government must be lobbied. Decisions need to be made now about storage locations and buildings. Also, whilst it is important that the major National Museums being free for their citizens, I think so many free Museums were a mistake by the UK government. It is possible that other Museums could go for a gold coin donation - even for an entire family (so cheap as possible) and direct this money towards storage of archives of these same places and advertise it as such? EG, it could be a campaign entitled "Saving our Heritage for the Future".

3. Are there fieldwork and analysis practices we could improve that would refine our approach to selection?

But what are we selecting?

I think field work should collect everything it can, constrained naturally by the time each project has and also what they collect may well be defined by the a priori project goals. But in the process, collect as much as you can, because (i) we can collect digitally as we go and (ii) all 'notations', photographs, etc, should be labelled appropriately and we can decide which of these to pull out as records to be kept in whatever place requires particular information.

But it is entirely important to still collect B/W film photographs and paper records for long-term stable storage. Seriously, there is not any existing legal and policy framework sufficient to enable the long-term/permanent support of archaeological digital archives to be created, deposited and curated. I don't think we have a law in the UK yet that has yet fully stated and supported that we must (for instance) change the hard ware every 12 months and software every 6 months to ensure the stability and accessibility of all digital records. Plus, it is necessary that the copying over and re-saving of every single photograph is done every two years, say, or at least check the software is compatible. Will, for instance, any old *.png files be able to be opened? Also image files get corrupted over time, who is going to ensure they will always be able to be opened by next year by anyone with new software or be opened at all. The same copying regime has to be carried out to prevent having images that are corrupted (maybe someone has written a routine by now that can do this?). I do know that the Trusts in Wales were backing up at the end of everyday and hard drives

were changed over regularly to prevent the loss of data and archives. But this is not enough in the long-term.

4. Should we keep everything forever, irrespective of the significance of the sites that the archives represent?

If we could, of course, we can never know the exact significance of things, especially of things in our own time.

Online discussion 2

Archaeological Standards and Guidance: what are they for and who sets them?

Historic England and ClfA project team discussion participants:

Edmund Lee	Knowledge Transfer Manager, and Project Assurance Officer, Historic England
Duncan McCallum	Policy Director, Historic England
Robin Page	Digital Coordinator, Research Group, Historic England; LinkedIn Group owner/Moderator
Jan Wills	ClfA Chair, and 21 st -century Challenges Project Manager

DAY 1

Robin Page: We are now starting the second discussion in the '21st-century Challenges for Archaeology' series, today 10th May and tomorrow 11th May. We invite you to join us in focusing on the future of Archaeological Standards and Guidance and to debate 'What are they for and who sets them?'. If you have an interest in Archaeology, please do join in and have your say! I'll now hand over to **Jan Wills** of ClfA and **Duncan McCallum** of Historic England and others to open the discussion.

Jan Wills: Thanks, Robin. This is the second online discussion hosted by Historic England and ClfA in the 21st-century Challenges for Archaeology series. We had a very good discussion a few weeks ago on archaeological archives. From that discussion and the subsequent workshop we are producing a shortlist of proposals that we will be circulating to participants (and then wider) shortly. We hope to do the same with today's topic.

We work within a framework of legislation, policy, government and sector guidance, and professional standards and guidance. At the time of the Southport report (2011) we seemed to be moving forward with a degree of confidence in our evolving professional standards and our ability to regulate our profession through them. Since then much has changed - certainly the political context has, and with it the overarching policy framework - so how do we feel now in 2017 about the way our profession and the rest of the sector sets and monitors standards in archaeology?

Contributor 1: Professional and technical guidance should be prepared, disseminated and cyclically reviewed by the professional and trade/technical organisations, as is the case in the rest of the economy. That is their primary role. Whilst none of us would dispute the technical competence - in some cases superiority - of our government-employed colleagues, they do not operate in a

commercial environment or in a professional one (as understood by the law). The government does not tell architects how to design buildings, so why should it have to tell us how to do archaeology?. Until we - archaeologists - produce our own best practice guidance and specifications, we will continue to be viewed as agents of the state.

Edmund Lee: Ok I'll take the bait ... You've set up the discussion of who should provide standards and guidance – point 2 in today's intro. I'd like to broaden this a little to bring in point 6 - what a standard is for? which I think is closely associated. If we know what we are trying to do with a standard, it makes it clearer who and how it should be developed and used. We're not alone in thinking about this. I like the British Standards approach 'Standards are knowledge. They are powerful tools that can help drive innovation and productivity. They can make organisations successful and peoples everyday lives easier, safer and healthier.' <https://www.bsigroup.com/en-GB/standards/Information-about-standards/what-is-a-standard/> If that's what we think a standard is for, who would not want to be involved in setting them and using them?

Jan Wills: Regulation does however form the framework in which architects' buildings are designed - they have to obtain planning permission and other consents - and so an interesting aspect of this issue in archaeology is the relationship of legislation and policy to professional standards and guidance.

Contributor 2: As well as thinking about what standards are for, we also need to think about how they are used and the mechanisms by which they are a) adopted voluntarily or b) enforced. Frameworks exist for enforcement through, for example, the planning process, consent regimes, professional conduct process and through contracts. We may have views on how effective they are, whether they're understood and whether they're used appropriately, but at least they exist. But what about all the technical good practice guidance and advice that's produced without any mechanism for enforcement? How does that find its way into practice?

Contributor 4: I am joining this discussion from an HE funded, free to attend training workshop in Leicester, centred on the recently produced guidance documents on residue analysis and pottery production sites. I don't think anyone among the 40 people here think the government is telling them what to do. One key word here is guidelines. HE produces guidelines to good practice and has funded organisations such as the pottery study groups to produce standards, which are more than guidance. The recent ClfA project, also funded by HE, that reviews the quality of finds reporting shows that most find reports fail to meet 60% of the criteria the ClfA Finds Group compiled to measure the quality of finds reports content. There is a clear need for standards, most of which come from professional organisations such as ClfA or specialist groups. What seems to be missing is the teaching of these to undergraduates and other learners, as well as a willingness to support professional self-regulation.

Contributor 5: From a very blinkered view which is almost academic in its formation, surely we should strive for a set standard to allow for a baseline in the quality of a site archive, report etc that

allows for the reinterpretation of the data set and worthwhile comparison between sites. Without a set standard you risk the rise of 'smash and grab' archaeology with little thought or time given to methodologies used or archive produced. If this becomes the case we might as well let developers bulldoze sites and not bother for the quality of data recovered. Given the reduction in funding and cuts in the local government heritage sector this is more important now than ever, in districts where no planning archaeologist is present we need an internal check that makes sure that any archaeology is dealt with appropriately.

Edmund Lee: And we all visibly benefit from that regulation of architecture in terms of safe buildings which don't (usually) fall down, burst into flames etc. Standards aren't scary - they are there to help. The comparable public benefit of archaeological endeavours is highlighted in the National Planning Policy Framework:

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/national-planning-policy-framework/12-conserving-and-enhancing-the-historic-environment>

So how can we best organise our practice, our process and our end results in a way that will provide that public benefit?

Contributor 6: I'm particularly interested in the language used in both standards and guidance - how far it is fixed and controlling and encourages 'archaeology by numbers' which potentially discourages creativity and innovation in approach, and also how far the documents set out to distinguish between 'baseline' standards (what must be done) to 'aspirational' standards (what could be done) which introduces an appropriate element of proportionality and professional judgement...

Robin Page: I'm posting up some comments from a **Contributor (9)** who is unfortunately experiencing some LinkedIn gremlins this morning:

Taking the six questions as a basis for discussion 1. Not really sure enough about this to comment 2. I think the present set up works reasonably well. Most people ask for (that I am aware of) ClfA standards to be followed (whether members or not), as well as MoRPHE and other relevant guidelines to be followed - so the setting of them isn't too problematic imo. 3. This is the key one - through Planning in theory this is possible, but actually difficult to get Planners to care about, and also hard to do from a simple resource capacity point of view. 4. This is also a difficult one. It's hard to keep up to speed with all the changes and recommendations (two that spring to mind are the Rural Roman recommendations and also Paleolithic ones) - and again this comes down to capacity (in the Planning context at least). 5. I think this may be a slight red herring in terms of standards, as regardless of which you go for - method or outcome - you still need standard to measure against, though it is useful to ponder as sometimes, as a curator, I might suggest something a bit "old hat" as technology, techniques change rapidly 6. Improving standards will probably add cost, so there is a real question about adding to them. However, the problem at the moment seems to me more about getting everyone to play at the same level so its more about undercutting best practice. That means we should concentrate on that issue before raising the bar I think - i.e. everyone is adhering to current standards (enforcement).

Jan Wills: From the types of projects that Contributor 4 mentions (which have looked at how far particular standards have been complied with) it would seem that we're not complying very well with the standards we do have at the moment. Meanwhile, the syntheses projects like Roman Rural Settlement have produced the first broad reviews of how the information that we have been collecting can be used - or not - to write new narratives. Time for reflection on whether our standards are fit for purpose. Do we have the confidence to change?

Edmund Lee: Good points (thanks Robin for posting them). I do feel on point 6 that although following and improving standards *may* add cost to a particular *project*, at the strategic / sector level they are a cost saving. Standards are the 'level playing field'. They avoid the cost to individual projects of 'reinventing the wheel' which is a saving for all. We just need to make sure we apply standardisation in the right places at the right time and with appropriate oversight to avoid 'archaeology by numbers'. Standards are (to quote BSI again) 'a reliable basis for people to share the same expectations about a product or service'.

Contributor 2: The debate around outcomes vs. methodologies is an interesting one. Monitoring compliance with standards which describe the required outcomes but allow for professional judgement and innovation in achieving them requires a level of professional confidence that we don't always seem to possess. Measuring achievement of quantitative targets is much easier (but far less satisfying, professionally). The 'Southport' vision isn't based on greater levels of prescription - it's based on 'a culture of confident professionalism'. What can ClfA do to help support the profession towards that vision...?

Jan Wills: I think that reviewing standards against outcomes is a part of this - we need to know what our standards are delivering, and whether they are still appropriate. This is relevant too to the cost issue and to whether we are delivering public benefit: are we doing things in a particular way just because we've always done it like that?

Edmund Lee: In my personal opinion I think the process of standardisation in the profession should be viewed positively as supporting that 'confident professionalism' we aspire to. Once we have in place a) standards covering the right points to make a real difference without constraining innovation b) standards which are sufficiently detailed and objective for work to be assessed c) an open and blame-free process of assessment (a tall order admittedly), then we can present our work with confidence, knowing that we've covered the bases, and won't be judged against 'hidden' criteria we weren't aware of. Debate and discussion can then rightly focus on the methodology and the significance of our discoveries.

Duncan McCallum: Looking at the value of standards and guidance from a wider heritage perspective, what I sometimes hear from developers is that they are looking for certainty and consistency. They accept their responsibilities in heritage as much as they do about fire safety but they want fair treatment and for the archaeological or other work to genuinely help answer the questions about what is important about a site. Standards and guidance are in my view extremely

helpful in setting out a level playing field and they help speed up that part of the development process.

As to who should produce them, in my experience the most effective guidance is usually produced collaboratively and although I'm much less involved in the production of standards I think people want to be reassured that standards are reasonable in what they are asking for - and joint working; professional bodies, HE, developer interests and so on help to ensure their credibility.

I can't resist adding a quick comment on **Contributor 1's** stimulating comment earlier today - accepting that as I work for HE I am an agent of the state! The government may not define acceptable colours for the bricks and the tiles on my house but they have a huge influence on the many aspects of the construction from defining what a habitable building can be made of through to how far a piece of timber can span so that it is a safe place to live in. For me the same applies to standards in archaeology, or heritage more generally - they set the basic framework to ensure the end product is fit for purpose but don't need to go the 'n'th degree to cover every conceivable issue. Government backed certification gives me reassurance that the house I live in is reasonably safe but the professionals who drafted into the building regulations have the detailed knowledge and are best placed to apply the standards flexibly and appropriately to respond to each site's unique circumstances.

Contributor 7: First off there needs to be clarity in the profession about what standards are for - to reassure the public that they can TRUST us to deliver an appropriate, reasonable and consistent level of quality. This is what sets professionals apart. Standards, if not immutable, should change relatively rarely. Guidance, on the other hand, which is the current best practice to achieve the standard, can change whenever there are improvements, for instance in technology or process. We are a sector awash in standards (and guidance), and quite good ones in my opinion, but there are conflicting perceptions that (a) standards are not applied or enforced consistently, and (b) standards are applied too mechanically, suffocating innovation. Both are true depending on where you work. So my position is that we are good at producing standards and guidance, but could do better at implementation, and fostering innovation (quicker, cheaper AND better). Get those two things right = massive step forward.

Contributor 8: I feel one of the challenges for us archaeologists is that we need to be more integrated with the planning system, and really be expert at understanding the role of our work within that system. I still feel there is a strange disconnection between the two disciplines - which you don't see with some other construction related experts. I think more training in planning compliance would make our industry more valued, perhaps.

Duncan McCallum: I absolutely agree with your points about the importance of implementing standards and the need to encourage innovation to deliver quicker, cheaper and better ways of doing things. We all have a part to play in finding innovative ways of delivering better understanding

of this nation's heritage - money will always be tight - and governments of whatever political persuasion will need to be convinced that environmental costs incurred in the delivery of sustainable development really are necessary. My view is that professional bodies can and should play a sector-leading role in showing how it can be done in a lean and effective way. That is likely to mean slightly higher levels of risk on occasions.

Jan Wills: I'm interested in the points about innovation (and they link to points on costs and risk), and I know there's a FAME conference coming up on that. Gill Hey gave a paper at the ClfA conference on Terminal 5, the innovations in practice there, and what's happened since. From your perspective is there innovation in field techniques, say, or are we locked into a mechanistic approach?

Contributor 2: A view that came over quite strongly in the WSI workshops ClfA ran (with ALGAO and HE support) was that professional standards and good practice are aspirational and ability/willingness to comply with them is based on the availability of resource. Surely we need to turn this around so that the need to comply with professional standards underpins the resourcing of archaeological work? Otherwise, how can we possibly be delivering public benefit?

Jan Wills: Was this a view that went across the various parts of the sector i.e. curators/consultants/contractors? I'm thinking about both what curators feel they can require and also what we should all be committed to achieving through our professional responsibilities.

Edmund Lee: I think I'm with **Contributor 2** on this one. Compliance with standards should underpin resourcing decisions. But I think we need to address the issue of compliance in more ways and more creatively. What motivates compliance with standards (or indeed any professional activity)? Getting paid or getting permission / grant is one motivation, clearly a strong one. But it isn't the only one. In scholarly publication, for example, the quality test applied is peer review, with the benefit to the researcher being enhanced reputation among their peers. The Roman Rural Settlement project has, looked at in one way, 'peer reviewed' a huge body of literature that hasn't previously had that attention. Going forward, can we harness the power of peer review to the need for assessing compliance?

Contributor 9: This discussion seems to be focussing on compliance, because I think this is the issue which there is less clarity/certainty about. Without wishing to sound like a one-trick pony, in Local Government the ability to check compliance is largely dictated by capacity, resources, and access to information. We don't usually have access to academic articles which might help us assess a report more critically - that is something that needs addressing across the sector. But chiefly - its time. So if the GL report looks ok then we'll approve it. Yes we will try and make sure it complies with best practice/guidance/standards, but that is actually fairly difficult to enforce in planning, unless you have support of Planners who are subject to their own pressures. So perhaps examples of this in that context need circulation - eg how compliance has been enforced

Contributor 2: It was primarily expressed by the contractors but supported (as in they agreed that it happened, not that it was right that it should) by LPA advisors. I agree with **Contributor 8** that a better understanding of the planning system and the various roles archaeologists have within it is important. But Edmund's point is key - compliance shouldn't just be about getting permission or getting paid. Any system of professional self-regulation is dependent on individuals (and organisations) voluntarily making a commitment to uphold professional standards, which is what all accredited Cifa members and Registered Organisations, IHBC members, RICS, RIBA, RTPI etc etc members have done. Accepting that professional obligation doesn't mean that we can't find different/better/innovative ways of doing things that deliver better public benefit and better value to the client but it does mean that professional standards should be central to project design.

Contributor 9: But also widening the debate a little, we haven't discussed how you would ensure compliance in eg Community archaeology? For standards to be meaningful, they need to apply across the board.

Also I like Ed's idea of peer review, but am not sure how that would work in practice. And it wouldn't work in all cases, but I think its worth considering more

DAY 2

Edmund Lee: To pick up on one of **Contributor 9's** points (and **Contributor 6's** from yesterday): you say that the sector is awash with standards. This may just be my way of thinking, but I feel that the genuine meaningful standards are actually few and far between. That's because I see a standard as being written in a way clear enough to unambiguously assess whether a piece of work or service meets a standard. That means attention to the language used. It's literally the difference between 'Must' or 'Shall', and 'Should' or 'May' used in the text. The first pair provide a standard, and assume that you accept the work / burden of complying, the second are guidance or advice: it's up to you whether or not you do it.

Contributor 9: Unfortunately you're right, Ed, language is key, and it is my understanding that 'should' in some contexts means 'must'. But more the point I was trying to make is that it's not the production of standards and guidance which is an issue. We've got plenty - its implementation and compliance that is the issue, and I think the 21st century challenge for archaeology is to address that, not the production of guidance/standards

Edmund Lee: I agree - encouraging compliance and monitoring compliance openly is key as you say. There's multiple challenges: getting the right standards, applying them in the right place and at the right time, and finding resources to assess work.

Responding to the point on community archaeology: yes that's really important. We've demonstrated the potential research value of community archaeology:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/research-resources...>

Jan Wills: Contributor 9 has spoken of compliance, and the difficulties for local authority curators to have the time to undertake detailed monitoring of compliance. Resourcing in local government is unlikely to improve, and yet so much of our current system depends on local authority staff (HERs, planning and other advice, and at the other end of the process our colleagues in museums who receive the archive). So what about the general professional responsibility to comply with standards and guidance just because we have signed up to this as part of being a member of a professional institute? Are we taking on this responsibility or are we leaving it all to our local authority colleagues to monitor and check??

Contributor 10: Sorry to come in late to this discussion but I think a lot of useful points have been made. Most important for me is the comment that we need to turn the whole thing around so that 'the need to comply with professional standards underpins the resourcing of archaeological work' rather than compliance with standards being seen as a function of resources. The issue is that the curatorial resource is being eroded; to my mind there is scope for a level of 'standards' that comes in at a technical level (endorsed by ClfA even if not actually written by them) that can provide additional resilience to curatorial monitoring at all stages of the process and in all contexts. That is to say it is something concrete that curators can point their planning colleagues to, as well as being used to level up the playing field amongst contractors.

Contributor 10: Edmund's recent comments on community archaeology - or as he puts it 'work that takes place outside the planning system' - are also important. In my experience most community archaeology projects have a degree of professional involvement. This is because such involvement is usually a requirement of funding bodies such as HLF or Cadw or whoever. For me the biggest headache in terms of 'work that takes place outside the planning system' are projects undertaken by our academic colleagues who are often not ClfA members and are not working to ClfA standards - certainly in terms of process, such as consulting/depositing with the regional HER, for example.

Contributor 1: I feel we are conflating professional 'standards' and technical specifications. The government does produce the latter for architects etc., (Building Regs etc.) but not the former. A professional institution, however, exists primarily to advise its members on how to conduct their professional affairs so as to avoid being sued, i.e the former. If a member conducts his/her affairs in accordance with the guidance of the relevant professional institution (RIBA, RICS, ICE etc.) he/she is less likely to be sued in the event of things going awry. That is what I understand 'professional standards' to be. Technical specifications are a completely different matter. I have lots in my office and most are EH/HE publications, which are excellent: I just believe that they should be produced by, or with, the 'trade' bodies such as FAME, AAIS, AEA etc. I think it is immature of us to leave this to the state.

Contributor 1: LinkedIn is restricting how much I say at one go, which probably isn't a bad thing. My

main concern about the 'standards' issue is that the IFAs S&Gs (and the Technical Guidance Notes as well, actually) haven't been properly overhauled EVER, despite several major changes in legislation (PPG16 anybody?) and, more significantly, our venturing into professional realms not anticipated in the 1980s and 90s - such as contract consultancy and the dreaded 'setting' issue. The word 'client' does not appear in any of them.

Contributor 10: I agree on the separation of technical specifications and professional standards. They are two very different things, operating at different levels. I am however less concerned with who produces technical standards. For example 'Recording Historic Buildings' is actually a very useful technical document and everyone in the sector understands what is meant by a Level 1, Level 2 etc. survey. In an ideal world of course such a thing would be produced under the aegis of the CifA BAG by a consortium of professionals, rather than the state heritage service, but we are where we are. Your second comment, about the updating of CifA S&G and Technical Guidance, is fair up to a point - they do need an upgrade, certainly - but it is not right to say they have never been overhauled.

Contributor 2: So, we need to 1) make sure we understand the difference between Standards, good practice guidance and technical specifications, 2) make sure we understand the various regulatory processes (ie the mechanisms for enforcing compliance) and when and where they are appropriate/effective and 3) commit (and promote the importance of that commitment) to upholding professional standards through professional accreditation. It's easy when you write it down!

Contributor 1: Agreed. I'll expand on your example: The old RCHME Spec. is a very useful document for specifying and managing 'building recording' contracts, but a lot of my buildings work is not 'recording' per se, it is 'assessment' concerned with identifying significance etc. I am not alone. How that is done is not easily specified because it requires tiered value judgments, but a professional institution should be able to produce guidance on what is reasonable for a competent professional to do. This is a recurrent theme on the IHBC LinkedIn site. The same issue applies to, for instance, scoping an archaeological evaluation or excavation, or even a watching brief: we have S&Gs that tell how to go about doing those types of work, but little that offers us help in judging how much to do.

