

This toolkit aims to embed meaningful public engagement within archaeological projects, by identifying who can help, and when and how. It provides practical suggestions to support archaeologists at all stages of project design and delivery.

It is primarily focused on two groups, described as project commissioners and advisors, and the archaeology design and delivery team.

Project commissioners and advisors include those who identify the requirements of an archaeological project (such as the local authority archaeologist), and those who procure the services of archaeologists (such as project consultants)

Archaeology design and delivery team covers a broad range of roles within the archaeological team, including those writing initial project tenders and design documents/WSI, and all roles within delivery teams.

More generally, this toolkit is relevant to anyone interested in public engagement in archaeology. The content should be seen as a curated resource, providing background information and signposts to useful online content, as well as specific resources designed to help archaeologists in their everyday work. The toolkit primarily discusses processes in England, but colleagues in Scotland and Wales may also find much of the content useful, and the context of the wider UK is examined in parts.


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archaeologists.net/engagement


Public engagement

A toolkit for archaeologists.

Directory and link to resources



Public engagement in archaeology



Making public engagement happen



Designing public engagement

Public engagement in archaeology

Understanding why public engagement is important for archaeology is a vital step in delivering public benefit and social value.

This section introduces key themes and ideas, exploring engagement is, how we can achieve public benefit and the different roles archaeologists have in making it happen:

- ▶ What is engagement?
- ▶ What type of engagement?
- ▶ Public benefit and social value
- ▶ Roles and responsibilities

Making public engagement happen

The historic environment sector is complex and, through our work, archaeologists are connected to politics and civil society.

This section considers how the process of commissioning archaeological work, or procuring teams to deliver archaeology, can facilitate meaningful public engagement:

- ▶ Public engagement & development
- ▶ Commissioning public engagement
- ▶ Procuring public engagement
- ▶ Planning for public engagement

What does engagement look like?

The nature of a public engagement programme will depend on the need that has been identified, as well as scale.

This section provides a 'look up' for how different activities can achieve different types of impact, and what resources are available to help build a public engagement plan:

- ▶ Planning your engagement
- ▶ Non-participatory dissemination
- ▶ Active participation
- ▶ Collaborative to co-designed

Additional tools and resources

- ▶ **Public engagement in archaeology** - Providing the background to the ClfA toolkit, this infosheet collates data gathered through consultation and survey, including two which have been undertaken as part of the project development in 2021 and 2023.
- ▶ **Public engagement and legislation across the UK** - How archaeology is delivered within development-led projects across the UK is driven by national planning legislation, which differs within each of the UKs four nations. This infosheet provides a quick guide to each.
- ▶ **Evaluating and understanding impact** - This infosheet describes how to start the process of planning change and understanding impact using a simple Theory of Change to consider how activities may create impact.
- ▶ **Creating a public engagement plan** - Meaningful public engagement needs to be planned alongside other project management activities, rather than become an afterthought. A public engagement plan can adapt to each project - this infosheet runs through some key ingredients.