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# The Archaeologist

Issue 127  
Winter 2026



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Single Probe Handheld MAGNETOMETER **ARCH I**  
+/- 8,000 nT  
Data recording  
GPS interface

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**TA128: Open issue.** This issue is an open theme to showcase the range projects and practice being undertaken across the historic environment sector. Do you have a project or case study to share, want to shine a light on a specific technique or approach (even if it didn't work as planned) or pose a think piece to engage others?

Get in touch with your ideas.

Deadline 1 April 2026.

Contributions to *The Archaeologist* are encouraged. Please get in touch if you would like to discuss ideas for articles, opinion pieces or interviews.

We now invite submission of articles for the forthcoming issues. Articles must be accompanied by hi-resolution images (at least 300dpi) with appropriate permissions and captions. We request that all authors also pay close attention to ClfA house style guidance. The editorial team will get in touch regarding selection and final submissions.

Please read the guidance at <https://www.archaeologists.net/publications/the-archaeologist>

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Digital tablet recording on  
an industrial site. Credit:  
Wessex Archaeology



# EDITORIAL

## Information management unplugged: why the ordinary matters in heritage

Laura O'Connor MCIfA (10992), IMSIG Chair, Historic Environment Scotland



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Information management (IM) in heritage is not often recognised as something extraordinary, yet it underpins multiple specialisms across our sector. When robust, it is the unsung hero of large infrastructure projects, data repositories and public information data services. But when it's not, it can undermine even the best-intentioned initiatives. IM and its advocates often sit quietly in the background – databases updated meticulously, naming conventions applied (or not!), standards implemented and real-time decision-making enabled. As this demonstrates, IM is anything but ordinary. It is truly fundamental to how we understand the past, work in the present, and strategise for the future.

TA127, developed in collaboration with the ClfA Information Management Special Interest Group (IMSIG), explores these dynamics further, where information management encompasses activities from the practical and routine to the incredibly technical and strategic. Collectively, the articles pose a critical question: what does information management within heritage really look like in practice today?

To answer this question, we have a range of exciting papers from leading experts in the field. In 'Advanced digital workflows for archaeology', Émilie Pagé-Perron (ADS) and Julian Richards (ADS/HSDS) explore working with European partners to develop best practice for field recording, archiving, and managing multiple data types.

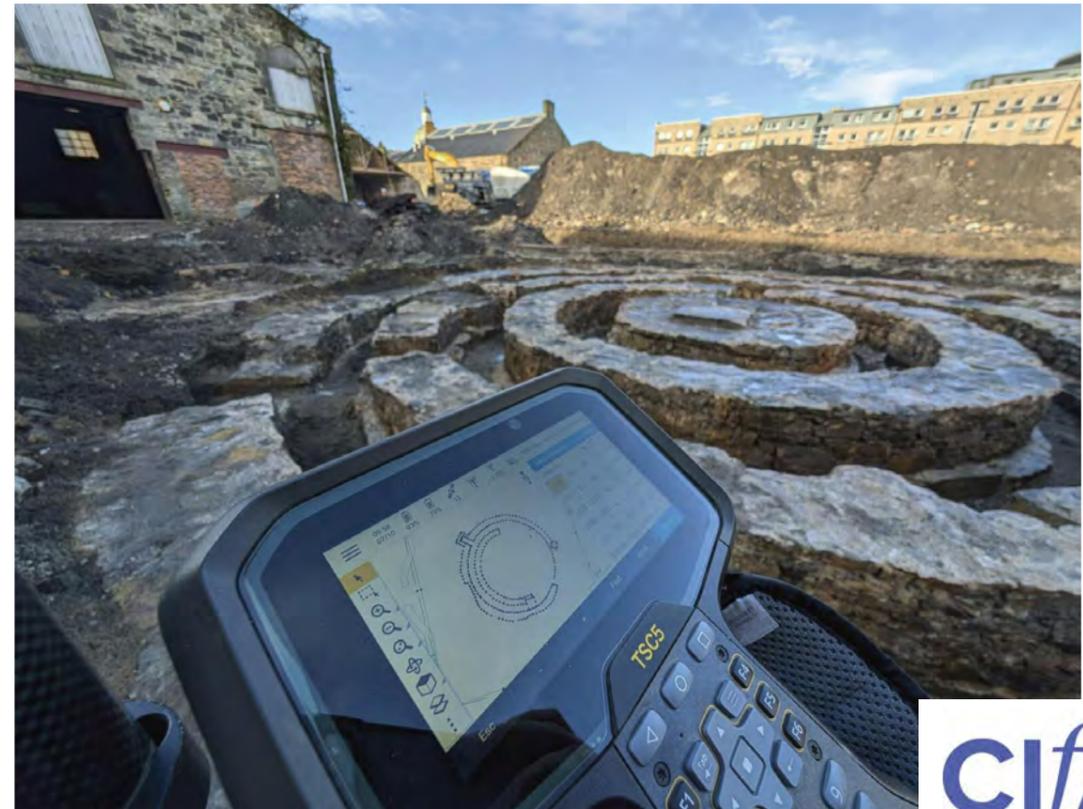
Ben Wallace (Warwickshire County Council) and Keith Elliott (Scottish Borders Council), in their contribution 'Historic Environment Records: signposts to the past', review the UK's network of HERs and how they serve multiple users, maintain rigorous standards and play a critical role in decision-making for planning. Complementing this, IMSIG committee member and Historic Environment ICT & GIS Consultant Gary Duckers reflects in 'A career in context: from trenches to tables' on his versatile career path from field archaeology to consultancy, perfectly illustrating how passion for information management develops alongside professional experience.