Robin Page: Earlier on in the discussion it was noted that new guidance or updated guidance can often be necessitated by changes to best practice. An example of this is the "Preserving Archaeological Remains" guidance note published last November. Here is an article that takes a look at the thinking behind producing that specific piece of guidance: <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/research/preserving-archaeological-remains/>

Duncan McCallum: Picking up on the exchange of views on what is reasonable to expect professionals to carry out by way of assessment or recording, I'm interested in thinking how it can be expressed in a way that avoids criticism that it is adding to 'regulatory burden'. Even if there is no new burden and what is asked for by curators would generally be seen to be reasonable, it might not

always feel that like when one is on the receiving end eg a developer working on a site with narrow margins.

Jan Wills: I'm not sure that we are always very good at articulating the public benefit or knowledge gain from development-led projects. The spectacular ones generally find good publicity but the enormous overall gain in knowledge from the last 25 years of more modest work is still not widely enough understood. It's a demonstration of how archaeological investigation has been successfully integrated into the land management system (well, mainly).

Jan Wills: Robin and I are both signing out now. Thank you all very much for your comments today. Robin will be collating these so we can feed them into the workshop next week that some of you are attending.

We'll leave the discussion open until tomorrow morning for any last thoughts this evening. Thanks again.

Later comments

Contributor 7: As this is all about the next 25 years here are my suggestions for change. 1. Better coordination between those who produce S&G to ensure work is focussed where it is needed. 2. A single location for all S&G documents. 3. A better system of enforcement not just reliant on over stretched local authorities. 4. Ensure there is space to be innovative and develop new ways of working. If we are clear on what we must/should do we will understand better where there is room to do things differently. In addition to good S&G, there is a lot of accepted practice, assumed to deliver quality, that needs to be challenged (e.g. hand excavation/sampling percentages) - this partly goes to the point about guidance on how much we do. Perhaps this is not the space for more guidance but for innovators to be creative. How do we encourage this? Come to this years FAME forum on innovation and be part of the discussion <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/the-2017-fame-forum-tickets-33578669705>.

Contributor 11: Thinking about the point made earlier in the day by **Contributor 2** and Jan about reviewing standards and outcomes: I think it is important to consider how the outcomes might be measured as part of any review process. Although we know that S & G have had a big positive impact there isn't very much empirical evidence to support this. Looking to the future: being able to measure the positive impact of changes to S&G is likely to improve support for them in the sector including compliance, and should also have a positive feedback in terms of future reviews.

Contributor 3: I was trying to post this yesterday but it kept saying 'there is an error, try later'. Likewise in the previous e-discussion (end of March) I would like to hear the success stories and the mechanisms which enabled the smooth running of a project from fieldwork to museum deposition (where S&G were adhered to).

However, I also feel despite the S&G there is the personal element of the project manager, the DC

archaeologist and the museum curator. In the current system under which we conduct our fieldwork the 'quality control' falls mainly under the DC and later on the museum curator. I would also like to say that it is good timing with this e-discussion, as in the post-recession era it is more noticeable that the level of our colleagues which was affected harder are the experienced field supervisors and officers.

Robin Page: Thank you for your persistence - and apologies for the disruption to your genuine and useful posting. For reasons best known to itself, LinkedIn is placing your posts into a moderation queue - its Site Wide Automatic Moderation can be something of a blunt instrument.

Contributor 3: We are seeing more junior staff at these posts nowadays being promoted faster due to the large infrastructure projects so it is also necessary that we do not repeat mistakes of the past - especially in this context of economies and staff. As said previously by a number of participants, I am also keen to see more collaboration from across the board if it comes to reviews of S&G. Lack of resources in this era together with a growing competitive market is not an ideal 'recipe' but this is where the RO status , at least speaking from a contractor's point of view, is being checked in a space of a few years.

Online discussion 3

Designation and management of the archaeological resource in the context of a changing planning system

Historic England and ClfA project team discussion participants:

Joe Flatman	Head of Listing Programmes, Historic England
Robin Page	Digital Coordinator, Research Group, Historic England; LinkedIn Group owner/Moderator
Jan Wills	ClfA Chair, and 21 st -century Challenges Project Manager

DAY 1

Joe Flatman: A hello from me here at Historic England as joint lead with CIFA's Jan Wills, and welcome to the next two days of discussions. This is an important topic that ranges widely across really significant issues to do with heritage management in many different settings. It also has particular relevance given the potential impact of Brexit on archaeological site management; so too possible future planning reforms. I will be dropping in and out of the discussion all day today and tomorrow, and really look forward to hearing people's thoughts. All ideas, comments and suggestions will be fed into ongoing joint-working between HE and CIFA, so they really matter. Thanks, Joe

Jan Wills: And from me too. So much of the context in which we work is changing - time to think about the way we currently protect and manage archaeology, and how we can respond to the challenges of planning 'reform' and Brexit, amongst many others.
Jan

Contributor 8: Responding off the cuff to some of the questions:

1) Seems ok to me – but are there any alternative models actually used which could be considered? The issue from a planning point of view is always that it varies a lot dependant on various factors - local capacity to deal with applications (in terms of planners or archaeological curators) means what might be routine in one area is exceptional/non-existent in others; relationships between the archaeologists and planners – at this CC most of our planners we get on with fine and are happy to follow our advice but we have a few who occasionally plough their own furrow, which can create issues. The key issue, though, is the lack of any sort of sanction against planning authorities which apparently remove their archaeological provision, which is a major flaw in the system as currently set up.

2) De facto, this usually means that non-designated gets removed and recorded, and designated gets

kept. There are exceptions, but as a rule of thumb, that is my experience of how this works in practice. As long as we are happy that designated sites are the ones we want kept, then is that ok??

3) Yes – if archaeology is a material condition, and LPAs can currently remove their cover, without sanction, there needs to be legislation to prevent that.

7) NO! Overlapping designations are a pain to deal with, but they identify the relevant issues for each type of asset. Merging them would produce some sort of confused fudge I think.

Contributor 3: I agree with the last point (7), certainly. An holistic designation type that covered all and sundry might sound appropriate from an academic point of view, considering how all of the elements mentioned are of course intrinsically linked, but I think from a practical, planning point of view, it could potentially lead to the importance of any one element covered being disregarded or not sufficiently well accounted for, in either designation or decision taking.

Jan Wills: To pick up questions one and two: catalysts for change might be the loss of an ability to assess significance early, and pre-determination, in Development Management, depending on how Permission in Principle is actually implemented. We might there have to look to more upfront designation and/or identification of important heritage assets (e.g. cf NPPF para 139), instead of the very flexible system that we currently have??

Contributor 11: We've just addressed the identification part of (4) in our area through a programme to update and locally define a county-wide series of "County Sites of Archaeological Importance": i.e. sites of comparable value to Scheduled Monuments but not yet designated as such, as well as some already-Scheduled sites themselves, but now including wider or revised site areas on the basis of new information, or areas that were excluded from the original designation for some reason.

Jan Wills: Can you say more about how you compiled this, and how you will link it into policy? Presumably it aligns with the NPPF policy I mentioned above, but maybe you have a local plan policy too??

Contributor 11: We had a pre-defined Table of Significance covering all archaeological periods to assess the relative value of sites, which helped inform decisions about whether a site should be granted this status. This was a slightly mechanistic approach, but having a series of parameters set out beforehand that described what were considered to be Nationally or Regionally Important features, allowed us to make reasoned and consistent judgements about significance. If/when a site satisfied such thresholds, we'd already got the groundwork in place to support the designation. Then it's a case of working out if a sensible or evidential boundary to an area could be applied.

We have NPPF paragraph 139 to back this up, but also 129 is relevant as through this method the LPAs will already have "assessed the particular significance" of these sites so can manage them through local plan policies, which mention the CSAI designation. We also provided a new definition of this term as part of the project.

Jan Wills: Sounds good - have you had any challenge/testing of the approach e.g. at inquiry?

Contributor 7: On 7 I agree; unless we want to have a constraints map which basically says don't build here, we need separate designation to reflect the protection and management regimes appropriate to the interest. It's already strange that a Conservation Area can have a setting. Making planning judgements about constraints requires relevant expertise.

Contributor 11: We ran the method statement/Significance Table through the archaeological community to see if there were any comments on the approach locally, and all the LPAs were kept up to date throughout the process (it took three years) and were continually supportive and happy that it was compliant with their obligations under the NPPF. The designation name and its place/use in local plan policy was already in place BTW - and had been since the early '90s - we just updated the information and the mapping. The new areas haven't gone live yet but we're confident the approach is robust enough to withstand scrutiny. I will have a copy of the method statement with me on Friday if you want to have a look.

Jan Wills: Yes - that would be extremely interesting, and something that I'm sure Joe will be keen to see, in taking forward the National Importance project.

Joe Flatman: Thanks for the discussion here on 'County Sites of Archaeological Importance'; Jan's absolutely right to flag HE's interest in such approaches in the context of the National Importance programme. As people may be aware, the Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service within HE's London Region has undertaken a similar review. It's extremely helpful to hear of such approaches, including methodologies and also - if any - challenges to these.

Contributor 7: I am not clear whether these non-designated national importance lists are intended to supplement the designated lists (permanently or as an interim measure) or permit HE to move away from designating new sites at all.

Jan Wills: NPPF policy 139 indicates that undesignated heritage assets of equivalent significance to designated sites should be treated in policy terms the same as those sites which are designated. I don't think that there has been a lot of follow up to this policy, either through the creation of lists, or on a case by case basis in response to proposed development (correct me if I'm wrong). It could help where heritage assets can't be designated under the terms of the legislation, in cases of newly identified sites, or where there would be a good case for designation but that simply hasn't happened for whatever reason.

Contributor 1: We have recommended refusal, and then defended at Public Inquiry, a development proposal which was of equivalent significance to a designated site, however, we have not had many such cases. Whilst we would very much like to...

Also, I can I can also see the benefit of having such a county wide list for wider uses than just for supporting out planning function - for example it could allow better targeting of resources across the county etc.

It would also be particularly useful for highlight not-designatable sites - the nationally important ridge and furrow across parts of the midlands in particular come to mind.

Jan Wills: If PiP is applied in future to Brownfield Registers and Local Plan allocations we need this kind of strategic work more and more but it puts the onus on LPAs to fund and they don't have the money??

Joe Flatman: A reply here on **Contributor 7's** question about 'whether non-designated national importance lists are intended to supplement the designated lists (permanently or as an interim measure) or permit HE to move away from designating new sites at all'. This is a great challenge that offers rich territory for discussion. The HE view is that a 'mixed economy' of management approaches is needed: sometimes [a] we pursue the designation of new sites as part of medium/long-term strategic programmes (an interesting related discussion is what those programme priorities should be); [b] we'll also always consider 'spot' designation nominations (primarily but not exclusively on grounds of threat); [c] we're always working on amendments and upgrades to existing designations and; [d] we also want to work with the sector on providing greater clarity on defining, on a national scale, non-designated national importance, where the aim is to strengthen the 'currency' of such identification by aiding greater consistency.

A reply also on **Contributor 1's** question about the HE National Importance project. The original project documentation is at <https://historicengland.org.uk/listing/what-is-designation/scheduled-monuments/national-importance-programme/>. We're now working up a phase 2, partly informed by the original work, also by these debates, and by internal HE discussions too. There is clearly appetite for an improved qualitative as well as quantitative understanding of how 'NI' is approached in different locations, and how from that greater national consistency might be achieved that would subsequently give LPAs greater authority in planning decisions where 'NI' arises. One part of that is would be exploring how HE might help LPAs with the types of systematic identification of possible sites.

Jan Wills: some opportunities for LA/HE partnerships here?

Contributor 5: In our area we certainly make a point of identifying non-designated sites of national importance in the planning process, where we consider we have a good case - in my view it's one of the key tasks of assessment or evaluation to identify such sites so they can be taken down the 'equivalent to designated assets' route. Efforts to engage consultants in a discussion as to whether such identifications hold water have so far not really gone anywhere, neither have they been seriously challenged, yet. We have also been looking at the GLAAS programme of Archaeological

Priority Zones as a way of identifying areas proactively - in an area of 30 sq km this is a viable proposition which may not be feasible on a larger canvas.

Contributor 1: [waves arm] We'd be interested in some LA/HE partnership working on this...

Jan Wills: Contributor 5 - how do you feel about identifying 'the equivalents' up front as part of the local plan or register compilation process if there isn't any route to evaluation at that stage?

I have to sign out of the discussion now, and will be back tomorrow. Thanks, everyone, for thoughts and good information on developing practice.

Contributor 5: I think I'll have to paraphrase my old friend Donald Rumsfeld there - yes that can certainly be done, resources permitting (!) (LA/HE partnership), and that can deal with the ones we know about. But we also need to consider the 'known unknowns', ie those areas / sites / assets with anticipated potential, and finally the 'unknown unknowns' those that come up during routine investigations. So it has to be understood that this isn't a single exercise.

Robin Page: Thanks to everyone for your input so far, look forward to more comments and insights tomorrow for the second day of this discussion

Contributor 2: Two days discussion at such short notice is not great and each of the 8 discussion points would probably benefit from their own discussion threads! So, too little time to do justice to a very important and far reaching topic. For me, there is only one overarching message here, or a plea really - don't get hung up on process, think creatively and become less risk averse. I teach a skills module to postgraduates at the University of York Archaeology Department and each year I am stimulated by the enthusiasm, imagination and creativity of students from a variety of backgrounds. Where does this all go? I think we need to expand our audiences for this sort of discussion.

Question one: You would have to say no to the appropriateness of the current system and yes there is a need to develop an approach that is far more suitable to the 21st century.

Question two: I would say not. The establishment of Local Lists promoted by HE and through NPPF is clearly a step in the right direction but in order to get under the skin of true public benefit and value of archaeology and historic environment.

Question three: Simple answer to this. Don't even go there for the next few years! For obvious reasons.

Question four: Not sure of the relevance of this question as I would have thought one's response would be the same as for scheduled monuments, not that I don't think reform is needed.

Question five: We really need to sort out what we mean by public benefit and engage with the

principles of Social Value (session at last IFA conference) far more than we do. Again, need to involve the communities. Too often archaeological investigations (the usual management option) are carried out behind closed doors with minimal interaction with communities (H&S, time constraints etc. Some honourable exceptions). Results (public benefits?) are rarely communicated as a lasting 'story' to enrich communities and enhance character and understanding. 20th century grey literature is still alive and well and research value rarely comes into play. We need to get out of our collective ivory towers.

Question six: How long have you got? We all (archaeologists and conservation officers) need to relax more, be more pragmatic, more insightful, more creative, less processual, less dogmatic, less mistrustful, less pompous....and yes, thinking that through one could see how almost every element of our professional practice could be challenged and modified to suit a changing world in which no aspect of the historic environment is so sacred that it will endure forever. Above all we need to choose our battles, not spread ourselves too thinly.

Question seven: This is an interesting issue that has often raised itself over past decades. As someone with a keen interest in characterisation, sense of place, spirit of place and place making, I am acutely aware of the importance of considering all aspects of what gives a place character from the tangible to the intangible. In that sense, most of us probably do work in holistic ways informally all the time. There is certainly a case for at least considering morphing HERs into what used to be referred to as Local Environmental Information Systems. There is much to be gained from this. Merging designations is best achieved at regional level and I know some HERs at least include designated assets such as ancient woodland and NNRs on their GIS systems. From a users view point a one-stop-shop is always advantageous. At a national level there are resourcing risks in seeking formal mergers with say Natural England but that should not stop discussion.

Final comment. The profession is still fractured but after many decades of realising this to be the case, very little has changed it seems to me. The academic world is still distant from the profession and although there have been, and still are, some excellent collaborations through sponsored research projects there is still a disconnect between universities and 'professional archaeology'. The same is obviously true of the disconnect between commercial archaeology and community archaeology. I have never been a fan of the commercialisation of archaeology and if we were to prioritise one thing over the next few years it could be to re-examine this model (academia/commercial/community) and develop some alternative options. Final point. I hope that my contribution has been of use but I am fully aware that it is probably little more than a stream of consciousness. Although this discussion forum is useful, the time constraints and notice period are not helpful!

Day 2

Joe Flatman: Morning everyone. Day 2 of discussions here, and myself, Jan and Robin will be popping in and out of the discussion all day. We're hugely appreciative of all of the contributions so

far: as a reminder, these will all get collated and used as part of the follow-on from the workshops to inform HE/CIFA's (and others) future partnership working. So for example, LA/HE partnership working on quantifying 'NI' is something we at HE have been thinking about already, and is definitely an area of work that we'll explore in depth as a next step.

Contributor 8: To follow up on a couple of the points above - I think there are some lessons to learn about how this series has been advertised to the community. This is a problem in other spheres, and is something as a sector we need to address. I also agree that some notice about questions is helpful, as sometimes it's hard to think up answers to complex issues on the fly.

That said, I think some of the points need fleshing out/justifying to be useful. For example, he is right about public value, but I think recent training by CIFA at conference and elsewhere regarding getting this into WSI's has started trying to address this - but it will take time to filter down into practice. In particular, I would like to see some concrete suggestions for how we do things differently (question 1) as I am struggling to think of alternative methods. And also as to why the current set up is unfit. Major failures in the system are rare (or just hidden?) - so if it ain't broke...?

Contributor 4: Unfortunately the real solution to the issues raised in the discussion points is essentially the hardest one to deliver. Namely, increased scheduling through a revised version of the AMAAA. I would hazard a guess that two of the key obstacles to scheduling is a) proving national importance and b) justifying this in order to impose the restriction on the rights of land owners that scheduling enforces (along with potential compensation claims). This is what has led to this two-tiered system of scheduled sites and 'equivalent' but non-scheduled sites and only a revision of the 1979 act will change this in any effective and meaningful way and allow for the designation of more archaeological sites and buildings. Perhaps a grading system like that used with listed buildings would be useful as many sites that don't quite make the national importance cut but are still of enormous value and significance could benefit from the increased protection scheduling affords.

Grade II scheduled monuments could be the more regionally important sites and buildings or be subject to less draconian restrictions on the rights of the owners than that of Grade I monuments. Powers to acquire the land/monument should probably be replaced with the power to enforce urgent works/repair notices, as with listed buildings and setting should also be addressed. I am aware that changes to the act seem remote at this point but that shouldn't stop us raising these issues now so that they are on the radar of DCMS.

(On a separate note perhaps also we could also place ourselves in parity with other countries by changing their name and calling these sites and buildings what they actually are, 'national monuments'. Scheduling is an archaic, 19th century civil service term for listing which most people these days associate with bus/train timetables. If nothing else it will help people (the general public, government officials and those in the industry alike) recognise the importance of this form of designation!!)

Joe Flatman: Thanks for this; the issue of revisions to the 1979 Act is as you say in interesting one. As some here may remember, there were plans for a wholesale revision of heritage protection in the 'HPR' work of the early 2000s that in the end did not get parliamentary time. If successful that would have created a graded system across the board... alas, time has moved on as we all know, and getting parliamentary time for heritage reform at present is an exceptionally tough nut to crack. Where there is potential is in demonstrating to government the benefits of tweaks to existing legislation where they would demonstrably be in the public interest in terms of giving greater clarity and certainty; the changes to how we approach listing enacted in the 2013 Enterprise and Regulatory Reform Act are an example of this, where HE now has much greater room to define both what is, and what is not, of special interest in NHLE entries, both in the text and maps.

Contributor 11: Could tweaks to existing legislation include following Wales' example and removing the defence of ignorance from the 1979 AMAAAA? That would be an easy win in the public interest.

Contributor 10: I agree, Tony, and that's a good example of an achievable short term improvement (if there is Parliamentary time for anything other than Brexit), but it pre-supposes that the current framework is, and will remain, adequate. With the lack of resources and a tide of de-regulation I'm concerned for the bigger picture.

Contributor 6: On the theme of improvements to existing SM legislation the issue of the Class Consent allowing continued cultivation of scheduled monuments remains an important issue that has also been proposed for amendment in the past. It is not worth the effort of proposing a significant site for scheduling if the existing regime of damage continues unchecked.

Contributor 9: Agree that we should consider developing a shopping list of amendments to the 79 Act and then look for legislative opportunities. The case for this has been strengthened by the recent changes in Scotland and Wales. Any lobbying for this could also be linked to proposed negative impacts from Brexit (e.g. removal of agri-environment schemes vs Class Consents) and further planning reforms (greater threats to non-designated vs expansion of designation)?

Jan Wills: Just signing back in.

For me the main driver at the moment towards change is deregulation and planning 'reform'. It may not be so easy in the future to assess significance through evaluation and other investigation at an early enough point in the development management process (because of PiP and other changes), driving us back towards more strategic work in identifying sites for scheduling, or other levels of protection - albeit from not such a good information base.

Picking up the early point about timetables and notice of the online discussion I'll post something later today on where you can find the overall timetable for the project, and the other forthcoming discussions.

Joe Flatman: On the strand of 'developing a shopping list of amendments to the 79 Act and then

look for legislative opportunities' this is definitely something that would be of use; it's crucial to have something to hand so that when the opportunity arises, such a thing can be brought up. Framing these in the context of things like Brexit and planning reforms, where the proposals made are sensible and seen to be in the public interest, also allows the sector to be promoted as positive, forward-thinking and helpful. HE has a long list of such possibilities already, but additional ideas and framing /context are always useful, as is evidence that such reforms are collective proposals from us!

Contributor 9: I think it might be helpful to engage in a little post election crystal-gazing on Friday e.g. although deregulation will continue, I suspect that it will have less of the (3 for 1) zeal, and direct public sector funding for housing and new settlement infrastructure may be back on the agenda?

Jan Wills: I promised an update on forthcoming online discussions in the 21st-century Challenges for Archaeology series.

All information is posted on the ClfA website under News and Events, for example:

<http://www.archaeologists.net/news/21st-century-challenges-archaeology-workshop-3-designation-and-management-archaeological>

from a few weeks ago. There's an overall timetable and updates, including the draft reports on the associated workshops, will all be posted there.

