

FORENSIC ARCHAEOLOGY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

Friday 26 January 2024, 11:00 to 12:00 GMT

Online

AGM Minutes (delayed 2023)

Present: Lianne Birney (CIfA Staff), Sabrina Ki (OCM and co-opted Secretary), Deborah Ryder (OCM), Denise Hillier (OCM), Alastair Vannan (OCM), Aidan Harte (co-opted OCM), Laura Evis (co-opted Treasurer), Alexandria Young, Diana Swales, Ian Hanson, Jennifer Carey Mikkelsen, Pier Matteo Barone, Colin Forrestal, Hayley Jayne Hayes, Ben Moore, Karen Vowles, Craig Willey

Agenda Point	Action (Initials)
<p>1. Apologies for absence Apologies were received from Peter Schofield and Madeleine Stephens.</p>	
<p>2. Minutes of last AGM The minutes of the last AGM (2022) were accepted without changes.</p>	
<p>3. Matters Arising There was a discussion of the interview questions and panel work for MCIfA career progression, relating in particular to the ethics part of applications. Ian Hanson (IH) and Aidan Harte (AH) pointed out that the question bank for interviews are not always applicable to forensic archaeology. The questions are generic relating to archaeology as a whole, rather than the more niche profession of forensic archaeology.</p> <p>The way IH and AH ask questions in the interview is perhaps more probing than a 'normal' interview, but would be more suitable for a forensic archaeologist to answer, compared to trying to answer generic archaeology questions. Individuals have successfully progressed in their career and accreditation with these more specialised questions.</p> <p>The idea of a sub-group was raised, to review the ethics part of the question bank and devise more specific questions.</p> <p>Alastair Vannan (AV) drew attention to ethics regarding how people may choose to engage with the media outside of normal police channels. There have been issues with non-accredited individuals speaking to police in official criminal investigations in contexts that may not be appropriate.</p> <p>Deborah Ryder enquired about the process of devising and sending questions to CIfA. Lianne Birney (LB) responded that Kate Geary at CIfA can come to a sub-group meeting to help with devising questions, or CIfA can just be sent a list of appropriate questions. CIfA needs to ensure consistency across the board regarding accreditation interviews, but there is nothing to stop the forensic archaeology interview questions from becoming more specific.</p> <p>Laura Evis (LE) added that it could be useful to coordinate questions with the</p>	

	Heritage Crime SIG as they will have similar issues around ethics.	
4.	<p>Chair's Welcome and AGM Report</p> <p>The chair Robert Janaway (RJ) is unwell and unable to attend today's AGM. In his absence, Sabrina Ki (SK) welcomed the AGM attendees and went over the AGM agenda.</p>	
5.	<p>Secretary's Report</p> <p>SK summarised what she had submitted to ClfA in August 2023 for FASIG's Annual Report. She also covered the committee's further activities between Aug and Dec 2023.</p> <p>In 2023 the committee met regularly, including once with the Human Osteoarchaeology SIG committee to discuss a joint event. Minutes are available on the group webpage for these meetings.</p> <p>In April 2023, led by RJ and LE, FASIG hosted a conference session at the ClfA Annual Conference. In June 2023, FASIG circulated a newsletter to group members with committee updates and activities. SK highlighted that there was a member survey still open for membership to feedback to the committee.</p> <p>In Dec 2023, the committee met to review the specialist competence matrix. The revised draft was returned to ClfA and the working group for internal consultation.</p>	
6.	<p>Treasurer's Report</p> <p>A report was received from LE that in 2023 FASIG did not spend any money and gained three memberships = £30.</p>	
7.	<p>Elections to Group Committee and Advisory Council representative</p> <p>Thanks go to Laura Evis (co-opted Treasurer and Advisory Council Rep) and Alastair Vannan (OCM), who are stepping down after two 3-year terms, Anna Chaussée who is stepping down as co-opted OCM, and Sabrina Ki who is stepping down as OCM and co-opted Secretary after one 3-year term. SK will continue to support the committee as an Advisor.</p> <p>FASIG had openings for Secretary, Treasurer and four Ordinary Committee Members.</p> <p>Applications were received from Diana Swales for Secretary, Alexandria Young for Treasurer, and Aidan Harte, Jennifer Carey, Peter Schofield and Madeleine Stephens for OCMs. All were successfully nominated.</p> <p>The continuing committee as of 26 Jan 2024 is:</p> <p>Chair: Rob Janaway Secretary: Diana Swales Treasurer: Alexandria Young OCMs: Denise Hillier, Deborah Ryder, Aidan Harte, Jennifer Carey, Peter Schofield, Madeleine Stephens</p>	

