

Archaeology and innovation

#HeritageChat

The March 2020 #HeritageChat explored archaeology and innovation and was led by the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). CIfA are currently working with the Association of Local Government Archaeology Officers on a Historic England funded project to explore innovation and how historic environment professionals can learn about and incorporate innovative practice. The aim of the project is to build sector capacity and promote innovative approaches to maximise public benefit. This #HeritageChat forms part of the project.

Questions asked

- 1) On a scale of 1-10 where would you rank our sector in terms of innovation?
- 2) Is innovation always a good thing?
- 3) How do practitioners currently discover innovations?
- 4) How do we feel about / respond to other practitioner's innovations?
- 5) How best can we as a sector assess which innovations will be genuinely useful?
- 6) Would a published review of new techniques/methods/case studies be useful?
- 7) What are the primary barriers to adopting innovation in archaeology?
- 8) How can we as a sector better promote and facilitate knowledge exchange when it comes to innovation opportunities?
- 9) Why are we not better using innovative forms of dissemination and publication (i.e. digital, open access) for greater public benefit? How can we do this?
- 10) One specific area of innovation can be seen in the advancements in photogrammetry and 3d modelling. Is it time to scrap bulk hand drawing of features?
- 11) Do you have any examples or case studies you can share where you have implemented innovative practice on a project?

Tweet discussion

Archaeology & innovation



Curated Tweets by @heritage2020



Heritage Chat

@HeritageChat



Hello and welcome! We're delighted that the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (Cifa) @InstituteArch will be leading today's chat. Make sure you are following them as they will be posting the questions for the next hour #HeritageChat



19 Mar 2020



Cifa

@InstituteArch



Cifa are working w/ @ALGAO_UK on this @HistoricEngland funded project exploring innovation and how hist. env professionals learn about & incorporate innovative practice. The aim is to build sector capacity & promote innovative approaches to maximise public benefit #HeritageChat



19 Mar 2020



Cifa

@InstituteArch



We have a few Q's to get through - sorry if these appear quickly but to start
Q1 On a scale of 1-10 where would you rank our sector in terms of innovation?

Answer with A1 & use #HeritageChat

Do we make the most of collaborations? How do we compare w/other sectors? @HeritageChat



19 Mar 2020



Cifa

@InstituteArch








Replying to @InstituteArch

Jen from Cifa here - I personally think our sector is doing a lot of great innovative work but are we sharing it well enough? Do our colleagues and those in other sectors know what we're doing?



19 Mar 2020

- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Rob Lennox** @DrRobLennox
Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat
A1: We aren't world leaders in R&D, but archaeology has historically shown itself capable of utilising techniques & equipment to advance what we can study about the past. We have the pedigree! Lots of new horizons for applying this to digital opportunities today! #heritagechat
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Internet Archaeology** @IntarchEditor
Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat
A1 #HeritageChat From my perspective, I think we're pretty good at innovating/adopting new technologies as they come along, but perhaps not quite as good as the sharing of methods/theory- which possibly reflect the commercial/acad divide in terms of access to info. I'd say 7/10
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Internet Archaeology** @IntarchEditor
Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
A1 #HeritageChat Having said that, we could make even better use of the orgs whose mission is to assist and support archaeology. I mean, IA is busy but I'd like to be busier!!
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Rob Lennox** @DrRobLennox
Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
How could the sector improve networks to support this, IA?
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Internet Archaeology** @IntarchEditor
Replying to @DrRobLennox and 2 others
A1 #HeritageChat Ooh, mandatory/standard factoring in of publication costs for projects for one. It's hard if you've not even started your project I know, and I come along and ask you to think about the end when you don't even know what data you have but that's the time.



19 Mar 2020



ADS

@ADS_Update

Replying to @IntarchEditor and 3 others

A1 #HeritageChat

That's an issue we have as well with archiving. It's hard to guess what your costs will be before you've started. Will an excavation find anything?



19 Mar 2020

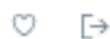


Rob Lennox

@DrRobLennox

Replying to @ADS_Update and 3 others

A1: Presumably this means lobbying funders to improve requirements for grants, and local authorities to condition this in planning? Are there any good practice examples?
#heritagechat



19 Mar 2020



Internet Archaeology ✓

@IntarchEditor

Replying to @DrRobLennox and 3 others

A1 #HeritageChat yes I guess @ALGAO_UK could play a part in this. I think Durham include it in their guidelines at least in the draft I saw.