There are three more planned discussions:

- *New models for local curatorial services: potential future roles for local authority archaeology services and Historic England*, week beginning 18th September
- *Synthesis of information from developer-funded investigation to create new historical narratives*, week beginning 23rd October
- *Challenges for archaeological publication in a digital age*, week beginning 27th November

Contributor 6: Picking up the post-election theme I agree that there is hope that deregulation may be reduced and that we should work to ensure that any adverse effects of changes so far are monitored and made public. Also I suspect that the key factor in keeping the present planning system effective will be the local staff, we must keep arguing for the importance of (and statutory status for) fully maintained HERs with associated development control archaeologists and keep making the case for restoring them where there are gaps and/or low levels of provision.

Jan Wills: Agree with your comments re LA staff, who are key to delivering the current system.

I have to sign out now, but I'd like to thank everyone who has joined in the discussion over the last two days. As usual any comments that come in this evening will still be included in Robin's collated comments from the last two days. These will inform the workshop we're running later this week, and there will be notes from this available via the ClfA website in due course. Robin and I will review how we've publicised the discussion and make sure we try to spread news of the next one as widely as

possible - see earlier post for details.

Contributor 2: An ironic evening hmmmmm. Some of you will get it.....

Online discussion 4

New models for advisory services: potential future roles for local authority archaeology services and Historic England

Historic England and CifA project team discussion participants:

Edmund Lee	Knowledge Transfer Manager, and Project Assurance Officer, Historic England
Duncan McCallum	Policy Director, Historic England
Trevor Mitchell	Planning Director, Yorkshire, Historic England
Robin Page	Digital Coordinator, Research Group, Historic England; LinkedIn Group owner/Moderator
Jan Wills	CifA Chair, and 21 st -century Challenges Project Manager

DAY 1

Robin Page: Welcome to this 4th discussion in the 21st-century Challenges for Archaeology series taking place here on this thread between 20th – 21st September 2017. Local authority Archaeology Services and Historic England teams between them deliver the information and advice that is essential for the protection and management of archaeological sites, structures and landscapes. At a time when all public sector budgets are reducing we will be talking about the future: what kind of services do we want, and how can we ensure their survival?

Jan Wills: Welcome from me too. We want to focus today on the roles of those who provide information and professional advice on archaeology at local and national level: Local Authority services and Historic England teams. All public sector budgets are reducing; against this background what kind of services do we want and how can we ensure their survival? In each of the three preceding 21st-century challenges discussions (on archives, standards, and designation/planning) the reduction in local authority capacity has been identified as a problem, and the decline in staff numbers continues as we can see from the latest survey. Robin has posted our suggested themes/questions but you may have others too...

Contributor 11: The starting point should surely be the Standard and guidance for archaeological advice by historic environment services which sets out the agreed standard for advisory work? The Standard of Archaeological advice on the historic environment must aim to benefit the public both now and in the future, through management and the advancement of understanding. It will contribute to the achievement of sustainable development and the realisation of social, environmental or economic benefits. Advice must be clear, consistent, compliant, reasonable,

timely, informed and impartial, and should be proportionate to a reasoned and clearly-documented assessment of known or potential significance. Advice must be provided by suitably qualified, skilled and competent advisors and based on an up-to-date and publicly-accessible information base maintained to nationally-agreed standards.

http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/ClfAS&GArchadvice_2.pdf

Robin Page: We will be joined over the course of the discussion by representatives from ClfA and Historic England. Before we tackle the questions in detail, perhaps especially useful for the first, can we say what it is that we want to achieve through advisory work? What outcomes do we want?

Contributor 14: To me the critical outcome is that an informed judgment is made by someone with the relevant information and skills. If first-pass curatorial decision making is simple screening on a GIS then it may be perceived as a non-specialist role that can be undertaken by a generic planning assistant or by a newly qualified heritage specialist. Questions about organisations and critical mass need to follow a decision about how work is supposed to be organised, and in particular whether it is desirable or feasible to hold the line that decisions about heritage should be made by heritage professionals following the agreed standard, or can be opened up to treat heritage as just another constraints layer.

Robin Page: Thanks. Numbers of the specialist staff that you note as critical are falling, so, in a post NPPF world, are there ways that limited resources can be focused on the most 'significant' archaeology?

Duncan McCallum: Hi. I'm going to be at the discussion next week and am looking forward to it. Martin has a very good point about the right level of expertise being engaged so that as much of the time of the more specialist staff is focussed on important technical decisions. Another issue I'm really keen to explore is about HE's role alongside the LAs in helping to deliver an effective service to the customers and public. In these lean times I think HE needs to look carefully at the way it engages with Local Authorities. Are we involved in the right kind of casework and how can we best help Local Authorities?

Contributor 14: That would seem to be conceding immediately the principle in the Standard that archaeological decisions should be made by heritage specialists.

Contributor 11: A driving force behind the development of the ClfA S&G was the perceived need for a clear quality standard which might be used to support existing arrangements but also to provide a benchmark for alternative service delivery models if necessary. I suspect the extent to which it has been used as such is limited but it would be good to get some feedback on that...

Jan Wills: I also think that the Historic England/Local Authority interface needs to be re-examined. On planning casework, given the known extent of and the potential for further undesignated

heritage assets with archaeological interest it can be difficult to be selective on casework. The better the information we have in HERs and the more predictive work we can do the better - but this needs resources too.

Contributor 15: I agree with Jan that we need to look at all the options, and not be too bound up with supporting existing structures/services. There is unlikely to be a 'one size fits all' model, but we need to think broadly - and in doing so we shouldn't just think about the archaeology services, but also the conservation advice available. In CBA's role as a National Amenity Society looking at applications for Listed Building Consent across England and Wales it is clear that often it is assumed that conservation officers alone will deal with these applications and yet they are part of the archaeological resource so a more joined up and informed approach is needed.

Contributor 12: Robin, I think that is a potentially dangerous avenue to go down. Much 'significant' archaeology is brought to light during development-led archaeological work. This work in turn is specified by the LPA's archaeological specialist having made professional advice to the developer or LPA. If we say we will only concentrate on "significant" archaeology then surely the implication will be to only concentrate on what we currently know about?

Contributor 8: Interesting that the discussion is nearly 4 hours in and as far as I can see there hasn't been a single intervention from anyone in a local authority service. Either we are all too busy doing the job, or perhaps we don't want to be turkeys voting for Christmas.

I'd like to take a slight issue with **Contributor 15's** comment about 'not being too bound up with supporting existing structures/services'. Certainly we don't want to be in a position of just defending existing posts etc but it is what we have and also what our colleagues in other services understand and can work with. There are examples from across the country of most of the existing models (unitary, district, county/district, cross-council - eg old metropolitan counties) breaking down catastrophically, but unless we can be sure that what is proposed in place of the status quo is going to be robust, and understandable by / acceptable to the LPAs who actually carry the duties set out in NPPF, we had better not break what we have. We already concentrate attention on 'significant' archaeology through requiring assessment / evaluation to help define what is significant. Then mitigation can be focussed on advancing understanding.

Contributor 15: I appreciate your point, and we are all working hard to be strong advocates for what we currently have in place, but at the same time one of the opportunities provided by these discussions and the seminars that follow is to look ahead. Resources are falling and the legislative/policy context is shifting. It is in that context that I suggest we need to think creatively ...

Contributor 6: I know various counties have rogue districts/boroughs that offer their own archaeological advice on planning applications and often don't have proper access to an HER. In a time when we need all the income we can get from districts/boroughs in order to provide a good

service, how can the acquisition of specialist advice/HER data be enforced?

Robin Page: Picking up on the comment about LA staff above - if there people following the debate but who'd rather prefer to remain anonymous please message me or Jan and we can post anonymously on your behalf (or email me at robin.page@HistoricEngland.org.uk).

Contributor 16: Contributor 6 has hit the nail on the head here. Speaking from the perspective of a sole trader contractor, in the North West we have seen instances recently of local authorities - even those who buy-in to the latter-day equivalent of the former county archaeology system - being misled by influential developers to avoid imposing suitably robust and detailed mitigation conditions. I wish there was some way that developers on whom an archaeology / historic building recording condition had been imposed to FORCE them to obtain a specification from the county archaeology service or equivalent. I have had an acrimonious debate with a client for over a year after a project started, because they were able to undertake their project without agreeing with the local authority as to which HE 'level' of historic building record, and the content of that record. The client and archaeological contractor should NOT be specifying the level of record; the local authority + ex-county archaeologist should.

Contributor 7: I think we ought to be start exploring how we maintain a system of informed access to expertly managed HER information in a time of extreme austerity when undoubtedly some archaeological advisory services are likely to fold or become so small as to be largely ineffective. Could, for instance, HE maintain regional HERs that used modern technology to provide information to more locally based archaeological development management officers who provide advice & recommendations to Planning Authorities? Would there be a way of HE obtaining funding from LAs to help maintain these regional HERs?

Speaking from a LA advisory service position in the northwest I wonder if I could attempt to address some of the questions that Robin posted. We have seen our budget cut by over 50% in the last 5 years & have lost 4 core posts (2 DC officers, 1 HER officer & our Education & Outreach officer). There are now 3 core staff left. We have our own robust research agendas that we have had produced over the last 10 years or so. We use these to concentrate on the most significant archaeology within the staffing capacity we have left to deal with, but effectively we are operating an archaeological triage system & not spending time on what we perceive to be less significant archaeology or where we think we would be wasting our time commenting. We are just about holding our head above water. I think but there are probably additional cuts to come & I know some of our neighbours are also under extreme pressure. I think we ought to start thinking about possible future models of service.

Contributor 18: I agree with **Contributor 6** that there is a definite concern that where we in the sector have championed good examples of archaeology services (GMAAS, Worcestershire, etc) these services have shown themselves to be vulnerable to being undermined by the 'rogue districts'.

Council leaders are unlikely to choose a well staffed, experienced, shared service (though it will be good value for money) over the slightly cheaper but in-reality paper thin in-house service or external contractor relationship which just about squeaks in under standards and NPPF guidelines, which fails to deliver rigorous advice, engagement, etc. If we give Council bosses this choice, what can we expect? (Non-exhaustive) potential options: (a) Continue to try to win hearts & minds, (b) Seek stronger advice from Government that services have to meet a number of additional delivery tests, or (c) get support a new model, perhaps a regional one, which is - if not imposed - given strong backing by sector & HE?

Jan Wills: I've just come back into the discussion after a break, and I'm glad to see some local authority contributions. If anyone wants to provide comments off line directly to me (janwills@keme.co.uk) I am happy (with your permission) to feed these into the workshop and the subsequent notes/recommendations on a non-attributable basis, or Robin can post material similarly.

I appreciate the point about defending existing services and I think that our national organisations are working hard to do that. However, I also think we should be looking ahead; things are not going to get any better. So maybe we should also be looking at the hard questions of how we might do things differently. This is an opportunity to do just that. What about the question, too, of statutory duties, and other ways of 'encouraging' local authorities to achieve compliance with govt policy ?

Contributor 17: I think we should avoid talking of a single model that could be supported. The fact is that financial pressures (like development pressures) are not equally distributed and so what is workable in A might not be workable in B. This inequality is only going to increase as the way in which local government is funded continues to evolve.

Jan Wills: I think that's probably right - but we can look at options. Will, for example, changes to planning fees help services in high levels of development areas become more viable, while changes to local govt funding (i.e. loss of central govt grant) result in even worse prospects in most of the north and the midlands?

Robin Page: Thanks for all the contributions so far. I have to sign off for now but please do keep on posting your opinions and proposals!

Trevor Mitchell: Hi All. Single management of an all-England HER might be a big ask of anybody. But I wonder how many HERs are needed to cover the country at a size which brings efficiencies and sustainability?

Contributor 3: As a recent graduate who has just joined a HER I think one of the issues we face is that of awareness. Many academics, and students are either unaware or unwilling to utilise the great resource a HER can offer. I think that because of this lack of awareness for many people, they don't see the point of HERs or they see them as 'roadblocks' to their development. One solution I believe

could be to raise the awareness of HERs and the role of archaeology in the planning system in schools/universities. Many students end up working for commercial units or developers, if they don't know or understand what their local HER can do for them or their employers then how can we expect them to want to work with us rather than ignoring us or finding their own ways around the system to 'cut costs'.

Jan Wills: Some work done on this at the time of HPR, in preparation for the Heritage Bill, looking at different options. We've just dug this out (thanks to Stewart Bryant) and can circulate if people don't have it and are interested. The conclusion from the cost-benefit analysis was that the current model (in its 2008 form) was the preferred one. I can't vouch for the rigour of the methodology!

Contributor 3: I'd be interested in giving that report a read!

Jan Wills: We'll try and make this available tomorrow. Signing off now, and hope to continue the conversation tomorrow.

Duncan McCallum: An interesting comment earlier about whether there was a way of better promoting HERS. Does anyone have any suggestions of ways in which Historic England and others could further promote HERs? Clearly for many the idea of statutory HERs is very desirable and HE, among others, continues to remind government officials of the advantages, but change, in the short term at least, doesn't seem likely.

Contributor 4: 1/5 I mentioned in the last debate, that I felt we have done little over past decades to draw the various strands of academic, 'professional' and community archaeology together to the extent that I think we can legitimately question all our current business models and modus operandi. We kicked off with a reminder of ClfAs Standards and Guidance for archaeological advice and for me, public benefit and the advancement of understanding are key. But how are we currently providing that public benefit? (do we even know what we mean by public benefit?) And how are we advancing understanding? Are we happy with how this is currently being delivered via local authority services, Historic England and commercial archaeology.

2/5 Whilst local communities of interest might appreciate why 'significant' 'nationally important', archaeology will be contested by professionals in the planning system, they might be less appreciative when their own 'significant', locally important archaeology is ignored. This matters if we are thinking of more sustainable models for local heritage services. Local politicians will respond better to demands from residents than demands from their own officers.

We need to be much smarter at providing opportunities for communities to engage with their own heritage and to provide them with meaningful data and understanding so that they can become active participants. This will do more than statutory duty to sustain an appropriate local authority specialism. But what sort of models might we explore?

3/5 Heritage Lincoln Connect with its underlying LARA data and Know Your Place Bristol are surely

excellent models for how HERs might develop as both a resource for professionals and for local communities of interest. To address Trevor's question, I see much to gain from taking a regional approach to developing new HERs building on these excellent examples of best practice. Regional HERs make sense academically, they allow a much more coherent understanding of past landscapes and the relationships between places. They have the potential to provide users with a richer and more meaningful experience, and, economies of scale will help make the best of ever decreasing resources. North Yorkshire for example currently has four separately managed and maintained HERs. Sensible? I think not.

4/5 HE might help develop models like this through identifying funding streams partly from its own budgets and largely through working with Heritage Lottery, using its influence to develop programmes of funding for HER development. I also think it would be worth re-visiting the concept of Local Environmental Management Systems and potentially merging with ecological databases which are often regionally based.

We might also start to think about regional local heritage advisory services in the same way where expertise, including a more integrated building conservation element, can be shared across administrative areas. More local coverage can be achieved through the third sector for instance, regional CBA groups. To pick up on another point above, HE clearly have an important role in brokering the legal and financial agreements that would be necessary.

5/5 Steps could also be taken to integrate these regional HERs and advisory services with appropriate university departments through research and development as well as teaching and learning opportunity. This may help develop much needed regional centres of excellence providing sustainable futures for archaeological specialisms such as ceramics and palaeo-environmental studies.

All this might seem fantastical to some cynics but my experience working in local government, strongly suggests that this kind of approach is needed, necessary and urgent.

Jan Wills: Two thoughts following on those comments; if we seek to aggregate services or build new services for example at regional level for reasons of economy and other benefits how do we maintain the appropriate links with individual local authorities and also with communities. And, secondly, big change requires leadership, carrots and sticks etc. Where is this going to come from?

DAY 2

Robin Page: Good morning all, thanks for your comments so far this morning - keep them coming.

I've received a comment from **Contributor 16**, a County Archaeologist:

1 of 2 posts: 'I think part of the problem when presenting our case is a willingness to highlight that it is a non-statutory service. We must find some way to express the idea that although non-statutory it is none the less a mandatory function. The planning system requires access to an HER and expert advice. Planning decisions made in the absence of these could be challenged. *This Common Inheritance* (1990) makes it clear that the planning system is charged by government with delivering environmental protection, and subsequent advice notes through PPG 16 to NPPF have reinforced this planning duty. Government commitments via the Valletta Convention are overtly delivered by reference to the planning system.'

2 of 2 posts continued: 'We must find a way to counter balance 'non-statutory' or at least to qualify it, in a way that has an appropriate strength to it that properly reflects the fact that it is not a 'planning indulgence' but a 'planning duty' that our services meet. We, the archaeology community, but particularly local government and Historic England, must identify that having a heritage advocate within the planning system, although non-statutory, is mandatory rather than discretionary. (It is unfortunately discretionary as to who is charged with providing the service but it is not discretionary that such a service must exist in some form).'

'It is not that I think it should be statutory (although being passionate about the role of heritage in quality of life that would be nice), my point is that in the 'reality' of our position we allow non-statutory to be disguised as discretionary. But we are not, in my opinion, discretionary. So we must find stronger (but none the less true and honest) words to describe our role'.

Trevor Mitchell: Hi, you make some good points. I feel that we do need to ponder why we do it - public benefit, enhanced understanding etc. But for the purposes of this debate, 'it' is not 'archaeology', but advisory services. The planning system exists 'To control the development of land in the public interest' (or similar). Insofar as advisory services inform decisions on the development of land, how might this provide a starting point?

Contributor 4: Hi Jan, I think the more local element can be achieved through as I say, links with the Third Sector. With a greatly enhanced web based HER such as the Lincoln and Bristol models, local communities will have greater access to data and research about their areas of interest. Local eyes and ears.

Trevor Mitchell: In my compartmentalised construct, curation of HERs is a separate matter. Similarly, the promotion of the discipline and community engagement, both important, may not be key outcomes for advisory services. I wonder whether there will be time in Monday's workshop to consider all strands of LA archaeology services?

Contributor 4: Also, Jan, thinking about CBA resources such as LHEN and how that might develop in the future

Contributor 6: I think HERs belong in a local planning advisory service, not a big regional service of some kind - you know your local data, and the dialogue between the HER and planning archaeologists is constant, enhancing the HER and enabling us to provide the best advice we can. However this doesn't mean that data can't be more joined up. The Heritage Gateway could be useful for this (though not for commercial purposes!), however at present it is fairly clunky. And it makes sense for HERs to share buffers around other authorities to enable better advice to be given. The best thing about HERs is not being able to access the data online, in my opinion, but access to knowledgeable staff who can look at people's questions and work out what data they ACTUALLY want.

Contributor 4: Hi Trevor, of course, heritage issues are but one of many constraints and opportunities planning officers need to balance. They are also under huge pressure and in the main significantly under resourced. Anything we can do to make their lives easier is ultimately in our own interests. Crib sheets, constraint and opportunity mapping, reference to local and regional case law all becomes that much easier with a more integrated and regional advisory service...I think!

Jan Wills: still pursuing **Contributor 4:** in any regional or other structure not directly within local authorities how would we make the link between local authority that needs the service (and would have to contribute funding) and the other organisations? (I'm not arguing for any particular outcome, just keen to get people's ideas on possible scenarios). Our experience of multi-LA services hasn't always been very good.

Contributor 2: Worth noting that most of the HERs in the southwest are now on the Know Your Place website (developed from the Bristol model) - in Gloucestershire we post our monuments data on to the website. So that is regional integration (in terms of promoting info to the public) whilst keeping the higher level data at a county level. This seems to work well. It also maintains the important close relationship between the DC archaeologists and their planning colleagues at district and county level. Also worth noting that the HER in Gloucester City sits within the Gloucestershire County system and I access it remotely. This means there's no double handling of data and no confusion at boundaries - but again we keep that local relationship.

Contributor 20: I agree that KYP is a very good way of expanding the user base for HERs. The fact that the monuments data sits beside the historic OS, tithe and enclosure maps (soon!) immediately means it is available to users who might be familiar with the latter but not what we do.

Contributor 22: I'm a bit late to this discussion - hi all. Jan has had some thoughts from me on some of these issues following Discussion 3, but picking up on points above: I think there are huge dangers for us as a profession if we continue to endlessly circle around service provision. As Jan points out, there is a 2008 report which indicates that the 'current' system' - and by this I take that to mean having County Archaeological Advisory services and HERs in planning departments - is the preferred model. We need to support this & move on. The principle advocacy bodies are not helping the

situation by constantly taking the view in discussions that there are 'many methods of delivery' and leaving it at that - this perspective is clearly diluting and undermining the case for resource maintenance and/or increases. We need them to be saying – 'there are a number of methods of delivery and we as the experts and advocates for the sector are telling you that this is the most efficient and preferred one.'

What we need is a series of clear messages: there *is* a best practice way of service delivery: HERs and advisory services *should/must* be statutory: resources *should/must* be adequate and available to provide for these: where they are not, it's not our job to talk down our profession and the services we provide to accommodate this, but rather to highlight the inadequacies and fight to address them.

Contributor 4: Hi Jan, Maybe the workshop next week could examine that! The devil is in the detail but what I would say is that rather than impose a model on a needy LA service, perhaps we could ask them what they would like from an expanded regional service.

The world changes very fast and from 2008 to 2017 a lot has happened. My sense of where this discussion is trying to go is in exploring models more suited to the 21st century. As a profession, we have rather sat on our laurels a bit.

Contributor 2: I think a regional model runs the risk of further reducing the number of professional archaeologists for a given area (already over stretched) and of detaching those archaeologists from the context (in both planning and archaeological terms) of the advice they are giving. Local knowledge is really important. That doesn't mean we can't work regionally to engage with the public however (as KYP shows). It's fairly easy to get funding for public engagement - but the HLF are (quite rightly) not going to fund a database that fundamentally exists to provide baseline data for the planning system - that's up to LPAs and represents a tiny fraction of their spending.

Contributor 4: There are risks with everything and at the minute we know that pressure will increase on LA advisory services year on year. With a regional model you could actually end up with more advisers per head of population. Depends what you go for and where you are. You are right that at the minute HLF will not fund databases that provide for the planning system but HERs can be so much more than that as KYP Bristol and Lincoln demonstrate. This is why I suggest a role for HE using their influence to affect change in HLF position.