	<p>Lianne Birney explained the role of the Advisory Council Representative, as a new Group Rep is needed this year.</p> <p><i>Alastair Vannan and any others interested may email Lianne for more information about the role.</i></p>	<i>All committee</i>
8.	<p>Revised constitution – FASIG and Forensic Archaeology Expert Register and Panel (Expert Panel)</p> <p>The attendees were notified of the revised FASIG constitution that details the separation of FASIG and the Expert Panel. Attendees were invited to email SK for the tracked changes document that provides more information.</p> <p><i>SK to send revised constitution doc to members who ask.</i></p>	SK
9.	<p>3-Year Plan review</p> <p>The current 3-Year Plan was reviewed. The AGM attendees looked over the Year 1 (2023) Objectives and Outputs. The outputs were largely met but AV noted an issue with the wording around Forensic Regulator approval in Output 1: “Updated forensic archaeology competency matrices (PCIfA; ACIfA; MCIfA) approved by the Expert Panel and Forensic Regulator”.</p> <p>It may be unlikely to receive explicit approval from the new Forensic Regulator. The current version of Standards and Guidance is explicitly endorsed by the Forensic Regulator, but it is not known if this will continue. The Expert Panel have just completed an extensive review of the Standards and Guidance, which is now returned to ClfA for an internal consultation, before then being sent to the office of the Forensic Regulator for consultation.</p> <p>The new draft matrix has already been looked at by the Expert Panel and feedback has already been provided.</p> <p>The second Output is “FASIG representation on appropriate social media platforms”. FASIG is on Twitter and Discord. There is a LinkedIn page for FASIG but it is currently using Denise Hillier’s personal account, so it would be a good idea to create one separately that can be more easily handed over to whoever is managing FASIG’s social media.</p> <p><i>Denise will sent the committee links to the forthcoming social media accounts when they are ready.</i></p> <p>The third Output is “Host a FASIG conference session/event”, which was fulfilled in April 2023, and the fourth is a “FASIG group review report”, fulfilled via the Annual Report submission in Aug 2023.</p> <p>Moving onto the Year 2 (2024) Objectives and Goals, the first Objective was discussed in particular: “Develop a mentorship scheme for members wishing to engage with forensic archaeological casework”. FASIG’s funds cannot go to mentorship, and ClfA has already done some research into whether mentorship schemes like this are viable and found quite low frequencies of long-term success. Hence FASIG may need to do this mentorship more informally without</p>	DH

	<p>official ClfA monitoring.</p> <p>AV suggested the peer review process for anyone undertaking casework but who needs mentoring. This does not only apply to non-accredited FASIG members but also accredited members who may still want peer review. They could approach accredited members of the Expert Panel for peer review, which can be funded work costed to the police or legal aid. The peer review expert will then also be paid for their work.</p> <p>LE suggested advertising this peer review process to people as an option, particularly to forensic archaeologists at the beginning of their career. AH agreed that the peer review process sounds like the best way and noted that the Chartered Society of Forensic Sciences have done something similar, with a network/database so people can easily find peer reviewers. FASIG could put together a list of people willing and available to undertake peer review.</p> <p><i>This idea will be run by RJ before being put on the website.</i></p> <p>It was agreed by attendees to roll over outstanding goals of Years 1 and 2 to Year 3 (2025).</p> <p><i>Incoming Secretary to update 3-year plan with support from outgoing Secretary and send to ClfA to put on group webpage.</i></p>	<p>All committee</p> <p>DS and SK</p>
<p>10.</p>	<p>AOB</p> <p>An event was proposed to celebrate the recently retired Professor John Hunter's contribution to forensic archaeology, perhaps a day conference at the University of Bradford.</p> <p>Alastair Vannan and Rob Janaway have sent Lianne some text to circulate around the membership regarding this.</p> <p>There is also potential for an article on John Hunter to be published in the ClfA magazine.</p>	
<p>11.</p>	<p>Date of the next committee meeting, and future events.</p> <p>It was agreed that it would be most efficient to send around a poll post-AGM to schedule the next committee meeting. Once confirmed, the committee will inform ClfA of the meeting date and general location.</p> <p><i>Incoming Secretary to send around a poll for the next committee meeting with support from outgoing Secretary.</i></p> <p><i>Incoming Secretary to have a meeting with outgoing Secretary about the role.</i></p>	<p>DS and SK</p> <p>DS and SK</p>