19 Mar 2020



The Feisty Otter

@feistyotter

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A1 - a friend of mine returned to fieldwork 2 years ago after a 6 year career break. Literally nothing had changed. That's disappointing. So many advances in survey and digital recording being ignored by commercial units.



20 Mar 2020

CIFA
@InstituteArch

Q2 Is innovation always a good thing?

Answer with A2..
Are there instances where we need to exercise caution or examples where innovation has not been successful? Or should we be embracing opportunities to implement innovation as often as possible? @HeritageChat #HeritageChat

♡ ↗

19 Mar 2020

Rob Lennox
@DrRobLennox

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A2: When we innovate we also need to reflect on practice to make sure we understand the implications of new ways of working. Eg. Advances in the use of ancient DNA is creating new ethical questions, & legal frameworks may become outdated and need updating. #heritagechat

♡ ↗

19 Mar 2020

Edmund Lee
@EdSRLee

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat


So sorry to be a late Tweeter today. #HeritageChat A2 this report from @nesta_uk provides insight on public attitudes to innovation generally [nesta.org.uk/report/uk-gett...](https://www.nesta.org.uk/report/uk-gett...)



Is the UK Getting Innovation Right?


This report sets out to better understand public attitudes to innovation as a time of great technological and social change.

[nesta.org.uk](https://www.nesta.org.uk)

 **Heritage 2020**
@heritage2020

A2 If it makes us strive to do better, then surely having an innovative attitude is always a positive. But important to still to recognise when something is already going well, to avoid making unnecessary, potentially resource wasting changes
#HeritageChat


♡ [↔] 19 Mar 2020

 **CifA**
@InstituteArch

Q3 How do practitioners currently discover innovations?

Answer with A3..
How do you find out about new approaches/techniques/research? Do you find it difficult or is it about knowing who to talk to and where to look?
@HeritageChat #HeritageChat

♡ [↔] 19 Mar 2020

 **CifA**
@InstituteArch

Replying to @InstituteArch

A3: Kate at CifA here - I imagine there will be a lot of innovation over the coming months as we seek workarounds to the Covid-19 restrictions, necessity being the mother of invention and all that! Would be good to share some of that practice
#HeritageChat













♡ [↔] 19 Mar 2020



 **The Feisty Otter**
@feistyotter

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A3 I tend to look to other sectors for new tech or methodologies, archaeology is a magpie subject #HeritageChat



♡ [↔] 20 Mar 2020



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-  **CIFA**
@InstituteArch
- Q4 How do we feel about / respond to other practitioners innovations?
- Answer with A4
Do you keep up-to-date with what others are doing? Do you actively engage in discussions about innovation, sharing positive and negative experiences?@HeritageChat #HeritageChat
-   19 Mar 2020
-
-  **Internet Archaeology** ✓
@IntarchEditor
- Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat
- A4 #HeritageChat I do try to keep up with publication innovation. Too many channels! And I only go for the open access sources too.
-   19 Mar 2020
-
-  **Georgia Robinson**
@gellykelly
- Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
- A4 - also finding the time to read what is out there especially when working and studying! Again, another Q discussed with @VLeQuelenec over what research is available via institutes. #HeritageChat
-   19 Mar 2020
-
-  **Heritage 2020**
@heritage2020
- A4 #Innovation really important at the moment – being able to adapt and be flexible. Steep learning curves with remote working and virtual participation in things. Innovation can take many forms – and doesn't need to be 'frontier knowledge' #HeritageChat
-   19 Mar 2020
-
-

 **CIFA** 
@InstituteArch

Q5 How best can we as a sector assess which innovations will be genuinely useful?



Answer with A5
How is this achieved now? Independent review of publications and results? Attending conferences/seminars? Word of mouth?@HeritageChat #HeritageChat



  19 Mar 2020

 **CIFA** 
@InstituteArch

Replying to @InstituteArch

How do you currently achieve this? Is there a dedicated person in your team charged with looking at new ways of doing things for the business?



  19 Mar 2020



 **CIFA** 
@InstituteArch

Q6 Would a published review of new techniques/methods/case studies be useful?