Contributor 21: **Contributor 4's** points might make sense for his area but my understanding is that joint/residual services are generally first in line for cuts, as there is a strong tendency for them to be seen as an optional extra, rather than integral, by the individual authorities who fund them.

Contributor 22: The preferred model from 2008 is (with a bit of local variation maybe) broadly the same one as post-PPG16? Qualified archaeological/conservation professionals sitting in the appropriate local authority planning departments with access to adequately-supported databases (ie

HERs). Are there are *actually* better ideas out there that we've not thought of (A few have even been tried)? - or are we just compromising ourselves into acceptance of constant reduction in our services and expertise - and diminishing our own value accordingly? We've been having these service delivery discussions for as long as I can remember, and unless we start defending our work properly as far as I can see the only result of the post-2008 approach -and therefore the 21st century delivery model we're definitely heading for, is an acceptance of inadequate resources and depleted services countrywide as the way forward. I can't support that and I don't think the profession should either.

Jan Wills I'll be feeding the collated comments from this discussion into the workshop on Monday. The emphasis of the workshop is open discussion about the issues but also then reaching a set of proposed actions. The latter will probably be around pieces of work that need to be done to progress ideas/proposals that have come up. So, for example, responding to comments above on service models, there was a study in 2008 which supported the current LA service structures for HERs but that was nearly 10 years ago and much has changed. It's no longer a very good basis for advocacy. Is there some work to do here on the shape of services, their status and their funding? More talking I know but we're not actively working on these issues at the moment (*pace* all those who are doing really good things in LAs despite the problems) other than surveying the staffing numbers. Howell Redesdale happened but not much follow up...

Robin Page: I have had a further comment via email from **Contributor 23** who reinforces previous postings on the strength of local knowledge of the data in smaller HERs and the relevance of the data to the local populace and thus to elected representatives potentially making them more resilient.

Contributor 4: Hi **Contributor 22**, you are absolutely right we have been talking about this for a very long time but the best form of defence is attack and we can change our perspective and take a glass half full view of change and be excited about the opportunities a different way of working might offer.

Contributor 4: Hi **Contributor 21**, There are obviously a lot of potential challenges in setting up any new or changed system or process and we can see this in the plethora of out sourced LA services such as libraries, economic development, parks and gardens and, in York, allotments. The LA model is changing around us and will continue to change. South Yorkshire Advisory Service is still around and I well remember the anxieties of those early days setting up a joint delivery service. Others will be in a better position to articulate the challenges from a West Yorkshire perspective I am sure.

Contributor 4: Hi **Contributor 23**, via Robin, please look at the Lincoln or Bristol model and ask yourself whether the local community could still be served in an appropriate way? HERs that are tucked away and only accessible through supervised visits are not really the thing I would suggest.

Contributor 1: I agree with **Contributor 6** with regards to the fact that one of the benefits of a

county HER is that those people who work with it regularly know their area/data etc. With regional HERs, there are also the practical aspects such as how to facilitate such a huge database. We have c.80,000 records so a regional HER would be massive. There are also issues with regards to who maintains, hosts, updates etc. With regards to facilitating access to community groups, we recently carried out a project called 'Assessing the value of community generated research' where we have made a number of recommendations around HERs, research frameworks etc. This project was commissioned by Historic England and they are working with ClfA and CBA amongst others with regards to these can be taken forward.

Contributor 6: I'm not sure many HERs are 'tucked away and only accessible through supervised visits' - we might not have a fancy website but we like to think we're very helpful at answering requests and sending scans of documents etc! (We don't have the office space for visits these days anyway!) I think this is a little off-topic in some ways, since the HER's main use (like it or not) is for planning purposes. Though ways of making the data more accessible to the public are great, the HER is most used for planning purposes, and there's no obstacle to acquiring data for that.

Contributor 22: Hi Jan. Historic England was tasked with taking the recommendations from the Howell/Redesdale report forward last year. Perhaps this would be a good opportunity to ask for a progress update?

Contributor 4: Hi **Contributor 6**, perhaps I should scrub 'supervised visits' but 'tucked away' I would still contend goes for many HERs. I think the status and purpose of a HER is absolutely germane to the future of LA heritage services and there is more to land use planning than dealing with planning applications surely? Place making is back on the agenda, at least with some Urbanists and the huge volume of data, and analysis held by LAs either as part of an HER or as an adjunct to it (characterisation etc.) is of huge value to anyone interested in the evolution of place. How that is managed and how that is accessed and moderated for the widest possible audience is crucial. The earlier point about the lack of academic interest in HERs is interesting.

Jan Wills: Hi **Contributor 22**- yes that's true (*cf* Culture White Paper). Sector reps and others, including ClfA and ALGAO, met with Historic England last autumn to discuss how to do just that. I'm anticipating an update from HE on progress since then which we can feed into the workshop on Monday, and make more widely available through the notes from the workshop which will be accessible through the ClfA web page.

Contributor 6: we do have involvement with Neighbourhood Plans etc as well, I was including that in the remit of our team as it is planning related...

Contributor 21: One thing no-one has yet mentioned in relation to HERs is the need for closer liaison with our IHBC colleagues. I don't know if everyone struggles to get hold of historic building surveys, I guess it's easier in unitary authorities? Establishing HERs as the main repository for such information

would certainly broaden knowledge of their existence.

Contributor 4: A useful piece of work either for next week or as an action coming out of next week might be to model the impacts, risks and opportunities associated with a regional model of heritage advice delivery and data management. I should think that we have most of the information needed, current staffing levels, salaries etc. to make a good fist of it. You could factor in volunteer contributions etc. and think about how a service level agreement might work out. Once the model is created, I am sure someone could devise a way of testing it against a variety of factors or forces for change that might act for and against service delivery over the coming years. Just a thought.

Contributor 5: Hi All. Sorry, late to the conversation but very interesting. Just thought it might be worth looking at us north of the Border. We run a number of systems here that are worth considering. In many cases we are far less resourced than English authorities, but I like to think we make do despite the same pressures. We have the traditional DC/HER teams based in LAs, advisory services based in trusts, LA services providing advice to neighbouring authorities through SLAs and services partly based in universities, several in museums services. It's not one size fits all and does work at the moment.

That said, there are LA services that are struggling with, in our cases, one member of staff doing both DC and HER work. Those with SLAs struggle to maintain the agreements because, as was said somewhere above, those are an easy chop even with advocacy. This has led to at least one LA not having advice at all. But as a potential solution we're looking at linking some services (such as provision of RRFs) through partnerships where we can. Given the policy environment in Scotland this seems like a sensible way towards regional services, without actually getting there 100%.

Contributor 4: Hi **Contributor 21**, I agree absolutely, and I alluded to it earlier on as I think did others. I might be very useful Jan/Robin to invite IHBC colleagues to next weeks deliberations. Perhaps they are already part of the inner sanctum.

Contributor 10: Hi all, afraid I've not had much chance to contribute to this as I'm away. But I strongly agree with those who see the discussion as focused on the role of archaeologists and archaeology within the planning system and the need to maintain and improve that vital local service despite the cuts and ideological reductions of recent years. We need to remember it took a couple of decades to get protection of archaeology into that system in the 1980s - 1990s and there is no intrinsic reason to suggest dismantling it now. Nor are there any sensible alternative funding sources (sorry but citing HLF is a non starter) and it has always been a tiny percentage of local budgets. Indeed one of the looming issues now is that local authority pay scales have been held back so badly that it is probably not an attractive career route for many graduates nor for tired excavators. I hope that now Historic England has settled into its new organisational structure that it will focus more publicly on the need to promote and protect the role of local authority archaeologists (and indeed all those involved in historic environment protection) rather than endless discussions of change for the sake of minimal savings.

Contributor 9: Thinking about improved definitions for HER services/standards/performances: in April we re-launched the HER audit programme following extensive revision in consultation with ALGAO UK HER Committee. The audit defines good practice and identifies agreed standards (thereby encouraging development). In a process of bringing these up to date, the new structure now accords with a range of service outcomes based on nationally agreed requirements set out in 'HER Guidance' (HE, ALGAO, IHBC 2016). We'll build on the experience of the 10 HERs audited this year to ensure that the audit is a baseline quality standard which helps guide HERs to be the best they can be for current and future users. Recognising that achievement of a national standard gives confidence to all stakeholders and users of HERs, a move to an accreditation scheme might offer greater certainty. Do you think this direction is worth exploring?

Contributor 19: Coming to this late, and picking up on the regional option: I think its time has come, or is approaching rapidly. Local knowledge is best where you have it, but how do we address the large areas that don't - or might not in 5 years time? Regional solutions must, though have sufficiently flexibility to cope with the variable levels of provision (and income from charging) and the messy local govt. structures. Building on existing regional structures (RRF groups and ALGAO regional groups - which already have broader sector representation) is likely to be the easiest and most flexible. Solutions could for instance range from closer working and sharing of expertise (including from the wider sector) to scoping new structures where provision is clearly below the minimum.

Contributor 7: I think in areas where Local Authority provision is stretched to the point where there are non-viable advisory services emerging, I think there may be scope for regional HERs managed by HE, perhaps based in the HE regional centres. HE will (a) be sympathetic to funding them properly & (b) have some clout in extracting financial contributions from LPAs. With the use of digital technology & remote working, Local Authority based archaeological development officers would be located to influence planning decisions. Local Authorities understand the need for expert advice. They don't always appreciate the scale of resourcing needed to maintain adequate HERs.

Contributor 4: Hi **Contributor 10**, HLF might be a non-starter now but...forever? Has HE no influence at all? Can we not dream?

Jan Wills: Although this workshops project is HE funded and therefore England focused, we have invited other UK nations, and also other professional institutes and service users. So HES, ALGAO Scot and Wales reps, CADW, IHBC will be at the next workshop, as will LGA, BPF and CLA.

Contributor 1: With regards to promoting HERs, this is something that the whole profession needs to do. There is a disconnect within our own profession about what HERs do and how they fit into the wider profession. HE are running their HIAS strategy which involves among other things, how to make HERs more accessible and how to link in more with things like Heritage Gateway, OASIS/ADS, so people are working on it although it's taking time. I don't think anyone who works in a HER is

denying the advance of technology etc. but methods of delivering HERs on a regional level is fraught with difficulty. For example, the HER Content and Computing Survey 2016 report by the HE Heritage Information Partnership Team found that nationally, there are nearly 1.5 million monument records. While I know what we have been talking about regional HERs, this would still represent a huge undertaking in terms of technical specifications etc. in terms of number of records, who holds sources, what do we do with paper records,

As for academia, in my experience they're not interested in engaging with HERs - there is work to be done in that respect but I'm not entirely sure how we go about it considering that universities in general (there are some exceptions) don't see themselves as responsible for training potential commercial archaeologists and everything that goes with that.

Contributor 4: Forgive me, but for me the Heritage Gateway is very much yesterday's thing - a quick fix at the time. ADS is a brilliant resource and a fruitful place to start thinking about alternative models to delivering evidence and understanding to a wider audience. I don't know the HIAS strategy thing but really we have some great examples of accessible HERs so why don't we just morph them into something that can be rolled out? Why do we endlessly navel gaze about data standards etc. I'm in total favour of getting stuff out there warts and all and let the raw edges be sorted over time. As long as there are appropriate caveats clearly visible, what's not to like? Paper records? Scan them. Lots of local volunteers I am sure...

Jan Wills: Late yesterday there was an exchange about the cost-benefits of various service models for HERs and I made a reference to work done for the heritage protection bill. You can see the basic outcome of this in Stewart Bryant's background paper on statutory HERs prepared for Monday's workshop here: <http://content.historicengland.org.uk/content/docs/research/21st-century-challenges-workshop-4-statutory-notes.pdf>

Stewart might want to comment further if he's out there??

Contributor 4: Hi **Contributor 1**, sorry I didn't realise you had more to come! It's true, Universities do not see themselves as responsible for training potential commercial archaeologists but at York, post-grads at least, are introduced to methodologies and processes designed to enhance existing skills etc. I am certain that we need to make more of links to academia, hence my earlier suggestion that regionally based advisory services might explore it.

Robin Page: For all wishing to learn more about HIAS:
<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/heritage-information-access-strategy/>

Contributor 4: Hi Jan, thanks for sharing that. It would be useful to understand how that scoring would pan out now, 10 years on.

Contributor 1: yes, HG was a quick fix at the time but it's now being looked at to redevelop it. In

terms of scanning documents etc, it's easy to say just do it but it's not that easy to do in practice. Lots of local volunteers? Perhaps but there is still the issue of space/resources etc. I understand where you're coming from in principle but my experience of running a HER and liaising for the last 5 years or so with HE, and other HER colleagues show that the reality is much different and there is no easy fix. Have a look at the link to HIAS that Robin has put up - HE are addressing issues of accessibility etc.

Why do we navel gaze about data standards? Because high quality and consistent data is key. Look at the Roman Rural Settlement project for example. They weren't able to look at some aspects due to the lack of good quality consistent data. I know that you would probably argue that a regional approach would resolve this but not necessarily.

In terms of training archaeologists in uni – yes, you may be right in this but building links to academia is hard when you're pushing against a closed door in some instances. I don't think a regional advisory service approach would resolve this.

Contributor 4: Sorry, **Contributor 1**, data standards and all that goes with it have been part of my career for so long I have just become so frustrated with (my perspective) the lack of progress towards accessible HERs.

Contributor 1: There are also other issues around regional HERs such as what happens if one LPA pulls their funding? How do you work out what level of funding each LPA contributes? What happens for those that are two tier authorities? What happens if one LPA doesn't sign up to support a regional HER? does that mean they have a separate HER or forgo access?

I think data standards is part of every archaeologist's career or should be. You might think there is lack of progress towards accessible HERs but there is work being done on this. Part of the reason why more HERs haven't signed up to HG is the lack of financial funding to be able to do this. Not every HER has the resources to have everything online. And data standards are very important if we want to facilitate greater access to HERs.

Contributor 13: Sorry to be late to the conversation. I feel that (with notable exceptions) arms-length organisations not embedded within their planning authority are often more vulnerable to cuts – if only by virtue of the fact that it's easier to make someone redundant in an arms-length organisation than someone you interact with (even if it's just in the kitchen) every day (equally local support for services tends to come from the fact that the most vociferous campaigners have often met their HE teams in person more than once). We shouldn't undervalue proximity – geographical, social and professional. Joint services can work very well – often most successfully where you have large urban unitary authorities (such as South and West Yorkshire – but as others have said, even they have significant problems at present)....

In other areas it's much harder to establish joint working – and not just in archaeology. To take the North Yorkshire example – there's been talk for many years of 'unitarising' to form 2 or more single-tier authorities, to bring efficiency savings, reduce bureaucracy etc. At first glance it looks like a no-brainer. However, it's never happened (and the couple of instances of shared services instigated in the last few years have been expensive failures). The reasons are complex and down to political and socio-economic factors beyond anyone's control. To give one example of why it might not work – there would be a 'fight' over who had to take certain districts into their authority – areas of North Yorkshire have populations density of less than 44 people per sq km, making the revenue brought in from planning fees and council tax minuscule, and the services expensive to run – it's a matter of geography. This wider problem would be a consideration for any joint/regional HE service.

There's also the 'what's in it for me?' attitude in some authorities towards merging services. HE teams are small-fry in terms of staff numbers and budgets. Combining two overstretched budgets gives a net gain of nothing - but you now have two task masters instead of one and an extra HER to look after when you didn't have the staff to look after the one you had already! It's a different matter if the two budgets have some slack in them – combining would indeed bring a benefit, you might even squeeze a half time post out of it, but I can't remember the last time I heard anyone of my acquaintance say they underspent, or had enough from search / enquiry fees to countenance buying anything other than paper clips.

Robin Page: On sharing services Historic England (then EH – the report dates from 2015) supported IHBC to look at the pros and cons of sharing local conservation services: <https://content.historicengland.org.uk/images-books/publications/analysis-of-impact-sharing-local-conservation-services/analysis-impact-of-sharing-local-conservation-services.pdf>

Trevor Mitchell: The discussion has been really interesting and will fuel our workshop. But the chat has been mainly about defending or adapting existing systems. I hope we will be able to dream about new services to meet new outcomes. What should advisers be doing to deliver public interest outcomes, such as growth and housing?

The workshop will be about new models for future roles. Throw away the desk instructions and standard operating procedure - how can archaeological advisers make a positive difference to society? What should we care about? Where should we put our efforts?

Edmund Lee: Just a thought on resources for local services (my thought, not an HE position). Is there anything we as a sector could do with the Community Infrastructure Levy, which was introduced to help councils benefit from development in their area? https://www.planningportal.co.uk/info/200126/applications/70/community_infrastructure_levy

On the regional versus local discussion. Any thinking along those lines will need to bear in mind the very different character and planning regimes of different regions. The Northern Powerhouse, for

example, is a different beast to the South... and a final one from me (again not HE). Remember that hosting of a database (local, regional, national, whatever) can be done anywhere. The delivery of services based on the knowledge in those database records is a separate consideration.

Robin Page: I have to sign out now- many thanks for all the useful comments - we'll leave the discussion open till tomorrow morning for more thoughts on Trevor Mitchell's invitation: 'Throw away the desk instructions and standard operating procedure ...'

Contributor 7: To try and answer Trevor's post re what should advisers be doing to deliver growth & housing. A case needs to be made that a properly resourced archaeology advisory service speeds up planning decisions & helps provide certainty for the vast majority of developments...

Jan Wills: Thanks, that's a good note of positive action to end on. I'm signing out now, but as Robin said we'll leave things open till tomorrow am for any further thoughts. We'll be circulating the comments to the workshop on Monday. The draft outputs from all of the workshops are added to the ClfA website (see link above in Robin's opening introduction) and comments are invited up until the end of 2017 after which we'll be finalising the report.

I hope to add the draft notes and actions from workshop 3 (designation and planning) by the end of this month.

Thanks again, everyone.

Thoughts on potential additional workshops (from BAJR Facebook group members):

During the course of promoting the discussion members of this group suggested additional dedicated sessions on the challenges of:

- Brexit
- Climate Change
- HS2
- Archaeology as a career: pay conditions etc...

And also stressed the need to involve communities/community archaeology in the project.

Late contribution:

Contributor 27: I wasn't able to join the 'conversation' last week, due to work pressure: if I don't finish jobs on time I don't get paid! Nonetheless, I wanted to make this observation: some LPA Archaeology planning services manage ok with very few staff; others struggle with much larger staffs. The difference appears to be the volume of work-creating bureaucracy they invent. Some insist on writing very long 'briefs' and reading and challenging every word of a WSI; others trust us. The archaeological outcome seems to be the same in both cases. I don't know if this translates across to 'built heritage'.

Online discussion 5

Synthesis of information from developer-funded investigation to create new historical narratives'

Historic England and CifA project team discussion participants:

Edmund Lee	Knowledge Transfer Manager, and Project Assurance Officer, Historic England
Robin Page	Digital Coordinator, Research Group, Historic England; LinkedIn Group owner/Moderator
Barney Sloane	Head of Strategic Management and Planning, Research Group, Historic England
Jan Wills	CifA Chair, and 21 st -century Challenges Project Manager

DAY 1

Robin Page: Welcome to this 5th online discussion in the '21st-century Challenges for Archaeology' series, led by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and Historic England, taking place from now until tomorrow 26th October 2017. This time the discussion will focus on how we transform recorded data from archaeological investigations into wider knowledge and new narratives.

Robin Page: on behalf of Barney Sloane: Barney Sloane of Historic England will be joining us later, but here is his take on the discussion and why it's so important:

'Welcome to everyone!

If there is any reason at all to fund and undertake archaeological investigations, it is, surely, to increase the sum of human knowledge – to learn who we are and where we came from, to spark wonder and inspiration, and to help the lessons of the past inform our own future. Archaeological activity across Europe and beyond has burgeoned in the last quarter-century, due in part to the Valletta convention, in part to an accelerated investment in infrastructure (roads, rail, energy etc), and in part to the increased adoption of a 'polluter-pays' principle of funding. In England this last is especially true: we now undertake very roughly 5000 investigations a year.

The online Grey Literature Library managed by the Archaeology Data Service (www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk) has some 45,000 reports available, free, worldwide. The British Library electronic Thesis service (www.ethos.bl.uk) has 3000 PhDs on archaeology available to download. And this is all in addition to the formal publications of journals and monographs. This extraordinary resource present huge opportunities as well as daunting challenges. CIFA and HE are both very keen to find ways to harvest the riches and surmount the challenges. We have posed a few questions to help galvanise the discussion. These effectively fall into two categories – about

principles and concepts, and about practicalities and policies. It might make sense to tackle them in that order, the logic being that if we know where we want to get to, we can then work out what mechanisms we need to get there.

This is no empty academic exercise. The justification of the cost of archaeology is vitally important both at an individual funder level and at a national policy level. Closing the loop between what we already know and what we set out to learn will make that justification far easier. It is our hope that what comes out of this online discussion and from the workshop which will follow will make a significant contribution to that endeavour. We look forward to a creative and stimulating discussion. Many thanks for taking the time to join in.'

Contributor 8: Although access to the primary data is important, even more important is that the data is properly reflected in the key searching tools, in the case of archaeology this should be the HERs. If people preparing syntheses have to rely on workarounds because the HER coverage is incomplete, inconsistent, or not current, the profession as a whole is having to do the work twice. HER backlogs and data quality are therefore fundamental issues in the development of an effective synthesis framework. (there are primary data backlogs due to post ex but to some extent these are inevitable since there are dependencies which prevent parallel working: HER backlogs only exist because of lack of resources)

Jan Wills: Thanks, Barney, and welcome from me at ClfA too. Picking up the first question that we posed, I'm interested in the disconnect (as I see it) between the world where the need for the development-led investigation is identified and then specified (i.e. the planning system), and the end use of the data generated for synthesis (in an academic context). Is there a disconnect? How can we join up the two worlds rather better?