Julian Richards (ADS/HSDS) and Jo Tozer (HSDS) introduce the Heritage Science Data Service, cataloguing heritage science datasets and facilities from partners including Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland, Amgueddfa Cymru and the British Museum.

In his article 'Navigating conflicting regulatory requirements for historic environment information', Martin Newman (Historic England) examines how copyright, open licensing and GDPR interact with heritage datasets, demonstrating that compliance and accessibility can coexist.

Our IMSIG committee archives experts – Katie Green (ADS), Jessica Irwin (Wessex Archaeology) and Theodora Anastasiadou (specialist) – explore the challenges and opportunities of information management in archaeological archives, highlighting the balance between safeguarding collections and enabling access.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is increasingly being adopted as a tool across the sector. Following on from the October ClfA



Survey of Gas Holder F, Baltic Street, Leith (Winner of the 2025 IMSIG photo competition submitted by Steven Watt). Credit: AOC Archaeology Group



Innovation Festival seminar 'AI in cultural heritage' (reviewed in this issue), we are also pleased to include an article on the subject. Alphaeus Lien-Talks (Historic Royal Palaces) explores the potential of the technology when applied to data within grey literature, showing how harnessing AI can help ensure these data remain findable, understandable and reusable – strengthening the foundations of information management.

Finally, to understand where we are going, it always helps to remember where we came from. Original IMSIG committee member Edmund Lee reflects on the Group's early objectives, highlighting the importance of collaboration, trust and shared expertise in achieving FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable, Reusable) data. Promoting these conversations remains central to IMSIG's objectives, reinforcing that good information management is a cornerstone of sustainable, responsible heritage practice.

These contributions very much illustrate that information management is not only about technology or tools. Platforms, standards and automation are only ever effective when embedded within pragmatic strategies. Governance, documentation,

skills development and shared objectives are equally imperative. While implementation approaches can vary, it is apparent that incremental improvements, cross-team/organisation collaboration, and thoughtful decision-making can lead to long-term success. Future-proofing data remains one of the sector's greatest challenges, requiring foresight, resources and sustained commitment to ensure it remains meaningful and usable across projects, technologies and ultimately into perpetuity.

The diversity of expertise in this issue reflects the reality of the sector – complex, evolving, and interconnected. The work of IMSIG aligns well here – by encouraging discussion, sharing experience and creating opportunities for collaboration, the Group supports practitioners navigating these challenges and in doing so, can help advance best practice across the sector.