Answer with A6



If Yes, who would be best placed to produce this? Where should it be hosted? Or does it already exist?@HeritageChat #heritagechat

  19 Mar 2020

 **Internet Archaeology** 
@IntarchEditor


Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A6 #HeritageChat I would be interested as the place to host something like this. Similar to the last few runs of the @EacEuropean volumes which are pooling info and innovation on a country level


  19 Mar 2020

Appendix 3 #HeritageChat_March2020


19 Mar 2020

 **The Feisty Otter**
@feistyotter
Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat
A6 - yes, this would be great. It feels like something @HistoricEngland should lead on #HeritageChat


20 Mar 2020

 **Heritage Chat**
@HeritageChat
Sounds a great idea #HeritageChat
<https://twitter.com/InstituteArch/status/1240630854604296195>


19 Mar 2020

 **Heritage Sci Forum UK**
@HertSci_UK
Replying to @HeritageChat
We've been looking into this - to help translation of #HeritageScience research into practice #HeritageChat would be interested to know wider thoughts

19 Mar 2020


 **CfA**
@InstituteArch
What do all think? We at CfA would certainly like to hear more about this @HertSci_UK
https://twitter.com/HertSci_UK/status/1240631819189596161

19 Mar 2020

 **CfA**
@InstituteArch
Q7 What are the primary barriers to adopting innovation in archaeology?


Answer with A7
Time, resources, cost, risk etc what is stopping you from implementing innovative techniques or approaches on a regular basis?@HeritageChat #HeritageChat

19 Mar 2020

 **The Feisty Otter**
@feistyotter

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A7 - when grant aiding projects I'm required by government procurement rules to have three comparable quotes which means that I can't find innovative work where only one company has the kit #HeritageChat #frustrating

20 Mar 2020

 **Georgia Robinson**
@gellykelly

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A7 - discussing this with @VLeQuelenec, we highlighted time and costs particularly in charitable heritage organisations who have limited access to funding and resources. #HeritageChat

19 Mar 2020


 **Kevin Mooney**
@Archaeokev

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A7 - Cost probably, however we should look to embedding the requirement for innovation within tenders


 

19 Mar 2020


 **CifA**
@InstituteArch

Q8 How can we as a sector better promote and facilitate knowledge exchange when it comes to innovation opportunities?

Answer with A8
What can we be doing better?@HeritageChat #heritagechat



 

19 Mar 2020


 **CifA**
@InstituteArch

Replying to @InstituteArch

Especially important now when the CifA annual conference #CifA20 and other conferences the world over have been postponed or cancelled - virtual networking? online seminars? How can we be innovative in our approach to the barrier that is social distancing?



 

19 Mar 2020

 **CIFA**
@InstituteArch

Q9 Moving on to publications - why are we not better using innovative forms of dissemination and publication (i.e. digital, open access) for greater public benefit? How can we do this?

Answer with A9@HeritageChat #HeritageChat


  19 Mar 2020

 **Internet Archaeology** ✓
@IntarchEditor

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat



A9 #HeritageChat we are time poor, moving on to the next project before we've wrapped up (ie published) the last one and the momentum falls away. Then we can end up doing what we know and have always done because it's quickest/easiest option


  19 Mar 2020

 **Internet Archaeology** ✓
@IntarchEditor

Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others



A9 #HeritageChat some pointers from me. If you have a digital archive, add a data paper (you actually already done most of the work already even if you don't know it). It acts as a window onto your data for others to reuse and innovate with e.g. intarch.ac.uk/authors/data-p...


  19 Mar 2020

 **Internet Archaeology** ✓
@IntarchEditor

Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others

A9 #HeritageChat Try to foster that "whole of lifecycle" mentality. (Try to) consider the end at the beginning! What data you might be collecting/creating and what others might do with it



  19 Mar 2020



 **Internet Archaeology** ✓
@IntarchEditor



Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others



A9 #HeritageChat Think about what you already create in the field but don't use in publications (video/drone footage, working shots, before and after pics, timelapse) or can't usually include (e.g. historical analysis), tweets, 3D models, gifs



— —



 **Internet Archaeology** 
@IntarchEditor
Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
A9 #HeritageChat And build publication and digital data management costs into budgets as routine, and generate good in-house data management practices - innovation will flow from this



  19 Mar 2020



 **Internet Archaeology** 
@IntarchEditor
Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
A9 #HeritageChat Finally, if you understand what digital innovative publication & open access offers then you can explain its benefits to others (funders?) more easily

  19 Mar 2020


 **Internet Archaeology** 
@IntarchEditor
Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
A9 #HeritageChat this in turn helps to explain the costs e.g. that it is a single one-off charge (someone's time) to create a digital, accessible, find-able (re-usable) resource which requires maintaining and managing into perpetuity i.e. it's not going to be a few hundred quid!