Contributor 9: Forgive me if I don't answer the numbered questions directly, but this is a huge challenge that, I believe, requires wholesale changes to the way commercial archaeology is undertaken. I am a great fan of the PPG16-inspired system, but the opportunities it offers are being squandered, for reasons I have written and ranted about already, whilst our knowledge exchange strategies are stuck in the 19th century. The fundamental problem is that all commercial archaeological contractors are stuck in a treadmill that leaves them no time for wider consideration of the data they are collecting, whilst academics seem uninterested in the results of commercial projects. Not until we have learned to reduce our workloads and increase our financial returns through the demand-management intended by PPG16, will we have time for the 'blue sky' thinking necessary for the realisation of our intellectual aspirations.

Contributor 15: To try and answer Jan's question about the disconnect - I think we should sub-contract academics with expertise in a particular area to contribute to WSIs etc, in the same way we would sub-contract a finds/environmental specialist. They could inform which data; and how it should be collected from the start.

Contributor 11: Following on from your point Jan - are we indeed clear about the parameters / potential of that 'end use'? Is there sufficient clarity / agreement about what synthesis (as both an action and a product) is?

Contributor 13: From a personal point of view (as a freelance pottery and CBM specialist) I try to cost the analysis of comparative data certainly at regional level certainly for any publication/ analysis (and this is usually accepted by my clients). In practical terms this is comparison with published phase groups and increasingly what I can find on OASIS (as less and less data is being published formally) backed up with informal data sharing with other pottery specialists - in practical terms I can't visit HERs very often as my clients aren't generally that understanding....

Contributor 7: As we found in the WSI workshops we ran last year, seven years on from the replacement of PPG16 'preservation by record' is still the abiding principle. Archaeological investigation undertaken as part of the planning system is not routinely being designed with the aim of increasing the sum of human knowledge and it would appear that the sector needs ongoing support in order to change that.

Contributor 14: What potential is there for closer working between major contracting organisations and university departments? This would not only enable greater connection, inspiring that interest in development-led archaeological data, but would also bring students closer to the process, and even provide opportunities to widen public engagement as at least part of the research imperative will be able to be taken on in a different context.

Jan Wills: An underlying strand in many comments seems to be that we need to think more about what we're doing and why we're doing it, and to do the thinking together out of our silos. Any takers for working out how we do this?

Contributor 7: The pre-AGM workshop we're running on Friday will look at opportunities for greater collaboration between the 'commercial' and academic sectors and discussion at the end will, I hope, consider exactly that. The workshop is now fully booked which shows how interested archaeologists wherever they work are in this subject and, I hope, an enthusiasm to work towards solutions.

Edmund Lee: One approach to closer working between universities and commercial units is the Knowledge Transfer Partnership scheme: a 3 way partnership between a business, a university and a recent graduate. I don't think archaeology has used this route yet, but happy to be corrected!

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/knowledge-transfer-partnerships-what-they-are-and-how-to-apply#who-can-take-part>

Barney Sloane: Picking up the point regarding academic interest, I am aware of a number of recent, significant (and successful) grant applications to the likes of AHRC and Leverhulme by academic teams which are focusing on synthesis of commercial data. I think the key to driving more interest

here is simple access to that data. What does this imply for the way we create research frameworks, and dependent upon that, how we articulate specific research designs and report against them?

Contributor 1: We have recently done exactly the same in the Netherlands, organised by our Cultural Heritage Agency (RCE). Details on the way it was organised, and lessons learned, in English, in:

https://www.academia.edu/33432428/Synthesising_data_from_developmentled_archaeological_research

<https://cultureelerfgoed.nl/publicaties/knowledge-for-informed-choices>

(Chapter 8)

Edmund Lee: On Q2, a specific issue raised by the Roman Rural Settlement Project methodological studies was the need for artefact / ecofact specialists to know (if only as an estimate) the volume of the contexts excavated on site, to allow comparison of assemblages. Do any units listening in routinely record that information and pass it on to specialists?

On Q3, the evidence from RRSP suggests we are not: 'Sometimes rather than a single pdf report, specialist data are made available as individual downloadable files (excel spreadsheets for instance). There can be advantages to the latter approach as this allows the specialist researcher to re-order data and amalgamate results from a number of different sites without the need for manual re-keying'...

RRSP paper 2 <http://cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/RRS-Methodology-Paper-2-field-practice.pdf>

On Q4, **Contributor 13** - can you expand on why you feel 'less and less data is being published formally'? Do others agree? That's a crucial issue for this discussion, I'd say. What are the causes? Technically it has never been easier to publish data files.

Contributor 5: I agree with Jan about the importance of HERs in this process - but there need to be better ways of feeding the results of synthesis back into the HERs.

Trying to explore Jan's 'disconnect' a bit more. The planning system delivers (successfully or not) a lot of things which are not actually development, including archaeology. What counts is how we are able to use the hooks in that system. We engage in two main places - NPPF para 128 for describing significance, and para 141 for recording and advancing understanding of significance. The 5000 interventions are split between these, not sure of the proportion. Describing significance (evaluation) is never going to do as much for synthesis as 'mitigation' will - but a key question for me is how (and how far) evaluation can go beyond description towards setting out a research agenda for mitigation.

Barney Sloane: Thanks, although the only bit of national synthesis I have personally done (medieval

graves for the Requiem book back in the early 2000s) was less focused on the pre- post-determination split and more on identifying the presence of potentially valuable info.

I think there may be a block in the cycle of [current knowledge]>[Research Design]>[Investigation]>[Analysis]>[Dissemination+Archive]>[Updated Current Knowledge]. Could we systematise that in any way to benefit each new potential project?

Robin Page: Posting a personal thought of one of my colleagues **Contributor 22:** 'With aerial mapping to National Mapping Programme (NMP) standards now covering more than 50% of England it may be worthwhile to investigate whether these data-sets could provide a useful framework both for informing the appropriate scale of synthesis and creating landscape narratives that incorporate information from development-led investigations. This is what we tried to do as part of HE's National Archaeological Identification Survey (NAIS) South-West Cambridgeshire project, which also looked at how each type of data complements and informs understanding of the other.'

A related challenge is to develop ways of presenting and interpreting the evidence that do not privilege a particular scale but are properly multi-scalar, linking landscapes, sites, features and artefacts within an integrated narrative framework. Given the map-based methodology of the NMP, one way forward might be to further explore the possibilities of GIS 'story maps' alongside or instead of traditional synthesis.'

Edmund Lee: A step towards bridging the [Dissemination+Archive] >[Updated Current Knowledge] gap is shown by the East Midlands Research Framework wiki. See end of this page: <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/Medie...>

Contributor 5: Barney, I think you are right. What I was trying to say was that while mitigation work can and should directly address advancing understanding, it's much harder with evaluation. There is a big difference between the two types of investigation, albeit they use the same set of techniques. Maybe the presence of medieval burials was a strong encouragement to find design approaches which avoided the need for larger-scale investigation?

Contributor 13: Hi Ed - what I meant is that the sort of data I use (pottery occurrence, phase groups) I can generally find in the grey literature but by the time the site is formally published that data is being left out (which makes me wonder why I subscribe to so many regional periodicals). I think that there are increasing constraints to word length for journal publication driven by drives to keep journal costs down - but not really my area.

Contributor 8: I'd second **Contributor 13's** view from an animal bone perspective - although a massive amount of time and money has gone into identification and analysis, the published version is usually restricted to a summary table or two.

Contributor 13: In terms of disseminating the data - very few of my clients appear to expect a digital copy of my full catalogue or have any specifications of what form it should take - and it is unclear to me what happens to such files after I have submitted them! I certainly agree having data in a spreadsheet or similar is much more useful than trying to extract it from a pdf to get into a database and to answer Ed again - the only clients I have that regularly supply volume information are academic ones

Jan Wills: Hi **Contributor 5:** There are very important moments in the planning casework process - as you say, assessing significance, and specifying investigation (if the development is deemed acceptable with conditions). Both have a fundamental effect on what data we end up with - do you think curators/contractors have the knowledge and resources to make judgements and develop projects that do advance understanding, or is there no time/resource to do this??

Contributor 5: That's a very big question! Yes, up to a point, but most curators and contractors are GPs, not brain surgeons, and to get the best research needs more than 1 or 2 people's input and quite probably some specialist (academic?) advice. Projects like the Roman Rural Settlement are tremendously useful where they exist, though there is a danger that they will be used as a substitute for thinking by hard-pressed archaeologists. There is also the question of having the confidence to not do a mitigation project, because the judgement is that it won't advance understanding. And as for urban sites ...

Contributor 16: a couple of points: an issue which links those involved with development-led archaeology and the academic community (and which could be the focus for discussion between those parts of the sector) are the data issues that are barriers to developing good national synthesis. For the Roman Rural Settlement Project, it was pottery quantification (amongst others), which is now being addressed. For later prehistory, the evidence is more anecdotal, but chronology, especially the lack of absolute dating, appears to be a problem. Another more local issue (occurring frequently in the East of E) is where a single synthesis is required for site - or landscapes - which have been worked on by multiple contractors. Here, there may be a case for requiring financial contributions (as part of WSIs) from all the developers involved to producing the single synthesis?

Contributor 5: that would be a great way of dealing with synthesis in urban archaeology as well.

Robin Page: In case there are any non-archaeologists following the conversation, I believe 'WSI' in this case means 'Written Scheme of Investigation'.

Contributor 5: Further to the discussion about full publication of individual sites, several recent projects in Worcestershire have had a short 'highlights' report in the county journal, with a full detailed report available online through the County Council website and also via ADS.

Robin Page: Thanks for all the useful and thoughtful comments so far today - and greetings to

potential participants just joining us from the US. I have to sign off now, but please do keep the contributions coming.

Jan Wills: Likewise I have to sign out, but look forward to hearing more tomorrow, on the subject of synthesis of information from development-led investigations. Use some of our questions posted above, or give us your thoughts on any aspect of this topic. Thanks to everyone who has participated today.

DAY 2

Robin Page: Welcome back to day two of the discussion. This morning I've received by email some thoughts from contributors to the UK Academic Archaeologists List that cited the Roman Rural Settlement project that we discussed yesterday and also a project on Roman London synthesising some commercial and academic work. One comment also suggested that provision for synthesis should be built into the process of commissioning archaeological projects.

Contributor 12: I'd like to question the first assumption here, that synthesis should only happen in academia. There is also an assumption here that it is only commercial archaeology that produces data that doesn't see the light of day. ALL work (ideally) should involve an element of synthesis, but that is sometimes hindered by information in academic circles not being available to non-academics. That issue also needs to be addressed.

On Question 7. Should developers pay for synthesis? Is there room for an escrow model, where a percentage of the funding for every dig goes into a common fund? Should it be left to chance and circumstance, or does it need a formal programme? This is a tough one. It raises questions of what is reasonable in planning terms. Is it reasonable to ask developers for synthesis of data from sites which are not part of their development impact? Is it reasonable to ask them to fund this even indirectly? Is there any precedent in other disciplines for this sort of thing eg ecology?

Arguably, in planning terms, they fulfill their NPPF obligations by producing a report/publication, which should include some basic attempt at synthesis. Synthesis outside of those documents is arguably not their responsibility. I can see developers resisting this if it will raise costs (ie an extra 1% on each evaluation for the Escrow fund), and if it doesn't come as extra, then it means that each individual site has 1% less funding to examine it.

Questions 8, 9 and 10 - the new research framework proposals (wikis) would seem to be an attempt to deal with this issue. And their success might be a good measure of synthesis success. Whether these work largely depends on regulation by Local Authority Curators, who are getting thinner and thinner on the ground. And it raises the question - what does this synthesis look like? Is it an academic publication, published in a journal curators can't access? Or does a Wiki count?

Edmund Lee: Q7: for synthesis at the level of an individual site, with multiple previous investigations should this not be an objective of Desk Based Assessment, which seeks to 'determine...the nature, extent and significance of the historic environment within a specified area'? The word synthesis isn't used in the CIFA standard, but perhaps that's the way to build it into the developer funding and planning model. Better DBAs would also help close the research loop that Barney referenced http://www.archaeologists.net/sites/default/files/CifAS&GDBA_2.pdf

Robin Page: Posting on behalf of **Contributor 19:** 'The problem, as I see it, is that developer-led policy is effectively a policy of Cultural Resource Management in which 'we think that this stuff matters and we had better record it before it goes' is a motivation that runs throughout the history of 'rescue archaeology' and is expressed by the old 'preservation by record' notion. This is NOT the same as investigating the material to gain a historical understanding of its significance. And who said that understanding (aka research) is a matter of 'synthesis'? Synthesis is just a matter of accumulating ever bigger patterns of the Cultural Resource, it is not a matter of understanding the historical significance of that resource, or for that matter the old (new archaeological) motivation of explaining why such patterns had come about.'

Barney Sloane: On **Contributor 12's** point, I am not sure that anyone has made the assumption that Academia *should* undertake all synthesis. It does remain the case that academic institutions have more opportunity to undertake major works of synthesis because of the funding models. I would certainly like to see the opportunities available equally across commercial, academic, governmental, and third sector groups/institutions - wherever the expertise and capacity exists. The Roman Rural Settlement project brought Cotswold Archaeology and Reading University together, and combined funding from a charitable trust and a Government body (Leverhulme and EH/HE) - and even a private individual. What would trigger more such collaborations?

Robin Page: And posting about the perceived academic/ commercial disconnect on behalf of **Contributor 25:** 'I suppose that one reaction is to mention the Reading-based Roman Rural Settlement project - this has successfully (to my mind) created excellent synthesis based on a set of really interesting research questions. An issue here, from the university research side of the divide, is that we find it really hard to justify synthesis-based research where we cannot gain research funding (preferably from the Arts and Humanities Research Council or the British Academy which pay overheads). The Reading project was funded by Leverhulme and there may be possibilities for university department to do more of this. The Reading project was masterminded by Mike Fulford and Neil Holbrook, so it interfaced between a unit and an academic department. I have a new book on Roman London in press and I have attempted to synthesise the published material from commercial archaeology. The scale of the project means that I have had to be very choosy and I have followed rather a thematic/theoretical lead. I did this without a grant but supported by the other two major AHRC-funded projects that I have been leading since 2007. These two projects do not involve synthesis of excavated material. One was on the afterlife of Hadrian's Wall and the other is the 'Ancient Identities' project (see first footer below). AI is looking at

perceptions of Iron Age and Roman Heritages across the UK. It is divided between a digital heritage theme (based in UCL) and ethnographic research (based in Durham). Having previously worked in heritage management, I am very interested in encouraging discussion about how we bridge between commercial and academic archaeology.'

Contributor 12: Jan's first comment yesterday, to me, suggested the model I was challenging.

Barney Sloane: On **Contributor 19's** point, I entirely agree. Synthesis does not = significance. It does, I assert, permit nuanced understanding of the broader cultural patterns that are not detectable at the site level (however significant that site might be). Consider the notion of regionality being explored by the Roman Rural Settlement project, or the detection of persistent yet very rare unorthodox medieval grave rites found by myself and Roberta Gilchrist. I'd argue that these patterns can really aid the focus and methodology of new investigations, and refine the research objectives to avoid unthinking repetition. But it's hard to do and I want to see whether we as a profession can find ways of making it simpler and more integral to archaeological practice.

Contributor 12: Responding to Ed's point, DBAs could be a place of synthesis, but they are the start of a new phase of development (usually) and I would suggest that the synthesis would perhaps be better in the final phase of an investigation (ie the reporting) of work done on a site.

Barney Sloane: I am aware that a group of archaeologists in the US is attempting to set up a National Center for Archaeological Synthesis. It is modelled on the experience there of gathering ecological data together. Here is an introduction: <http://www.pnas.org/content/114/42/10999.full>. It would be interesting to see what people think of this approach.

Jan Wills: Hi **Contributor 12**, I now can't find my earlier comment but I think it was a general point about the disconnect between the place where the data originate (the planning system) and the place where they are drawn on for synthesis. The first determines what's available for the latter, and works within a very specific structure/policy framework. In my previous life I initiated some synthesis projects within a local government context - one soon to be published - but its very difficult now to find capacity to do these kinds of projects in that environment. As to Barney's point about how to trigger collaborations such as the RRS: has this project demonstrated well enough to academics the potential of the data held from development-led investigation?

Edmund Lee: Barney, **Contributor 12**, yes I agree (mostly). Synthesis at a site level via a DBA would not resolve the issue, but it may help the discussion to break 'synthesis' down into different complementary types or scales of work as I think was mentioned yesterday. Even if only to get to your point that significance is not = 'synthesis', which I agree with (though to get to significance surely requires some synthesis of values: evidential, communal, historic etc). At the site level I suggest that pre-investigation and post-investigation synthesis would also complement one another and help shape investigation: 'this is what we thought we knew before we started' > 'this is what we

know now' = 'here's the knowledge we've gained'

Contributor 2: 1/2 Jan, you hit the nail on the head earlier on. The questions being posed in this discussion are, to my mind, the wrong ones. They reflect an inward looking process-driven 30 year old (PPG16) model of archaeology that has frustratingly not managed to keep pace with a changing world. We need to concentrate on, why we do what we do and who we do it for. As I have said before, the all too apparent disconnect in our profession is deep and broad and the losers to my mind are the communities in whose patch we carry out our mitigations and evaluations and in whose name we supposedly act. How do we tackle this? For a start we should just accept that what we do is just not good enough in terms of public benefit and we should start having serious discussion on developing new models in which we professionals work with, and for, the local communities in the true spirit of 21st century archaeology.

2/2 I think **Contributor 9's** observations on the squandering of resources and the treadmill of commercial archaeology are illuminating and should be taken more seriously than I think they are. The issue of how we deal more practically with archaeological data and syntheses is not the thing. What is the thing, is how we turn this mountain of material into coherent historical narrative that we can better share with the wider community of non-technical and technical audiences. How might we integrate the Young Archaeologists Club into real time archaeological fieldwork? How might we seek the active engagement of local communities in evaluating the significance of the historic environment in their patch?

3 (sorry) In response to Contributor 15's point on WSIs, yes, a great idea but let's not stop just there. Academics have been involved in the preparation of Regional Research Frameworks in some regions and there has been an increase in more locally based University research projects – think Star Carr in my own region. Is there a tendency to spend a development investor's capital on archaeology (controversial statement warning) that has more to do with job creation than addressing local or national research priorities?

Caveat - for some reason I did not have many of this mornings contributions in my feed when I wrote my piece, so, fully agree on the point on academic publication and on 'having the confidence to not do a mitigation project, because the judgement is that it won't advance understanding' is a more polite way of putting my point!

Barney Sloane: Thanks for your comments **Contributor 2**. I realise there are wider concerns about the nature of development-led archaeology, but in this particular online discussion we were trying to establish how we could best unlock the stories contained in the thousands of investigations which take place yearly. That does focus on a key concern of yours (in your 2/2) of 'how we turn this mountain of material into coherent historical narrative that we can better share...' I think its hard to tell the story if you haven't worked out what that is, whether your audience is local and non-technical, or international and highly specialist. The 6th workshop in this series will look at

publication and dissemination, so perhaps the focus on local communities as the audience should be raised there?

Jan Wills: picking up the 'mountain of material' (not literally), and apart from well known national examples such as the RRS how much do local govt colleagues think the potential of HER data from the last 25 yrs + of investigation is now appreciated by academic colleagues as a research resource? Maybe I can rephrase the same question to Barney and say from your perspective are more of the sort of collaborations like RRS (or on smaller scale) coming forward with an eye to mining the post-PPG16 mountain of data?

Barney Sloane: As far as Contributor 2's (3) 'controversial' statement, the relationship between the spend and the priorities can be a relatively weak one in many cases. Do people think there is a way to make research designs more keenly focused, and field methodologies more attentive to those research objectives? Is there a way of ordering the resulting reports so that access to key information is made more straightforward? Or should we be looking at machine learning technologies (such as natural language processing) to help?

Yes, Jan, I would say that the frequency is increasing, albeit slowly. Historic England (as well as AHRC and Leverhulme) have grant-aided regional or national projects. The difficulty is where more local synthesis might be helpful - gathering evidence for, say, a single river catchment or upland zone, or examining local material culture trends such as diet or industrial development. We don't currently have any obvious models for driving such work forward, so have little evidence to see how valuable that might be.

Contributor 12: This is increasingly (to me anyway) looking like a job for the Regional research Frameworks, in the new improved versions. If done right they may well fill this gap, and thus make syntheses at higher levels easier.

Jan Wills: Can we make the new generation of RRFs act as the stimulus to this more local work?

Contributor 6: This will of course be revisited in the Publication challenges workshop in December, but I just wanted to mention in response to some earlier comments, that the journal *Internet Archaeology* IS interested in publishing data and synthesis etc etc. and doesn't have a page/word limit. I would be very keen to collaborate more with the commercial archaeology sector for those projects where broader dissemination is needed and where full(er) publication is a condition of discharge. Much can be done to enrich and encourage reuse of even the most straightforward of outputs. We have recently published an example from a commercial unit which include specialist catalogues / data <https://doi.org/10.11141/ia.45.3> and I am in discussion with a (large) unit about another.

Barney Sloane: HE's Dan Miles is working with the East Midland RRF team to develop a wiki-type

pilot which we hope can ensure that the RRF will remain dynamic and become scaleable. If it succeeds as we hope it will, I think that may well stimulate such local work - and help specialists to argue a case for more than 'spot-dating services' (if I can put it like that). However I can't yet see the funding model. HE could never cover it I am afraid. Ideas anyone? Stewart Bryant suggested yesterday that all developers in a particular locale might contribute, through the WSIs. Could that work at a national level?

Contributor 17: Greetings from across the pond! Sorry to jump in so late - can blame it on the time difference! Excellent discussion and ideas, and we are having very similar discussion about synthesis here in the US. In a quick read of all of the comments, this discussion is looking at different types of synthesis: synthesis of classes of sites, synthesis of periods, synthesis of regional data, etc. One thing that has been slowly growing here in the US is the development of regional archaeological syntheses or syntheses of a class or classes of archaeological sites as a tool for heritage management decision making as part of compliance with our historic preservation laws and regulations. These syntheses are developed as part of what we refer to as "creative" or "alternative" mitigation. That is, a mitigation plan includes as an integral element the development of a synthesis.