With that in mind, I would like to take the opportunity to thank both former and current committee members of IMSIG:

### Information Management Special Interest Group – past and present

#### Current committee members

Laura O'Connor  
 Jessica Irwin  
 Theodora Anastasiadou  
 Eileen Kerhouant  
 Thomas Cromwell  
 Tanya Malone  
 Katie Green  
 Simon Parsons  
 Gary Duckers

#### Former committee members

Edmund Lee  
 Martin Newman  
 Isobel Holroyd  
 Mike Heyworth  
 Jeremy Oetgen  
 Mike D'Aprix  
 Claire Tsang  
 Doug Rocks-Macqueen  
 Colin Forrestal  
 Ben Wallace  
 Sarah Orr

# Advanced digital workflows for archaeology

Émilie Pagé-Perron, Archaeology Data Service, and Julian Richards MClfA (73), Archaeology Data Service and Heritage Science Data Service

**The Archaeology Data Service (ADS) is working with European partners to investigate and develop best practice for digital workflows, from field recording to archiving, for multiple data types, including context sheets, fieldwork reports, images and IIF, sound data, 3D data, BIM and geospatial data.**



Funded by the European Union



The research is funded by the European Commission as part of ATRIUM (Advancing front-Tier Research In the arts and hUManities) (<https://atrium-research.eu/>). The project is coordinated by DARIAH (the digital research infrastructure for the Arts and Humanities) but also includes CLARIN (covering language and linguistics), and ARIADNE (the research infrastructure for Archaeology), as well as individual archaeological partners, including the Swedish National Data Service, the Cyprus Institute, and ARUP and ARUB, the archaeological research centres in the Czech Republic. The archaeological bodies, including ADS, are providing test datasets, but ATRIUM also relies on computer scientists to enhance metadata and investigate novel ways of visualising the datasets. The outputs will be demonstrated using the infrastructures of the ARIADNE portal (<https://portal.ariadne-infrastructure.eu/>) and the ADS data catalogue (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/data-catalogue/>).

The workflows and demonstrators are split into five strands, according to data type. We start with textual data and go back to the beginning with hand-written proforma recording sheets. At ADS we hold lots of scanned context sheets but generally have very little metadata about their contents. Extracting information is a challenging task, involving handwriting recognition software, and segmentation to recognise the different parts of the form. Once the text has been transcribed, we can identify keywords based on controlled vocabularies, covering the subject terms, period names and placenames. We are also working with colleagues at the Universities of Sheffield and South Wales to refine AI techniques to extract rich metadata from unpublished fieldwork reports, as well as from the large digitised journal back runs we hold in the ADS library. The latter is more challenging as the articles are more heterogeneous than the OASIS fieldwork reports, particularly as we go back into the 19th century. At the moment, we often only have

the authors' names and title for these articles, so our aim is to add enhanced subject metadata to the library catalogue (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/library/>), making it far easier to identify relevant articles.

The second strand is focused on image data. Our Czech colleagues are applying visual recognition software to images and metadata from the UK Portable Antiquities Scheme to train their software to recognise artefacts from photos. The ADS is also experimenting with IIF, the international image interoperability framework. Using the IIF Mirador viewer, we can compare images drawn from different repositories. For example, researchers will be able to place Bronze

Age rock art from Sweden side by side with rock art images from Northern England archived by ADS. In another case study, we are rendering images from the corpus of Anglo-Saxon stone sculpture in IIF, so that the motifs can be compared with those from manuscript art held by European galleries.

In the third strand, we move from 2D to 3D. In these workflows, the team is looking at 3D models and Building Information Modelling (BIM) datasets and enhancing the ways such data can be visualised in ADS and ARIADNE using online viewers embedded in web browsers.

The collaboration with CLARIN means that the fourth strand focuses on sound data.