  19 Mar 2020




 **Internet Archaeology** 
@IntarchEditor
Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
A9 #HeritageChat I would have said this to anyone passing by my stand at the ClfA conference, but with its cancellation, let me offer here that I'd be very happy to have either a telephone or an online chat/webinar with anyone responsible for their orgs publications.



  19 Mar 2020

 **Julian D Richards**
@Julian62523002
Replying to @IntarchEditor and 2 others
For those who've not seen it, UKRI infrastructure roadmap highlights Heritage Science as a key innovative area, ripe for investment. 😊 ukri.org/files/infrastr... #HeritageChat 1/2

  19 Mar 2020

Appendix 3 #HeritageChat_March2020

- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Julian D Richards**
@Julian82523002
Replying to @Julian82523002 and 3 others
"Heritage science infrastructures can act as bridges between the humanities and sciences by using scientific analysis and technological innovation to understand, manage and communicate the human story, expressed through landscape, buildings and artefacts" #HeritageChat 2/2
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Heritage Sci Forum UK**
@HertSci_UK
Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat
#OpenAccess can be expensive - often depends whether it's funded #HeritageChat A9
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Cifa**
@InstituteArch
Q10 One specific area of innovation can be seen in the advancements in photogrammetry and 3d modelling. Is it time to scrap bulk hand drawing of features?

Answer with A10@HeritageChat #heritagechat
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **Cifa**
@InstituteArch
Replying to @InstituteArch
Jen here - I spoke to a colleague from Sweden recently who was astounded we still use hand tapes, as everything is digital where he is based, so this is an interesting question and especially interesting to hear about working practices in other countries!
- 19 Mar 2020
-  **ADS**
@ADS_Update
Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat
A10 #HeritageChat It's important to consider the preservation of such drawings and models. Models are more difficult to preserve than drawing.
- 19 Mar 2020

19 Mar 2020

Heritage 2020
@heritage2020

And you have good guidance to help - yes? #HeritageChat A10
[@ADS_Update](#)
https://twitter.com/ADS_Update/status/1240637529814163457

19 Mar 2020

ADS
@ADS_Update

Replying to @heritage2020
#HeritageChat A10

We have our Guides to Good Practice to try and help out.
guides.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/g2gp/Main

19 Mar 2020

Kevin Mooney
@ArchaeoKev

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A10 - Innovation shouldn't write of previous tried and tested practices, it should supplement or embellish it. Would hate to see archaeological illustration and illustration disappear...

19 Mar 2020

CifA
@InstituteArch

Q11 Do you have any examples or case studies you can share where you have implemented innovative practice on a project?

Answer with A11

Feel free to email Jen at CifA as well with any case studies -
jen.parkerwooding@archaeologists.net @HeritageChat
#heritagechat


19 Mar 2020

Georgia Robinson
@gellykelly

Replying to @InstituteArch @HeritageChat

A11 - a bit of a #tbt but laser scanning and recording the location of every coin in Le Catillon II @VLeQuelenec jerseyheritage.org/treasure-islan...

Although starting an HER from scratch using open source software including @archesproject might be innovative to some!



21 August 2014

Since the hoard was excavated in summer 2012 we have been waiting to start taking it apart to find out just what is inside. We have now just about finished doing everything that we had to do first so...

jerseyheritage.org

19 Mar 2020

CIFA
@InstituteArch

We're already showing as a sector how innovative we are & how innovative we're capable of being these past few days. This isn't just about new science/technology but also new approaches to working practices - let's continue #HeritageChat @HeritageChat #stayconnected #networking

19 Mar 2020

CIFA
@InstituteArch

That's it for this month's #HeritageChat - thanks for taking part & to @HeritageChat for allowing @InstituteArch to host. Please continue to comment using #heritagechat & get in touch w/ Jen if you have any case studies or additional feedback - jen.parkerwooding@archaeologists.net

19 Mar 2020