And to continue, the development of a synthesis is part of the mitigation budget paid by the developer or federal agency. In some cases, the development of the synthesis is an addition to normal archaeological data recovery. In other cases, a decision is made by all of the parties not to dig, or to dig less, in order to develop the synthesis as a future planning tool. And these syntheses provide the framework for defining site significance, research questions that are to be applied to future excavations/mitigation, and even where to conduct future inventories. In a few cases, these syntheses also provide the foundation for public outreach and education on the topic covered by the synthesis. Well, enough of my rambling for now! Good discussions everyone!

Jan Wills: Hi, and glad you could join us. If you are still out there: this sounds wonderfully collaborative. How are you securing that collaboration across what must be diverse parts of the profession in North America i.e. commercial, govt, academic etc

Contributor 3: Hi, haven't managed to read all the comments, but HERs are the obvious place to go to get developer-led archaeological data (they're the only places that should have all the data) and they very rarely seems to be used by academics to create syntheses. Creating syntheses is something our old pre-cut Museum Service was good at, and some regional publications still come of avenues such as the Leicestershire Fieldwork Group (for example "Medieval Leicestershire: Recent research on the Medieval Archaeology of Leicestershire"). But sometimes I WISH we had the ability to do more with the data (there's so much!). I've been to talks by academics that are so out of date because they haven't include the last 20 years of developer-led fieldwork. What you do to fix this I don't know...

Robin Page: Reinforcing what **Contributor 3** has said I cross-posted Jan's question about use of HERs

to the Jiscmail list for HER officers, in the albeit small straw poll of replies the observation was (with some local variation) that there wasn't often much take up in direct approaches to HERs by the academic community and where this did happen it was more likely to be students rather than more established academics. One poster also noted that there was also little feed in to HERs from academics.

Contributor 17: Jan, this is done through the consultation process that is an integral part of our historic preservation compliance process. Folks sit down at the table and discuss how best to mitigate impacts on an affected archaeological site and then hammer out the process, which in this case includes some creative mitigation involving the development of a synthesis. The development of the synthesis is then codified in a formal and legal agreement among the parties, usually including the federal agency, the state historic preservation agency, the developer/applicant for a federal permit of funding, and other participating parties. Universities are usually not involved unless they have a role in carrying out some element of the mitigation. The actual development of the synthesis is usually done by a commercial firm hired by the lead agency or the developer. In some cases, the firm may participate in the development of the mitigation plan/synthesis development.

We have another tool that can lead to the development of these types of syntheses: statewide programmatic agreements for a single federal program within a state or for the management of a class of heritage resources. These agreements are prepared outside of the project-specific process and lay the groundwork for all future projects that fall under the purview of the statewide agreement, establishing how historic preservation compliance is done for the program or class of resources. So, the agreement would stipulate that syntheses will be developed going forward and establish how these would be paid for. A few federal agencies actually have planning funds that can be used to prepare these syntheses, which again are planning tools for future projects. The selling point for all of this is having the syntheses in place streamlines future compliance in terms of time and cost.

Jan Wills: This is very interesting and so different from what we do in UK. What range of projects/development would this apply to? By which I mean is this the standard approach, or just big developments e.g. infrastructure? And who decides, who holds the power in the process?

Thanks Robin - useful to capture this information.

Contributor 17: We too, here in the US, have not been very successful in getting universities to use data from commercial archaeological work, and taking these data to the next level to enhance our understanding of the past and to share this understanding with the public who are paying for all this work. There are, however, a few universities that are doing this, and these are universities with strong departments that recognize the value of compliance-mandates archaeological work. In a few situations, this is accomplished through both formal and informal partnerships between a commercial archaeological firm and a nearby university.

Creative mitigation of the type I am referring to is usually done on large infrastructure or development projects or where a major site is being impacted by what could be a small project, such as a highway bridge replacement. However, if you take a programmatic approach at a state or regional level, you could bundle lots of small projects, but I have rarely seen this done. The decision maker in this process is the agency who provides the funding or the permit, but this is still done as a consultative process among all of the parties. I should say that the approaches I am discussing here is not a common, every-day practice in the US, but is a growing one given that some agencies, state historic preservation offices, and commercial archaeologists are not happy with doing the same old, same old. Many of us want to do archaeological work that results in an improved and enhanced historic preservation payoff.

Barney Sloane: Thanks for joining. I wonder, are there published examples of a local and a statewide synthesis developed using the process you outlined earlier? It would be useful (for me at least!) to see the outputs themselves. It sounds a really interesting model to explore with colleagues here.

Contributor 17: Unfortunately, there is no one place to get examples of these syntheses, they are scattered here and there in agency and state historic preservation offices. They are all part of the 'grey literature' associated with commercial archaeological work. Let me ponder this a bit more and see if I can compile some easily accessible examples and maybe send them to someone within ClfA.

Contributor 11: Considering Jan's point about data 'potential', and having analysed a number of synthesis projects working predominately with GL for my doctoral research – statements of potential are often couched in terms of data being new, fresh, unfamiliar, 'unbiased' – and it is a common attribute of most synthetic projects to claim how the potential of data increases exponentially when considering their accumulated value. The mechanisms for unlocking this potential seem to stem from the data's cumulative or relative values, and sometimes value is merely inherent within the data. Describing, compiling and comparing data, as a means of synthesis is perhaps falling short of the true purpose of the act. Agreeing with John Barrett's earlier point – accumulating the details about more stuff doesn't necessarily mean that stuff is more likely to lead us neatly towards the narratives we aspire to write, and the histories we aim to understand.

Contributor 17: I know that it is getting toward the end of the day in the UK, but I need to do a plug (commercial) for a different type of archaeological synthesis initiative that has just been launched. We now have in place a Coalition for Archaeological Synthesis (CfAS), and this initiative is not restricted to the US. The goal of the Coalition is to foster synthetic research on important social science questions whose answers will have important implications for addressing contemporary social issues. This initiative does not involve doing regional syntheses, or syntheses of classes of sites, but looks at using archaeological evidence (and other types of data) to address research issues that will have a social and public policy impact. The Coalition's website is at <http://www.archsynth.org/index.html>. Do let me know if anyone has a problem accessing the

website. Thank you all!

Robin Page: I have also seen this from **Contributor 23** via HER Forum about the situation in Wales- 'In Wales there has recently been a discussion about the need for HERs and other record-holding institutions (e.g. RCAHMW, Cadw, National Museum) to engage with universities in order to develop closer relationships with them. We are keen to highlight the relevance of HERs and other records to research programmes, to emphasise the utility of developing research datasets in liaison with HER staff, and are aware of the need to promote responsible archiving of the outcomes of research projects. We have high hopes that the issues noted below will be addressed in time'.

Barney Sloane: I am signing off now. I just wanted to thank everyone who has made the time to contribute to the last two days. There is significant food for thought, sensible cautionary advice, and some good ideas to work on. I hope we can convert some of this into positive action. Have a good evening (or morning!).

Contributor 10: Late in the day but I thought I would just pickup on the Regional Research Framework synthesis approach which has been touched upon earlier. The North West England RRF update is moving towards synthesis through updating the original resource assessment from 2006 using what's gone on in the last 12 years in the region. The intention is that the Wiki site mentioned earlier (sorry forgot by whom) that Dan Miles at HE is involved with will then be linked to OASIS and the grey literature archive so that outputs of all sorts can be funnelled to the appropriate areas of the NWRRF when it goes online. Our period workshops have shown that a huge amount of new and old material still needs to be synthesised, but that's not a surprise. Finding a way of making this more available to synthesise is crucial.

Jan Wills: I too have to go, but thanks to everyone who has contributed. We'll be taking your thoughts into the workshop we're holding next week.

You will be able to see the collated comments from the last two days on the ClfA website at: <http://www.archaeologists.net/21st-century-challenges-archaeology> as well as the notes from the workshop, as soon as we've written them up.

Robin Page: I too must now sign off-many thanks everyone. I'll keep the conversation open into Friday morning for late contributions.

Contributor 17: All the best for your workshop next week! Looking forward to seeing the results!

Contributor 2: Responding to these on-line discussions is quite challenging really principally because each of the 'sessions' is trying to focus on a particular aspect of the 21st century challenge and I do understand why. However, it does seem to me that to find ways forward for the specifics we need to deal with the bigger picture first, and that means challenging the very basis of what we do. I really do not see that there is a lot to gain from discussing developer led archaeological synthesis without

thinking about the public benefit (or lack of) of what we do. The same goes for thinking about the future of local authority services, commercial archaeology and the survival of archaeology in our universities. I am sure it will all become clear at the end of this process but I can't help thinking that the truly creative solutions are just out of reach at the minute!

Robin Page: Here is an interesting contribution to question 9 about tools to aid synthesis via the HER Forum list from **Contributor 20** and **Contributor 21** from Exegesis:

'CHIRP' is our working name for an idea we are currently developing and discussing with partners - an online platform for community/academic historic environment research that automatically integrates the research efforts with HERs. Watch this space...It stands (provisionally) for 'Community Heritage Investigative Research Platform' and it is a technical solution aiming to solve the issues raised in the work on the value and needs of community heritage, plus the long history of problematic/insufficient engagement with academic research. It's at the initial ideas stage at present.'

Robin Page: Thanks again to all for taking part, from the UK, Europe and USA. I'll close this discussion now. The next online discussion in the series on *Challenges of Publication in the Digital Age* will here be on 29th-30th November.

Online discussion 6

Challenges for archaeological publication in a digital age. Who are we writing this stuff for, anyway?

Historic England and ClfA project discussion participants:

Edmund Lee	Knowledge Transfer Manager, and Project Assurance Officer, Historic England
Robin Page	Digital Coordinator, Research Group, Historic England; LinkedIn Group owner/Moderator
Steve Trow	Director, Research Group, Historic England
Jan Wills	ClfA Chair, and 21 st -century Challenges Project Manager

DAY 1

Robin Page: Welcome to this 6th online discussion in the '21st-century Challenges for Archaeology' series on the subject of '*Challenges for archaeological publication in a digital age: who are we writing this stuff for, anyway?*' Discussion over the next two days will focus on how we can secure and enhance the public and academic benefits of archaeological publication at a time when most archaeological fieldwork is carried out by the commercial sector and when digital technologies are challenging traditional models of dissemination.

Steve Trow: Good morning everybody. Here are a few thoughts on 'grey literature' to get us warmed up. I hope we can also look at more formal channels of publication, such as journals and monographs, as well.

The dramatic increase in the number of archaeological interventions since PPG 16 was issued has been accompanied by a massive growth in the volume of 'grey literature' reporting. This has posed two challenges: ease of retrieval and variation in standards. Between 1990 and 2000 Historic England funded the Archaeological Investigations Project by Bournemouth University, which painstakingly 'swept -up' and indexed as much grey literature as possible to ensure its retrievability. Initially through the British and Irish Archaeological Bibliography and now the Archaeology Data Service Library.

In an era of public spending reductions, we can't afford to do this nowadays. Nor, frankly, do we think it's our job to chase around after the commercial sector trying to retrieve their reports! Nowadays it should be the responsibility of all archaeologists to ensure the reports on their interventions are uploaded to the Archaeology Data Service and indexed via OASIS. We are working to ensure this happens, with others in the profession, through our Heritage Information Access

programme see:

<https://historicengland.org.uk/research/support-and-collaboration/heritage-information-access-strategy/>

CifA will need to play an important role in all of this by ensuring that on-line access to information is threaded through its Standards and Guidance and training.

Is this something we can easily sort out? It doesn't feel as if it should be an insuperable challenge....

Jan Wills: Good morning from me too. Starting with grey literature links us into the discussions we had on the previous topic of synthesis: there was a lot of criticism of grey literature standards, and of the grey literature/formal publication relationship, and many researchers lamented the lack of clarity of the relationship between the two. The standards question falls into at least two parts: do we have the right standards, and is everyone complying with them? The answer to the latter question seems to be no.

Steve Trow: If the improving the retrievability of grey literature looks like a challenge that should be within our grasp, do we have a more intractable problem with its quality? The issue of standards has recently been given greater prominence as a result of a methodological review, funded by Historic England, as part of the important Roman Rural Settlement project undertaken by Reading University working with Cotswold Archaeology. This has shone a rather uncomfortable light on the considerable variation in standards of reporting and a resultant reduction in the public value of the products derived from development-led archaeology. Do we think the quality of grey literature is an historical problem that is now solved? Or do we need a close look at the standards and guidance we apply to it? Views from people who use it would be really useful.

Steve Trow: If people are unfamiliar with the work by Reading University and Cotswold Archaeology a series of thought provoking short papers can be seen at:

<http://cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/community/discover-the-past/developer-funded-roman-archaeology-in-britain/methodology-study/>

Edmund Lee: Paper 9 in the methodology papers on the Cotswold website by Stewart Bryant is particularly relevant to this discussion

Jan Wills: I think that Ed Lee and Stewart Bryant are going to be running a session at the CifA conference in April 2018 on grey literature reports, very hands on, with a view to sorting out the problems on the spot. Maybe they can contribute some thoughts on this here during the next couple of days??

Steve Trow: Thanks Ed. If I can take the liberty of quoting from Stewart's paper, he says: 'Any analysis and conclusions regarding methodologies is therefore reliant upon the presence of the

relevant data within the published or grey literature report and for this to be recorded reasonably consistently. Whilst some important data such as excavation and evaluation plans are invariably present, most data including reporting of non-invasive surveys and the reporting and illustration of artefacts and environmental data is inconsistent to varying degrees'.

Contributor 16: Taking the questions in turn:

1) How much do we know about our profession's usage of publications? Do the findings and recommendations of the 2001 'From the Ground Up' report still apply? Have they been implemented? - I am not sure we know very much about usage of Grey Literature. In our HER, the number of people coming in to use the HER reports has dropped off to virtually nil, but as many reports are now available digitally perhaps they are being accessed in different ways? (eg ADS)? I would think (though its been ages since I read it) that a lot of From The Ground up has been dealt with, but it might be worth a formal review.

2) Do we need a new and more prescriptive professional standard and guidance for grey literature reports and for our academic publication channels? - I would say that given recent work then the answer to this is almost certainly going to be yes for GL. The only way you can ensure standards are being met is having one defined. At present I would suggest there isn't a clear standard.

3) Is our profession clear when and why we publish reports as grey literature; on-line; as journal articles or as monographs? Who decides and on what basis? - I would say no to this, from the planning context. As Planning Advisors, LPA Archaeologists often have to make this call for sites found during the development process, and I would say that call is based on gut feeling, as to what should be formally published. But there's a subtle point here. I assume that a published site will have had more analysis than a non-published one. In the modern publishing media set up, a GL report with enough suitable analysis may be enough for a site, without it being formally published. So the important question in this are the first part. Why do we publish? In the past that was clear - wider circulation, but with online GL reports, why do we?

Steve Trow: Replying to **Contributor 16** on Question 1. With the help of Mike Heyworth, we will be reviewing progress on the 'From the Ground Up' at the workshop on the 7th. Some but not all the recommendations have been followed up.

Contributor 16: 4) Are we clear on the boundary between 'publication' and 'archive' and does this need to change? And do we know how to create a usable digital documentary archive and have we adequate professional standards and guidance in place?

I would say the boundary is clear, at least to me, but it might be getting more blurred with EG articles linked to digital archives. The published form is the interpretation of the archive, showing the key parts - the archive, is the raw data. Internet archaeology are helping to blur this line/remove the distinction in a positive way by making it possible to have articles which link to archives more

closely, but I think the distinction is pretty clear. You'll have to figure out yourself what an archive means, a publication explains it to you.

Steve Trow: One of the interesting things about 'From the Ground Up' was it assumed that we were on the brink of a big switch to digital publishing for major archaeological reports. And that was a decade and a half ago!

Contributor 16: 5) If we can access most information on line, what should the 'main' report on an archaeological intervention comprise? Evidence, synthesis or a popular account? Should any of it be in hard copy? Given that there is a reasonably widespread view that for many reports (of any kind - not just archaeological), it is the executive summary that gets read most, then this is a reasonable question. I think the distinction is between levels of detail. A popular summary (not the same as an executive summary) might be useful to have available, but the detail in a report is often useful to others more interested in a site. So I think a good report should be all of these things - a presentation of the evidence, an interpretation of it, a syntheses of it into its wider context, and a popular (ie plain English, aimed at the interested layman) account, as well as an executive summary. You can then pick what level to engage with the information at.

That said I think there is an assumption that people understand these distinctions, but I am not sure they do. I regularly point users at our online HER hoping that they will answer their query and I won't have to do a full HER search. But I am sometimes concerned that maybe they think they have gleaned everything from our online HER, when they haven't. Different levels of publication may raise similar concerns.

Steve Trow: Replying to **Contributor 16** on question 4. Your question is a good one. A bit of context (insofar as we understand it) may be useful? Notwithstanding the growth in grey literature, a ?? significant amount of state- funded, academically-instigated or commercially-led archaeological investigation is still published through long-standing traditional channels as monographs or articles in learned journals. This has been estimated by the Historic England funded Archaeological Investigations Project to be 'less than 10% of the total' of archaeological reporting and the Southport Report estimated that monographs made up 5% of total reporting. Arguably it is these formal publication channels that tend to be chosen for dissemination of the results of the most significant investigations.

This, of course, doesn't answer the question 'why?'

Contributor 16: As for hard copy, there is a can of worms. We still ask for hard copy GL reports for the HER. But as space is an issue then increasingly I know some HERs don't. And a good PDF version should be easily print out able if a hard copies needed. But then the cost is being borne by eg the HER rather than the developer for the hard copy. But print on demand is a way round that. And some people prefer reading hardcopy (though I think that is a generational thing, and will change over time). So the option should be there, at least for a while longer.

Steve Trow: At the risk of being provocative...are we making a good job of these formal (journal and monograph channels) and creating real public value? In 2003, the CBA's survey of user needs highlighted 'widespread dissatisfaction with the structure of reports, and diversity of opinion about the purposes of writing them'. It also concluded that, in terms of research and public benefit, 'the present pattern of publication is arguably falling short on both counts'.

And the report of the Southport Group in 2011 was rather more blunt, concluding that, '...there appears to be an over-reliance on publication in what were described to us as 'large dusty academic journals', with a lot of technical detail but very limited public readership. These generate high use value for scholars but very little for the public at large.' It also noted that 'Because of their specialist nature these monographs have very limited print runs. For the most interesting or important excavations an edition of 250–500 might be printed...These beautifully printed volumes have a very small audience'.

Contributor 16: 6) Does professional or popular hard copy publication derived from excavation reporting still have a role to play? If so, what, why and how? See above, but also, is there evidence to suggest it doesn't? This seems framed to get hard copy to prove its worth, whereas it might be worth reframing it with some evidence about how much hard copy gets used, and who by?

7) How can we improve public engagement with what we are writing without neglecting our professional and academic responsibilities to publish? I would suggest this is about producing different texts for different audiences. We could change GL to be more publically engaging, but would it then still serve its aims? A certain amount of technical jargon is ok in a report aimed at specialist professionals. A Plain English Version would be better suited to the public, and doesn't need to be the full document. Again it could be a detailed summary. And it's also worth noting that academic benefit, or specialist archaeologist benefit IS a public benefit, it's just a small subset of the public. If we want to broaden the benefit, I think we need different targeted narratives, but allow anyone to access all those different narratives, should they wish.

Jan Wills: At the core of much discussion of the lovely hard copy monograph, or whatever, is the academic and possibly older generational need to 'publish' in the traditional/old fashioned sense of Southport above. Is this still true? And can we - do we need to - drag ourselves away from this?

Contributor 16: I have just refreshed and see Steve's interjections to what could appear to be a bit of a rant. The point about dusty academic journals, is fair, but I think is more to do with the accessibility of those publications to people outside academia, rather than necessarily their use/relevance.

Steve Trow: Replying to **Contributor 16** on question 6. I'm not too embarrassed by asking 'hard copy to prove its worth', especially where public money is concerned, as it's a fairly expensive medium to produce. Historic England has recently taken the decision not to publish long-form/monograph

excavation reports through its own publishing team. They lose money and we simply can't justify the cost. And we will now be looking for digital publication of any investigation project that we fund. The real challenge is to make digital publications something more useful than a digital version of a hard copy format. Not sure we have cracked that one yet, either as an organisation or a profession.

Contributor 16: The other point about publication is to do with career progression, or showing status (personally or as a research institution) which is harder to do with more fluid digital publication. That is a wider (ie not just archaeological) career/academic issue.

Steve Trow: I agree with the point about the importance of the 'big book' in terms of career advancement, especially in academia. But not a massively persuasive argument in terms of public value! We are certainly not the only profession debating this at the moment and the next Research Excellence Framework in 2021 might profitably consider that point? There has been a very interesting project in the States by JSTOR and Columbia University called 'Reimagining the Digital Monograph Design Thinking to Build New Tools for Researchers' which might point the way? <https://labs.jstor.org/download/JSTORLabsMonographJune2017.pdf>

Jan Wills: I think this is a real issue for us. Unless/until digital publication is seen as an animal in its own right and as real publication there will be a resistance for the reasons that **Contributor 16** and I commented above. Is it being addressed in other disciplines??

Contributor 6: Re popular publications there has been a long gap since public facing books have been produced which is something we are hoping to address soon and a few are in the pipeline. One contracting unit were recently successful (unusually) in getting their monograph for a small site into Blackwell's and the Ashmolean shop by framing it in a more expansive manner (i.e. calling it Medieval craft working in Oxford):

<http://www.pre-construct.com/Publications/Clarendon.htm>

Another point to make is that the Oxford Urban Archaeological Assessment was made available online and not as a monograph (which would have involved a lot more work).

Contributor 4: I think the production of hard copy is still seen by many as the more academically prestigious form of publication, though it seems we are moving towards a mixture of both mediums at the moment- a small print run coupled with a downloadable e-book or pdf.