We are investigating the use of oral recording on site, with archaeologists speaking into microphones and reading context sheets, including in realistic, noisy field environments. Transcription software produces text from sound, and the texts can then be fed back into the workflow developed in Strand 1, allowing the extraction of keywords for indexing.

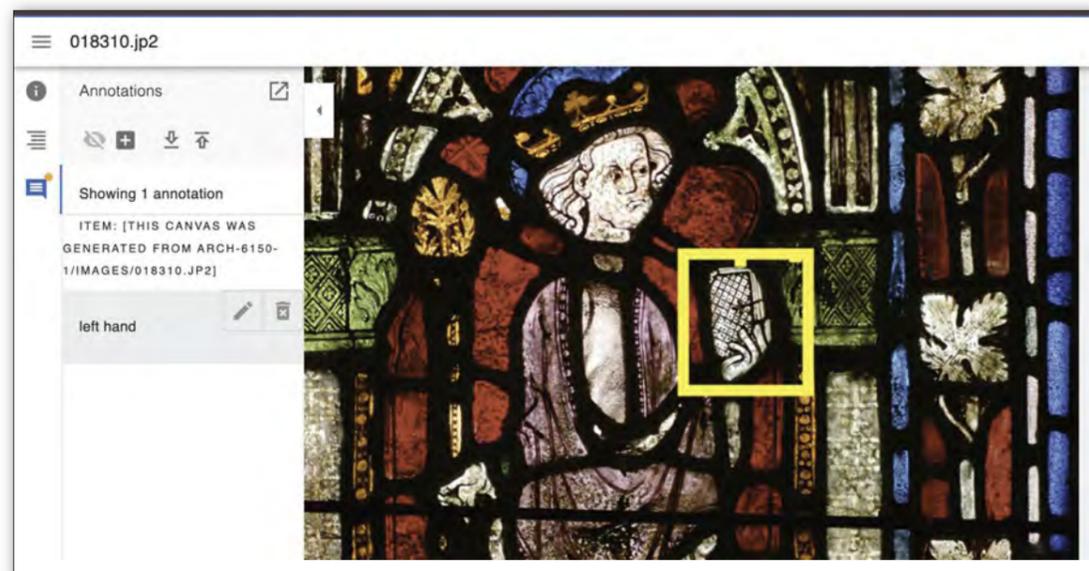
The fifth and final strand is looking at geospatial data, where we are examining how place can be used to combine archaeological and historical information. At ADS, we will be taking a case study of a dataset from one of the cemeteries excavated in advance of HS2, the St James's Gardens burial grounds at Euston, London.

ATRIUM is now halfway through a four-year project. Work on many of the workflows is well advanced, and in the second half of the project we are now focusing on the demonstrators. We aim that by year four many of these enhancements will have been realised for users of the ADS and ARIADNE catalogues.

These reusable workflows will not only improve the findability and interoperability of archaeological data across ADS and the ARIADNE portal but also support broader public engagement by making rich, well-documented digital resources easier to explore and re-use.



The ATRIUM team. Credit: Amelia McConville



Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi, 2025. <https://doi.org/10.5284/1132566>. The setting is Altamira, a branch of Mirador for sharing annotations by PCSS Poznan Supercomputing and Networking Center <https://gitlab.pcss.pl/dl-team/atrium/iif/mirador/mirador-atrium>. Composition by Émilie Pagé-Perron. Credit: Corpus Vitrearum Medii Aevi (Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International Licence)

## Émilie Pagé-Perron

Émilie is a Researcher and Data Engineer at ADS, where she supports ADS activities in the ATRIUM project and works with data pipelines, especially to maintain and provide new data for the ARIADNE portal. She holds a PhD in Assyriology and is co-director of the Cuneiform Digital Library Initiative. Her published work concerns open access, computational linguistics, and network analysis of ancient cuneiform objects.



## Julian Richards

Julian is Professor of Archaeology at the University of York, where he researches information management and Viking archaeology. He is Director of the Archaeology Data Service, and Co-Director of the e-journal *Internet Archaeology*, both established in 1996, and he is now leading the development of the Heritage Science Data Service. He has pioneered providing open access to heritage data in the UK for academic, professional and public audiences, and was awarded an OBE in the 2024 New Year Honours for services to Heritage and Digital Archiving.