Contributor 21: In response to Steve's question about the quality of Grey Lit: as of 2014 (the cut off date for the Roman RSP), there appeared to be problems - in one form or another - with a significant minority of GL reports. Most of these should be relatively easy to address via a combination of the scheduled improvements in ADS/OASIS, some changes to ClfA Standards and Guidance, and perhaps also getting HERs and the academic community to monitor progress? There is a workshop at the ClfA 2018 conference which will look at one potential collaborative way of making progress, hopefully

quite quickly. In addition, as part of this process I think there is a case for eventually raising the status of evaluation reports to formal, peer-reviewed publication, in recognition of their importance in the planning process and because many contain important archaeological information not available elsewhere.

Contributor 6: In Oxford the publication record is generally good, with the bulk of sites either published in the county journal *Oxoniensia* or as short print run monographs. The *Oxoniensia* format is particularly attractive because the reports are made available via the well-structured OAHS web site after a short delay. However there are ongoing issues with publication backlog and the use of journal space for specialist reports. The short run monographs are more problematical because of the sometimes *ad hoc*/voluntary nature of peer review and because they are often not made available digitally (beyond a draft pdf being held on the council internal server).

I have recently been under pressure to agree internet only publication of an excavation report and have been reluctant to cross this boundary. Both because of my own preference for printed reports (backed up with digital copies) and because there is some national research which also supports the utility of monographs, for example the 2015 Hefce report (which is only partially relevant to this discussion but provides some general context): 'Monographs are a vitally important and distinctive vehicle for research communication, and must be sustained in any moves to open access. The availability of printed books alongside the open-access versions will be essential.'
<http://www.hefce.ac.uk/pubs/rereports/year/2015/monographs/>

Edmund Lee: Thanks for the plug Jan. Yes, Stewart Bryant and I will be running an innovative workshop at CIFA 2018 in Brighton where we will attempt to write a template or standard for the headings that should always appear in an evaluation or watching brief report so as to improve the subsequent research value of these publications. That's part of the answer to Q2. Draft programme is at <https://www.archaeologists.net/conference/2018>. (I'd welcome expressions of interest in taking part in that session - off list probably best Edmund.lee@HistoricEngland.org.uk).

Contributor 18: From a 'commercial' unit perspective we work within a brief/WSI agreed with the curator/local planning team which will generally set out broad publication routes of generally a monograph or journal article as appropriate. Popular dissemination will sometimes be a requirement. The crucial point is how do we make one publication cover all audiences - the answer is that it can't and we need to layer information as appropriate (web-based technical material with specialist-written summary for publication, web pages and social media), ebooks and POD all have a role. In terms of audiences and popular dissemination we should be supporting publication in local/regional journals, many of whom have very active and loyal members. We shouldn't lose sight of the fact that we are preserving by record... and we know that use of primary archives by researchers is fairly limited at least the physical archive.

Steve Trow: Replying to **Contributor 6** and his good point about Hefce. I certainly recognise the (in

my case age-related) hankering for the attractive monograph. But a possibly more penetrating discussion of the worth of the long form publication comes from two recent AHRC funded reports to the British Library and AHRC: <https://academicbookfuture.org/>. This does make a case for the need for a long form of publication in the humanities but not necessarily in hard copy.

Contributor 4: I agree with **Contributor 6** that a mixture of both hard and online publication works well. In fact, free online downloads of books has been shown to increase hard copy book sales. I think there will always be an audience for paper copy, but in some cases it isn't always appropriate.

Steve Trow: I'd also like to hear more views on the progress the profession is making on digital archives and whether we are clear what should be in them? A quick look at the ADS web site tells me it has 1155 'project archives' with a healthy submission rate in 2017. Is this now the norm?

Contributor 16: Responding to **Contributor 21:** hooray! Another task for HERs to do, because we have plenty of spare time to do it. Seriously, the issue of GL standards in Development Management is going to run into the wall of capacity VERY quickly. I think the assumption may be that HERs/DM archaeologists are policing this quality issue already, my experience suggests that not all are (useful data to be gathered there - how many do, why don't you if you don't, and other related questions)? A standard of headings (Ed's point) would be useful to check against a report, but the longer that is, the more time it takes. And not being a specialist, how does the relevant archaeological officer know that whatever's under that heading (text images etc) is not just guff?

Contributor 10: In Worcester there has been a bit of a move towards digital monograph publication, but so far always linked to a summary highlights report in the county journal. I am fairly comfortable with this approach in principle, but there needs to be some feedback on the use of the digital monographs - I know I have downloaded them, but how many others have? How much awareness is there of them? The peer review point is well made and we should be making this explicit in briefs. We have sometimes (luckily very rarely) had issues with contractors issuing monograph publications without approval, and that can be hard to enforce on; peer review would help here. Peer-reviewed evaluation reports would often be useful, but not within the timescale of a planning application.

Contributor 4: The good thing about online publishing is that the original document can be updated and this is especially useful with things like Research Frameworks, such as the Derwent Mills Research Framework: Knight, David, 2016, The Derwent Valley, The Valley that changed the World: Derwent Valley Mills World Heritage Site Research Framework, Derwent Valley Mills Partnership: <http://www.derwentvalleymills.org/derwent-valley-mills-history/derwent-valley-mills-research-framework/> and <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/researchframeworks/eastmidlands/wiki/Main>

Slightly off point, but to go back to the discussion about different outputs - a good example of where both online and traditional publishing have been mixed is a project and publication Historic England funded on Heybridge, Elms Farm. One volume was online and the other as a hard copy:

Atkinson, M. and Preston S., 2015, Heybridge: A late Iron Age and Roman settlement. Excavations at Elms Farm 1993-5. Volume I, EAA 154

Atkinson, M. and Preston S., 2015, Heybridge: A late Iron Age and Roman settlement. Excavations at Elms Farm 1993-5. Volume II, Internet Archaeology 40. <http://dx.doi.org/10.11141/ia.40.1>

Contributor 21: Yes, I would agree that it should not add to the HER workload. I was thinking more of HERs feeding back from time-to-time on some of the basic issues which have been identified and which could be picked-up during the process of entering reports on the HER, such as location in the wrong place or obvious missing information about surveys. If there were a process for gathering this information from HERs (and if necessary feeding back to the authors) it may help to improve quality and - in time - reduce workload?

Contributor 20: The Society of Antiquaries of Scotland is actively looking to publish online Open Access as opposed to print publication, especially for what are in essence archaeological reports. Our books average about a 300 print run, and SAIR (Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports) has about the same visits per month, and just less in downloads each month - the comparison is striking. We have also had a policy of putting all out-of-print books online Open Access too - and these average about 70 downloads a month!

We also had an interesting discussion yesterday about data archiving and project dissemination (what books/monographs/articles etc are) and the potential for much greater public value from digital productions. There are clearly practical problems (copyright for book style productions for e.g.) but the potential to consume archaeological information in a much more useful manner means we will certainly be looking to develop digital dissemination more in future.

Robin Page: Picking up on a comment about how other disciplines/ professions deal with publication, **Contributor 22**, a member of the Britarch forum responded to initial publicity about this discussion via email, signposting how digital publication for some of the sciences is in part handled via centralised websites <https://arxiv.org/> and <https://www.biorxiv.org/>

Other contributions via email and Facebook have expressed perceived complexity/ 'dauntingness' felt in getting articles into formal journals.

In a separate Facebook post **Contributor 2** in effect pointed back to our first discussion about archiving, reinforcing the point that good publication rests on being able to draw on a good standard of recording and archiving.

Jan Wills: Reference has been made by various people to the important vehicle of publication in local society journals. The ones I am most familiar with are still mainly publishing conventional archaeological reports, with a struggle each time about how much of the specialist reporting gets into the volume. One makes a copy of each volume available on its website after a few years. How

much is this changing across the country as a whole?? Its interesting to contrast the discussions on archaeological reports with those on local history, where very detailed records are still being transcribed and made available in hard copy.

Contributor 18: In terms of popular dissemination we have made a number of popular booklets available via our web pages:

<http://www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/kent/east-kent-access-road> and <http://www.wessexarch.co.uk/projects/longforth>

In both cases these were in addition to 'traditional' monograph publication. For Longforth we printed copies of the booklet which have been given to the local museum, show home and at a number of lectures given on the results of the excavations - so fully embedded into a programme of engagement with the public which began onsite with open days. A similar programme of outreach was undertaken for East Kent but the booklet is only available digitally.

In response to Jan, the Kent Archaeological Society's archaeology reports online <http://www.kentarchaeology.org.uk/10/00.htm> is perhaps a good one to follow?

Contributor 1: Online publication also presents the opportunity of releasing data and interpretation as a project progresses rather than at the end or in the case of monographs several years down the line (the traditional linear model). And following on from another point - updates, ideas, errors or critical shortcomings could more easily be addressed and incorporated as part of a running dialogue and more fluid publication process.

Jan Wills: Thanks. I'd be interested if anyone else has good examples on local society approaches to publication.

Contributor 8: Just picking up on **Contributor 1's** point, I have some serious concerns about the suggested fluid approach to publication. At Oxford Archaeology we have trialled 'pre-publishing' specialist reports digitally, but readers often take this as the final word (using them as references in their own work), when actually the traditionally published version has seen more refinement/correction and updates. We're currently in the process of reviewing our publication procedures and policy (building on our current layered approach with a range of outputs), so the current discussion is really interesting ...

Jan Wills: Hi **Contributor 8** - OA has an impressive record of monograph publication, including over the last 12 mths. Are you thinking of any radical departure from this or are you too early in the review?

Contributor 12: Responding to Jan, a number of local (and national) societies have been digitising their back-runs and are hosting them with ADS (e.g. Berks, Sussex, Surrey, Derbys, Cumberland and

Westmorland, Severn Estuary, MSRG, etc) - and some have a rolling wall as new issues are released. This has the advantage (a) that they are easy to find (b) are archived (c) have DOIs (d) are indexed in the ADS Library, and (e) articles can easily be linked to supplementary data sets

And Steve Trow asked about 'progress the profession is making on digital archives and whether we are clear what should be in them?' From an ADS perspective the answers would be 'Slow' and 'No'!! The 1155 archives he quotes in ADS is, I'm sure, just the tip of the iceberg. We're in desperate need for the profession to define what it means by an adequate digital archive for a site investigation. I'm sure it's not just a GL report and some photos.

Steve Trow: I'm delighted that Professor Barry Cunliffe - who not only has a track record of exemplary publication but has also grappled with the strategic challenges of publication several times over the years - will facilitate the workshop next week. Barry offered me some wise insight recently, when we discussed the future of the archaeological monograph. He observed that the really critical thing is the extended episode of intensive deep-thought and cross-disciplinary working required to produce the content of a monograph: not the form of dissemination itself. That process is critical whatever the end result. This, I should say, does not preclude the interactive staged release of findings and ideas referred to above. I wholeheartedly agree about this and it may be a way of securing public engagement, in what otherwise would look like a period of inactivity.

I'm sure many of us enjoyed the fantastic Must Farm web pages and Facebook blog during the excavation. It would be great to think that we could stimulate further public excitement about the post-excavation analysis which is due to commence shortly.

Edmund Lee: One point going back to the hard-copy versus online discussion. I suggest the distinction is not so much the medium but the process of production. The distinction is between content which is peer-reviewed, and that which is not.

Contributor 8: Hi Jan, many thanks. It's too early in the process to give any details as yet, but we are planning to stay with monographs as part of our range of outputs for the foreseeable future. That said, we're looking at all options ... Has anyone yet mentioned the ADS/CIfA PUBLICAN survey in today's threads? Will be interested to see the results

Contributor 19: I don't think that GL standards need necessarily be seen as a policing issue; it could be like the digital/GIS standards where it's a series of prompts for the creator to follow if they want to make their work as fully reusable as possible. Despite the Roman report's comments on lack of quantification, it's better that every site is recorded somehow rather than some being in perpetual 'in prep' because the standards are seen as too onerous.

Steve Trow: Contributor 12's point is, I think, critical. The digital archive shouldn't be seen as a passive record but as an interactive tool. I'd guess that more than 90% of the 'average'

archaeological excavation report, in traditional monograph format, is made up of the excavation narrative and various specialist reports of interest to a comparatively small number of readers. Surely these could be in a far more interactive and deployable format in the digital archive, rather than on a printed page? It is the synthesis and contextual material that surely needs or gets the wider readership, particularly if the digital archive is just a click away?

Edmund Lee: Very interesting points from Contributor 1 and Contributor 8. The production and review processes need both some formality (to establish credibility and authoritative status) and some open-ness (to engage and inform the deep thinking). I'm slightly on **Contributor 1's** side (sorry!). I'm particularly interested in sites such as Open Context <https://opencontext.org/> which make research data available. Publication before Archive. Is that the way we should go?

Contributor 19: In Wales many of the county history and archaeology journals have been digitised by the National Library of Wales (although unfortunately many of the photos are blanked for copyright reasons). <https://journals.library.wales/>

Contributor 14: Online content can still be peer reviewed - cf the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland SAIR publications. From a writer's perspective I always prefer to see a hard copy book at the end of the process - it seems a more concrete record of one's achievement. But conversely, when I'm researching, I am always delighted to find what I need online as it saves a time-consuming trip to the library. As long as there is a credible way of referencing it in the bibliography that is.

Contributor 1: In reply to **Contributor 8** it would have to be stage managed with the usual QC/QA. But if you think it through how much current research is done from online/accessible preliminary and provisional 'grey lit' reports? {instead of final publications}. The idea comes from my time at OA and I am sure others have trialled similar approaches. How final are any of these publications anyway? I do prefer the layered approach as this can avoid the possibility of a 'dogs breakfast' - just thinking of the experimental approaches to public/academic integrated reports of the 90s and beyond (including my own projects).

Steve Trow: I enjoyed and sympathise with Contributor 14's writer v's reader dilemma. This neatly sets us the question about whether current approaches to publication are more designed to suit the producer - rather than the consumer - of research....

Contributor 8: Just to clarify in relation to Edmund's comment, I was referring to specialist reports that form a supplement to publication, rather than the digital archive itself (databases, archive level data etc). Am fully in favour of providing access to this type of information as long as it's done in a thoughtful way that complements other strands of dissemination (not simply a 'data dump'). We're currently setting up systems at OA to monitor the reuse value of such data more effectively and it's already clear that we're seeing some interesting patterns of reuse (eg for human skeletal data, linked to university terms).

Steve Trow: Contributor 8's point about monitoring reuse value is a good one. We do comparatively little of this although people may have further insight from the ADS?

Contributor 18: Picking up on Steve's point we need to see archiving as a process that happens throughout the project not just at the end and to make it become an active part of the dissemination process alongside a more synthetic publications

Contributor 8: I completely agree with **Contributor 1** that the layered approach needs to be carefully thought through, ideally at the outset of a project, in terms of data destined for traditional publication, digital publication (by which I mean peer reviewed outlets) or digital archive. It sounds simple, but can be a really complex process (not a 'quick/cheap fix'). One of the problems we're grappling with at the moment is the effective fragmentation of projects and their different outputs.

Steve Trow: Thanks - agreed. So perhaps the answer to Ed Lee's question above 'Publication before Archive. Is that the way we should go?' is that the publication and documentary archive creation are parallel and interlinked processes which start and finish together?

Contributor 13: As editor of Internet Archaeology, I'd say that the publication and the archive really should be developed together. I also echo the point above that publication needs to become more integrated in the process from the start.

Steve Trow: Earlier today I referred to a project by JSTOR and Columbia University called 'Reimagining the Digital Monograph Design Thinking to Build New Tools for Researchers' see: <https://labs.jstor.org/download/JSTORLabsMonographJune2017.pdf>

This work aimed at understanding the way people use the long form publication (in this case for the study of history) in order to design new digital publication formats that favoured the needs of the user rather than the producer. I'd be interested to know whether anyone knows of similar projects and, indeed, whether we feel archaeological publication would benefit from such an analysis?

Contributor 13: p.s. I am very keen to see the journal used more as a publication option by the commercial archaeology sector, for outputs where there are broader dissemination aims or needs. By way of an exemplar, we recently published an excavation report from Avon Archaeology which included a range of specialist reports and links to related digital archive holdings in ADS: Corcos, N. et al. 2017 Excavations in 2014 at Wade Street, Bristol - a documentary and archaeological analysis, Internet Archaeology 45. <https://doi.org/10.11141/ia.45.3>

This site was not a Must Farm or an Elms Farm but it still garnered attention from locals/non-archaeologists e.g. <http://chopsybaby.com/magazine/its-never-boring-in-st-judes-bristol-wade-street-archaeological-excavation/> Just a small eg but something that we can already achieve/broaden our audience as well as cater for us as archaeologists - maybe authors just need a

clearer vision of what is possible. I know there are some who have not heard of IA (PUBLICAN).

Contributor 18: Hi **Contributor 13**, I've been trying to push for IA for some of our projects but am meeting with some resistance from PMs unsure of curators (and clients)... I will keep going with it!

Contributor 13: Here are some of the PUBLICAN key findings:

Open access:

There is some work required to clarify in the profession the responsibility of the cost of open access publication, particularly at what point open access should be mandated/recommended. The main finding from the interviews is that commercial units and freelance specialists are willing to incorporate resources for open access into planned work, but that for this to occur, a substantial change in recommendations and support is required from local government archaeologists and curators. This study found that the ADS and IA are having a positive impact on practice but that there are still issues surrounding a lack of awareness of the resources/costs required to support these. Printed publications still seen by some as more stable, and that it was easier to use established routes for publishing (particularly for commercial units) rather than trying something different.

Specifically for IA: generally seen to have made a positive contribution to the profession esp. through profile building for specialists but challenges include a still lack of awareness of the journal, it being open access, and a concern of the complexity of publication process (i.e. variation in publication skills amongst non-academic stakeholders).

Other issues:

Digital publication is seen more typically outside 'usual work' (i.e. lack of organisational-level support)

A lack of prioritisation of publishing (particularly amongst local government)

Publication is perceived to be for 'academics' rather than practitioners

Variation in publication advice i.e. archive and publish but not taking into account digital options.

And certainly freelance and smaller units not currently including digital dissemination preparation costs in tenders

Contributor 17: Referring to what **Contributor 13** has said 'Printed publications still seen by some as more stable, and that it was easier to use established routes for publishing (particularly for commercial units) rather than trying something different.' In terms of stability I think I have been responsible for the pulping of 5000 books, which wouldn't sell, couldn't even give them away. I think its been difficult for commercial units to change what they do, a top down love of paper, with a small appetite for risk means in the two decades I have been in the sector we have all been aware of the problems but not much has changed. The complete lack of focus on the audience is the real issue for me. What will the next generation want - what we help them understand the archaeology that has been excavated in the last years of archaeological boom.

Contributor 18: In response - commercial units are somewhat tied by the briefs set by curators and other stakeholders, whilst we can lobby for change, others need to join in to make this happen.

I would also take issue with comment on lack of focus on audience, the problem is that we are being asked to produce one publication for all audiences and clearly it is hard to make that work in the traditional format.

Contributor 17: I do also think that there are some great tools, and opportunities in the digital realm to take advantage of - but as yet I am not aware of a 'publishers toolkit' (please correct me). DOI's and Crossref (<https://www.crossref.org>) allow a much better idea of what material has been referenced and cited. My worry is that when we start to look at the actual impact of the publications we create - then it's a very small circle mostly made of contributors to the volumes and their immediate contacts. My experience of crossing from OA to Historic England was that there existed some amazing published guidance but it never really got beyond a few select places. Knowing where stuff was and how to get it remains a real issue, both as a publication and as a digital asset.

Contributor 8: I agree that print runs historically for some volumes have been much too large. However, we've cut down (generally) at OA and now release digitally when they sell out (or before in some cases) or after a time lag. I agree about the need to focus on the audience, but the problem is (of course) that we have so many audiences, each with different expectations and requirements. We also mustn't forget that some areas of the UK still lack reliable digital access and therefore still favour traditional publication and/or CDs for specialist data. Going back to an earlier comment, having adopted a layered approach to try and address the audience issues, we've ended up with new challenges in terms of holding projects together (ensuring navigation etc). There's also the issue of linkage to new technologies (photogrammetry/geophysics etc) and, as you say, future expectations.

I also agree with **Contributor 18** 's comments about DCs etc and the challenges of meeting the expectations of each audience in a commercial environment

Jan Wills: Could you expand on the curator issue? Is it that curators are specifying traditional forms of publication, unwilling or no time to engage in discussion about other approaches?

Contributor 9: pretty late to this conversation but have enjoyed reading the comments. Yes I think there are good points here about unwillingness of curators to consider other formats of dissemination and we have a wide audience to satisfy particularly if we want wider public engagement and not just academic with the results of archaeological endeavours.

Contributor 18: Hi Jan, yes traditional forms of publication are almost always listed in WSIs often in the local archaeological journals/societies - I am strongly in favour of supporting these societies - but we need to find a balance particularly as some journals are being swamped with reports leading to the inevitable delays in getting the information out.

Jan Wills: This may be standardisation borne out of lack of time to engage in project-specific solutions?? What would help free up the discussion??

Contributor 18: Are these journals offering open access? The publication delay has always been an issue, but I get the sense its getting much worse?

Steve Trow: Just a quick thought on print-on-demand. It is still part of our current thinking, of course. But if we radically rethink what digital excavation report publication might look like, it may not suit Direct POD. Developing a separate parallel format for POD would be hard to justify.

Contributor 18: No open access isn't always an option, problems with publication 'backlogs' with journals is varied across the regions, we seem to be digging much more - although is this actually true - I would be interested to see the stats - so perhaps the delay to publication feels worse now than previously?

Jan Wills: My own knowledge of submitting material to local journals is pretty restricted to my own local ones, but since they remain important publishers is there a forum in which they collectively engage with these issues of publication?

Edmund Lee: A particular subtlety to the Open Access debate for local or specialist journals that I'm aware of, and might be relevant, is the reliance on sales of the journal to fund the activities of the society. Going OA digital might not be an option for them without revising their business model.

For those interested in the OA debate can I recommend the blog from the Society for Scholarly Publication - the Scholarly Kitchen - Well worth dipping into:

<https://scholarlykitchen.sspnet.org/>

Robin Page: I have to sign out now till tomorrow, thanks to everyone for this very productive session so far, keep the comments coming!

Jan Wills: Thanks, everyone, for the wide-ranging comments today. I have to sign out now but will be back tomorrow. A question for this evening and tomorrow (and tonight if you can't sleep): What is/are the ideal form(s) of archaeological publication for the future? Can you set out your vision, please?

Steve Trow: Thanks from me too. Some really valuable ideas and views from you all today.

Contributor 15: Although I'm a self-confessed armchair archaeologist, having recently discovered Publish on Demand for a book on interpretation, I'm a convert. It is easy and no cost to publish, and I think the public will pay a modest amount for informative and well-presented information. Don't forget other forms of public dissemination - Our former County Archaeologist, having taken early

retirement due to budget cuts, has carried on doing seminars and walks/talks but now just charges a modest fee (£3-£6) and regularly gets 20-30 people for a whole range of subjects.

DAY 2

Robin Page: Welcome back to the second day of this discussion, Jan Wills has asked us today to explore 'what is/are the ideal form(s) of archaeological publication for the future? Can you set out your vision, please?'

Contributor 15: I think a lot more can be done for dissemination to the general public via on-site open days that have the 'live' element that is now the fashion on TV. The recent public open days at the Roman excavations at the ex-Stibbe building in Leicester were completely overwhelmed (3 hr queue on Saturday) and had to be extended by a week to cope. I went early the second Thursday (only a half-hour queue), and although the guides were good, being archaeology students working in three teams with 10 visitors each, the information and interpretation provided was poor and amateurish, consisting of looking over the shoulders of others at photocopied photographs. As I have a commercial interest in interpretation, I am working on the idea of pop-up museums and open days giving people information on their smartphones using our 'Info-Point' Wi-Fi units on battery power. I'm currently looking for a pilot site in order to evaluate this approach.

Contributor 18: I would like to see more synthesis with specialist data available so that researchers can make their own interpretations although this may not be an easy shift. A balance between providing enough detail for interpretation but an interesting narrative of the site. But we do need to accept that some sites are not that remarkable and we are really just providing a record/interpretation for the future (although I accept that the unremarkable may become more significant with further discoveries/different interpretation).

Contributor 8: For articles, we've moved towards synthesis supported by digital release of grey lit and supporting data, which seems to work well (but it depends on the county and expectations of DC/consultants etc as to how willing they are to accept this - some still want single site reports). Grouping smaller sites thematically helps to offset the issues with limited space/queues for archaeological reports in county journals. For monographs, I think a considered version of the layered approach can work really well (including web-based outreach). However, I think there's still a strong place for monographs which effectively still provide a stand-alone output. Building on **Contributor 15's** point, we've also been discussing creating a virtual museum, but this is very much at discussion stage.

Jan Wills: Morning everyone. During the course of the day it would be good to hear more about where people would like us as a sector to get to in publishing/dissemination in the medium term - hence the future gazing comment above - and particularly about who needs to do what (prof institutes, curators, HE, universities, companies etc) to get us there.

Contributor 12: There seems to be a general consensus in the profession that we should be making better use of digital media - particularly to provide access to data from more synthetic publication (which might itself be online and more creative). However, (and particularly given that today is International Digital Preservation Day) we must not forget the fragility of digital data and digital editions. We have libraries to look after books; we need to make sure that digital data is looked after in accredited repositories. And today the UK's lead archaeological digital repositories are launching the Bedern Declaration:

<http://www.dpconline.org/our-work/working-groups-and-task-forces/bedern-group>.

Tub-thumping over!

Contributor 21: Something to pitch into the discussion is the question of who actually reads full published excavations these days? As I suspect that not many archaeologists outside of universities and those producing the specialist reports are doing so? (although happy to be proved wrong on this). Maybe a rapid survey on this would be useful? Archaeology after all is a reading subject, publications are becoming more accessible (and less costly and even free in many cases) and there is a lot out there that needs to read and used/critiqued. Perhaps keeping up with developments in relevant areas and subjects should be formally part of all CPD? A larger readership amongst the profession would also be healthy to provide more feedback and develop innovation.

Contributor 8: Hi Jan, Although not directly related to your comment, one key allied issue is to improve related training (both at universities and in companies), particularly in terms of academic writing. In the commercial sector, we often expect our staff to be polymaths, but not everyone finds the transition from field to px an easy process. We do quite a lot of training already, but there are some skills it's difficult to teach in a commercial environment - if people lack the basic skills of data presentation, interrogation and logical argument, it can cause huge problems later in the process and adds extra layers of complexity to the editorial process. Another issue (that we've already touched on) is that expectations vary so much about what it's appropriate to publish and/or release. In particular, there's still a lot of confusion about the difference between publication and archive (as per question 4).

Contributor 18: Hi we have all these issues as well but I'd also like to say the transition between writing GL reports and publications is also not easy for some people - ie what detail they can leave out. More practical training in university would be an obvious route, as well as better mentoring/training within the commercial sector

Steve Trow: Picking up on Jan's challenge to re-imagine the future and thinking about public benefit; existing digital capability; maximising the ease of discovery of reports; and the greatest utility of results for researchers, and maximum efficiency, here is my 'ideal world' starter for ten.

First, for all interventions an ADS OASIS record is created from the outset, and kept updated through various project stages, to maximise discoverability.

Second, where we think there will be a reasonable public interest in the results of an individual excavation we should produce a digital or hard copy publication aimed at the interested professional, plus the time-starved professional. The examples yesterday about 'Medieval Craft Working in Oxford' and Wade Street illustrate the potential to get a greater range of discoveries to the public's attention: not just the 'super sites'.

Jan Wills: It underpins the whole set of issues though, and came up in Workshop 2 on S & G i.e. there is a need to train people in that range of skills that you list. Others on the same occasion asked why these skills weren't being developed in universities...

Steve Trow: Third, summary reports can be produced for national/local journals (a point made yesterday) or on-line channels such as Internet Archaeology (see yesterday) which provide a synthesis and highlight and contextualise key findings. Ideally these reports are all on-line to increase discoverability and readership (see point about SAIR yesterday).

Fourth, the digital archive includes the excavation narrative, structural and contextual data, and specialist reports all in downloadable form to increase the ease with which researchers can export, manipulate and cross-correlate the data. These can also be written at the correct length to provide maximum utility: not constrained by the cost of publication.

Fifth, Hefce re-evaluates its definition of research excellence to ensure an e-publication is not given less weight than a weighty tome and also adds more points for archaeological publishing that has excited and engaged the public.

Sixth, we all get some extra space on our bookshelves for some nice novels...

Jan Wills: Does this futurescape have any takers??

Contributor 4: Adding to imagining the future- greater investment and increase in editorial posts and in training staff to produce good quality reports and publications.

Contributor 3: It seems to me that there are already a lot of initiatives examining various aspects of this discussion topic, and thank you Steve Trow and others for signposting to many of them. Too much to digest in such a short time however. The forthcoming review of "From the Ground Up", will obviously clarify question one and my hope is that ALL the recommendations in that report will be actioned at last. It seems that ClfA have already decided that new standards and guidance are necessary as they have set out their ambition for the 2018 Conference, and I fully support this. It is long overdue.

I would add, in response to many posts yesterday that local authority development management heritage teams are best placed to ensure the quality and accessibility of archaeological

mitigation/research so that the public benefit can be best achieved. They can only act appropriately with the active support of ClfA and Historic England. I would suggest that new ClfA Standards documentation should include clear and unambiguous instruction on access to, reporting on, and dissemination of results in a form that local authority planning archaeologist can attach to a brief.

In response to Jan Wills's question for today I suggest that we need to completely rethink what we understand by publication, particularly in the context of development related mitigation. Personally, I really dislike the term "popular account" and its derivatives as it reinforces an unhealthy mystique about archaeology in our society. Unless I am undertaking some really detailed research I really do not want to know that context 1 overlies context 2. What I want is the story and surely that is what everyone wants and everyone expects.

So here is a thought:

For the planning process: A technical advice note, no more than 2 sides of A4 and a well designed and constructed graphic.

For dissemination: An illustrated, inclusive and accessible narrative that integrates specialist contributions and allows archaeologists and others (citizens) to satisfy their curiosity about their place and their inheritance.

This in a form that can be seamlessly integrated into the HER without fuss and bother.

Contributor 12: I'm already signed up! And in terms of Steve's 5th point, actually HEFCE already mandates that all journal articles in the next REF must be available online and Open Access (at least as pre-prints) so there is no policy reason why e-publication should be given less weight. Many Internet Archaeology articles already featured in REF submissions last time, and also scored well in terms of Impact

Contributor 3: I would also suggest that ClfA could usefully identify examples of quality reports, evaluations, watching briefs, statements of significance etc. and signpost to them through new guidance. This will obviously create some challenges but it really needs to be done. Also, thought needs to be given to accessibility criteria but again that is probably down to local authority planning archaeologists to insist on.

Jan Wills: Hi, Much to agree with in objectives there but what about all of the other bits and pieces - where shall we put the context descriptions and the supporting data??

Contributor 16: in reply to **Contributor 3** - really disagree with that Planning idea, though I am not clear whether you mean that as a publication or the GL report. I think prescribing a format based on the route that lead to the investigation of a site is daft, bluntly. If there is any prescription, it should be based on the significance of the site, not the route to investigation. On that basis a nationally important site investigated in planning would get short shrift, but a locally important one via research would have more publication - if I have understood right.

Also, I think we need to define publication. Dissemination might be a better term. But increasingly, with various data online Publication as a term is getting redundant.

Some things to consider (and these are just off the top of my head) would be description of work on site and summary (ie GL report); peer-reviewed summary of a site (ie article); detailed site description (ie monograph); summary (popular narrative text). Those aren't well thought through, but I think publication needs to be re-thought as aiming to reach different audiences, possibly with different formats, but being less hung up by how that is done (ie distinctions between GL, Journal publication, monograph, online version etc are less useful nowadays than thinking of the audience you are aiming for).

Contributor 21: In response to **Contributor 3:** the technical advice note sounds like a good idea but would this be the only report or in addition to the GL? Because, (if the former) in the case of pre-determination evaluation, the report would still be expected to provide evidence that may affect the outcome of the planning application? And for the illustrated narrative: also yes, if the relevant supporting data (again the evidence) is accessible and signposted in the report.

Contributor 6: Re Jan's question of where the sector should go with publication/dissemination I'm looking forward to reading what other people's views are. At present my thoughts would be:

- Maintain journal/monograph output with academic/specialist focus, backed up with digital access where possible and sometimes with specialist reports available only in digital format.
- Grey literature made available online.
- Occasional requirements for popular pamphlets for major sites in addition to published reports.
- Regular requirements for popular leaflets (online pdf and short print run) for interesting/high profile sites.
- Increasing use of simply annotated 3d models of excavations (i.e. sketchfab) that in future may be accessed through wayfinding signs, as these can get straight to the point visually on someone's phone with minimum text (i.e. big medieval wall under car park)
<https://sketchfab.com/tags/westgate>
- Look for opportunities to encourage synthesis of urban data as this is an issue.

Contributor 13: I would argue that for many sites, quite a few of these things (summary/interpretations, detailed description) can be done via the same digital publication. It's what IA and ADS have been trying to do - connecting and linking the detail in the archive (be that simply a GL report or a richer archive) with publication of the narrative/synthesis etc in the journal article (plus additional things like 3D models, video) 'overlying' it (if it's long enough then might it be called a monograph) - so that it's all there together for whoever wants it at the level they want it at.

Contributor 3: Obviously there will be circumstances where more not less information will be required but the substantive point relates to the inclusion, in reports of unnecessary and irrelevant information. Does a planning archaeologist really need a narrative and tabular regurgitation of

records held in the local HER? I think not. Statements of significance are fine but can be brief if the graphics are fit for purpose. I have had the privilege of reading some very fine SofS that are narrative light and a joy to read. It's not difficult. Data is for the archive I suggest! Part of the problem may be that commercial archaeologists feel that they have to write reams and reams to justify the costs to the client. Just saying.

Contributor 21: And expanding a point made yesterday: I think that for the following reasons that pre-determination evaluation reports are under-rated and should in be regarded as full publication:

- they are arguably the most important archaeological reports produced for the planning process as they can affect the outcome and the design of development
- they are the archaeological reports most likely to be read by planners, developers, and local people who might be affected by developments
- they are the most important determinant of the mitigation strategy, should the development be approved and will impact on significant archaeology

For this to happen, there would of course be a need for better definition of the content and the reporting of evidence.

Steve Trow: Replying to **Contributor 12:** Thanks for the update regarding HEFCE. It's certainly a positive development, given some of the concerns expressed yesterday about the need to publish in hard copy in order to get professional recognition. I'd even more impressed if HEFCE's approach to research evaluation gives public benefit and outreach some real heft too.

Contributor 13: I'd like to see more digital publications that link into and connect to that data in the digital archive with as many 'touch points' as possible from the narrative/discussion i.e. not just a link from the Table of Contents.

Robin Page: A personal opinion from me, strongly agree with the references people have made to using other media, like 3D imagery, film etc and also 'layering' the linked information in the way **Contributor 13** described. Training has been mentioned and I think this should include a wider appreciation of what constitutes good impactful images. Communication is becoming increasingly image-led and a great piece of writing can still be boosted by eye-catching images...or indeed let down by it if they are dowdy.

Contributor 16: In reply to **Contributor 3** again - so actually rather than a prescriptive aside what your saying is leave out the guff? Agreed! Wholeheartedly - but that is more about defining what is needed in that sort of report, than prescribing a length. My pet bugbear is geology. Most reports mention it. But virtually none discuss what relevance it has to the site. On a different training routine, I was told that when preparing the document I was being trained for, at each point, don't just right what information you have under that heading, but ask 'so what?' ie what does that mean for you. I would argue the same is true when writing a GL report - geology is mentioned - but so what? The HER data is mentioned as a heading- but what does that mean in relation to this site?

Some good reports do this. Too many don't, and that's what need tackling

So in relation to guidance and standards for reporting - its not enough just to have headings to cover, but an indication of what should be included. Just mentioning the data is pointless - again Geology so its on limestone. Thanks - I can get that from the GIS. But, SO WHAT? What value does that data add to interpreting this site? And whilst data is mainly for the archive, there needs to be enough in there for me to read it and agree with your interpretation. I do occasionally disagree with reports about the significance of a things found, and suggest more/less work is needed. There needs to be enough data in the GL report for me to be able to do that without having to go to the archive.

Contributor 12: In response to Steve, to be fair to HEFCE they already give a massive weighting to public benefit. In the last REF Impact (non-academic and beyond universities) counted for 20% of University funding. In REF2021 it will be 25%. It's been estimated that for each Archaeology Dept one 4* Impact case study (i.e. case study of public benefit of our research) is worth at least five 4* academic publications. Sorry, slightly off topic, but might still be of interest more widely, as hopefully it will also influence professional attitudes to publication.

Contributor 3: Forgive this anecdote but following **Contributor 16's** point, my all time report bugbear is variations on the theme of 'no archaeological features were present'. Understanding of such basic information inherent in site formation processes seems commonly lacking. I was trained to view all 'soil' as archaeologically significant and the process of field archaeology an attempt at understanding the processes at work on a given site. I am not convinced that the majority of practitioners see it this way.

Steve Trow: Thanks, **Contributor 12**. I don't think discussing measurement of public benefit can be off topic here! I'm aware of the 'impact' weighting, of course. I suppose I'm slightly sceptical about the effectiveness of the way it is evaluated in practice. One for the next REF, I guess? But a key issue for academic, commercial and public sectors.

Contributor 11: Is there any web site with an index that links to all the reports that are available online?

Contributor 5: Just picking up on two things – 1, from yesterday picking up on the post regarding the need to see archiving as a process that happens throughout the project not just at the end and to make it become an active part of the dissemination process alongside a more synthetic publications - I think this is essential and the development of data management plans is a way of ensuring this is built into the project management system - it would not only facilitate digital archiving but identify early on (and can be updated) dissemination and publication opportunities.

2ndly - picking up on the earlier synthesis discussion and on the example of more popular publications is the opportunity of publishing from various different excavations sites into a combined

publication. An eg I can think of in Wiltshire is the recent excavation of a number of Anglo Saxon cemetery sites at Collingbourne Ducis, Larkhill, Tidworth and even Barrow Clump - all of which if combined in a publication could be incredibly interesting (for the public and academics) in terms of our changing understanding of this period - probably more popular and useful than 4 separate publications - more public value and impact, more intellectual value. The issue obviously is the funding model as all are funded separately (though the recent Larkhill and Tidworth come under the same scheme) - though all involve the same contractor. This also reduces book waste and of course publication costs. Individual detailed reports and specialist data could be digitally published separately.

Jan Wills: Thanks, **Contributor 5**. Its good to see this issue being picked up and it links back to workshop 1 discussion on archives, and the recommendation to do exactly that i.e. consider the archive from the project design stage onwards as an active process, not something that happens at the end. Something we can start to fix through updated HE and ClfA advice and guidance? There's a parallel strand which is about ensuring that the archive is a part of the project that is specified and monitored from the curatorial side - there may be some forthcoming work on disseminating/specifying best practice on this too.

Steve Trow: **Contributor 11**, try <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/>

Contributor 8: All the Oxford Archaeology ones are in our digital library here: <https://library.thehumanjourney.net/>, with extra archives etc on the ADS website. We are planning to update it and link it to traditional and digital publications, as well as the research archive.

Contributor 7: for MOLA reports see <https://www.mola.org.uk/research-community/resource-library>.

Here is a publication example with some numbers - for one of our large excavations in the City of London at No 1 Poultry (ONE94), London we produced 3 London Archaeologists journal articles at the end of the excavation and after the analysis phase 3 monographs, each with a 500 print run of which we have sold c 1,000 and a popular book with over 5,000 sold. The digital archive was deposited with the ADS in 2013

http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/no1poultry_molas_2007/index.cfm ... and since 2013 this digital archive has had 2,861 page views, 572 downloads and 1,219 visits.

Jan Wills: A late in the day request: What can/should HE and ClfA do to take forward issues raised in the discussion, and who else do we need to engage with??

Steve Trow: I'm afraid that I've got to engage elsewhere now, although Jan and Robin are still on duty. I'd like to thank everyone for their excellent, inventive and thought-provoking contributions. There is a lot for us to think about in the combined responses and to take forward to the workshop. I hope people (including additional people) will stay engaged for the remainder of the day - and I

hope to see some further creative thinking about alternative approaches. Thanks again. Steve.

Contributor 13: I think looking at the guidance given in briefs when publication is specified (and exploring the levels of publication that might best serve the evidence, would be useful, so drawing in ALGAO?)

Contributor 11: That is a great tool Steve. Oxford Archaeology is an example to follow, if all the companies will have their reports as OA it will be very easy to find any report, at the moment is more or less easy to find publications, but the reports get lost in the immensity of the web.

Robin Page: Historic England Research Reports (including on the built historic environment) can be found via this page on our website: <https://historicengland.org.uk/research/research-results/research-reports/> and the searchable database for them is here <http://research.historicengland.org.uk/>. Reports that fit the scope can also be found at the ADS library.

Jan Wills: So ideally there should be a dialogue, curator/contractor, about the appropriate level of publication, based on significance. Is the block to this the level of curatorial capacity to engage?

Contributor 13: I think that's a start. At least we all need to be on the same page as to what is even possible/suitable. Sorry I have to drop out now but I am coming next week!

Contributor 11: each company has its own system, but I think a search engine or able to locate all possible reports will be a fantastic tool. The Archaeology data service is a good approach in that direction but in a quick try I have only been able to find 1 article of 4 I know are available online so it is a bit limited at the moment as a working tool

Robin Page: Just to go back to the idea of multiple layers of dissemination, the image I chose to accompany the opening post is the cover of a hard copy work of synthesis about Winchester's archaeology by Patrick Ottaway- supported by Historic England. This builds on a town historic environment record that you can access online via Heritage Gateway and we also have a digital magazine and web article giving a taster of Winchester's rich heritage referencing the book: <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/research/understanding-winchesters-past/>

Jan Wills: That's a great one to reference, Robin. I have to sign out for the day now, so thanks very much to everyone who has participated over the last two days. Lots of useful thoughts.

And since this is the last in the series of six online discussions in the 21st-century Challenges for Archaeology series I'd also like to thank all that have joined in over the 9 months since we started. You can find all of the discussions and workshop papers online on the ClfA website, under News and Events where the project page is located. (The website may be unavailable today and tomorrow

since staff are moving office). There will be a session at the ClfA conference on the project themes, and more information here on how we hope to take the recommendations from the discussions forward over the next few months.

Robin Page: I too have to sign off and echo Steve and Jan's thanks. I'll keep the discussion open for tomorrow morning for any final thoughts.

Contributor 2: Sorry I came late to the party. I think I would echo the points about the fragility of digital archives. There has been lots of thought about what outputs should be but not much thought about who the readers/ viewers/ listeners for these various forms of media should be. As an archaeologist I am drawn towards the idea of layers of publication. But at some point there has to be some sort of conclusive paper copy of the findings of archaeological interventions held somewhere. Personally, I would like to see a series of conventions around what an interim should contain etc. It would make my job teaching first year undergraduates field archaeology a lot easier. On a final note I was looking at an archive today as it happens lovely popular publication by dedicated volunteers, supported by their local authority, strong set of archives on paper, and a completely redundant set of CD's and tape recordings that were inaccessible as there was no machine to play them on.

Contributor 3: The Winchester book is £40! Sorry but that is just not accessible for many even though I am sure it is very good.

Robin Page: A fair point already touched on, that high quality hard copy monographs are expensive to produce and thus can also be more of an investment for an individual as opposed to institutional purchaser, depending on their resources. Although - a personal observation here at the risk of indulging in 'whataboutism'- I have just recently seen some history monographs elsewhere retailing at five times that amount, which were less substantial pieces of work.

I'll be closing the discussion shortly. I'd like to repeat Steve and Jan's thanks to everyone who has participated in this series of discussions for giving their time and for sharing their insights and passion for archaeology. Please do continue to watch the ClfA <http://www.archaeologists.net/21st-century-challenges-archaeology> and Historic England websites <https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/research/21st-century-challenges-archaeology/> for further developments.