# Historic Environment Records: Signposts to the past

Ben Wallace, MCI(A) (2500), Warwickshire County Council, and Keith Elliott, ACI(A) (7428) Scottish Borders Council

Whilst most media coverage of archaeology concentrates upon fieldwork discoveries or post-excavation findings, behind the scenes, Historic Environment Records (HERs) are an established part of archaeological practice. Many readers may have some familiarity with HERs in either accessing or submitting data to them. This article provides an opportune moment to recap but also highlights things that may not be known.



A Guide to Historic Environment Records (HERs) in England. Credit: Historic England

## What are HERs?

Developing from Sites and Monuments Records (SMRs) over 50 years ago, HERs have become accessible, dynamic and evolving information services focused on recording the historic environment for defined geographical areas. Covering all periods from Palaeolithic to modern, they deal with both designated and undesignated heritage assets, and more recently landscape-scale concepts such as historic characterisation.

HERs contain thousands of known, recorded and mapped entries as core data, organised using a model of:

- **monuments** (sites, finds and landscapes)
- **events** (investigations)
- **sources** (published and unpublished sources forming the evidence for HER records)

Specialised software is often used to record this data in complex databases with associated Geographical Information Systems (GIS).

Alongside this, HERs often hold a variety of physical and digital sources, including archaeological reports, books, journals, maps, aerial photos, index cards, letters, photographs and drawings. HERs also point to and can access numerous other sources of information including LiDAR, digital maps and other online sources. With such a large remit and information base, many HERs have backlogs of information to process to enhance their records.

## Standards

Data standards and thesauri have been established by the wider heritage community, becoming the bedrock for HER data recording. These include *MIDAS Heritage*, the *Monument Types and Objects* thesauri, and spatial data

standards. HERs also hold FAIR principles (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) as a core part of their function.

Over the decades detailed guidance and manuals have been produced for UK HERs. First, and in paper format, was *Informing the Future of the Past* (IFP), which developed into a digital wiki version (IFP3) and more recently revamped as *The UK Historic Environment Records Manual*. Alongside this a formal *Guide to Historic Environment Records in England* has been published by Historic England, in partnership with the ALGAO HER Committee, which has also been adapted and adopted in Scotland as ALGAO Scotland guidance. In Wales, statutory guidance, standards and benchmarks are published by Cadw.

Historic England has developed a programme of HER Audits to help HERs assess themselves against these agreed standards and form action plans to improve and develop.



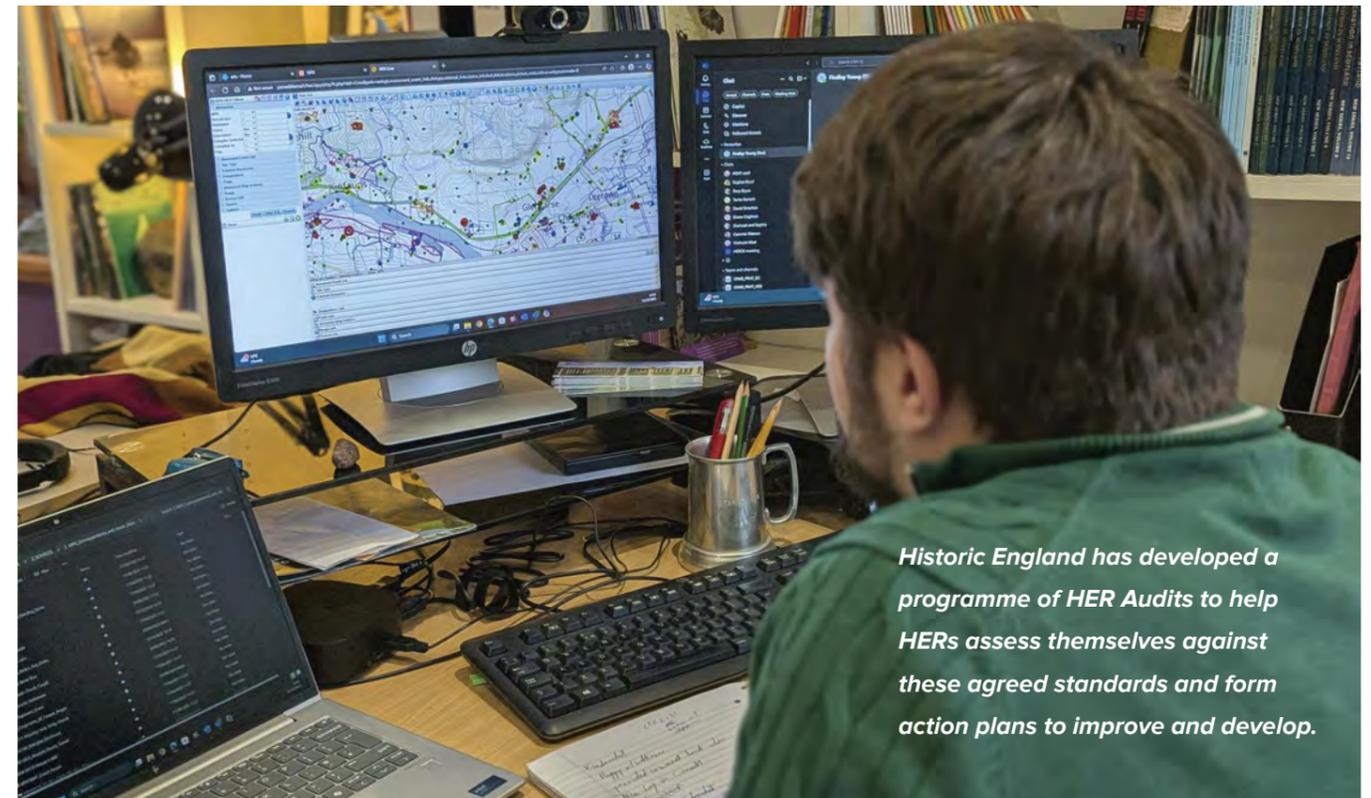
## Uses and users

HERs are maintained and updated for public benefit but they are also critical as an evidence base for planners, advisors, commercial archaeologists and others to appropriately manage archaeology and the historic environment in the planning process. However, HERs have many other uses and users too, for example, to inform agri-environment schemes, woodland planting proposals, Environmental Impact Assessments and, more recently, habitat restoration and nature recovery schemes.

HERs are used by students, researchers and others in academia, often as part of macro-scale national projects and programmes (such as EngLaID). Enquiries for data can be area-based, thematic or temporally led or even restricted to a specific monument or object type.

HERs also have links to local communities, from local residents seeking information about the area where they live through to volunteers helping enhance the HER for their locality. Some HERs deliver community engagement through specific projects and programmes or by developing apps and websites for people to discover more about the past in their local area.

HER data is also published online through such portals as the Heritage Gateway (for England), Archwilio (for Wales), PastMap (for Scotland) or individual HER websites.



Findlay Young, HER Officer, at work. Credit: Perth and Kinross Heritage Trust (PKHT)

Historic England has developed a programme of HER Audits to help HERs assess themselves against these agreed standards and form action plans to improve and develop.

The rich variety of users often feed new data back to the HER, whether this is resulting from commercial and planning-led archaeological investigations or a photo of an object found whilst walking the dog. HERs welcome all information within their area of geographic coverage and that has a link to our human past in some way.

**HER support**

With over 100 individual HERs across the UK and a variety of models in place it would be understandable to assume they were unorganised. Thankfully, several supporting groups have emerged that have built active and organised HER communities. The Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) formed the HER Committee (<https://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her>) in the 1990s. It meets three times a year, with representation from all UK nations, each English region, and relevant national groups, forums and other ALGAO committees.

Looking beyond those working within local authorities, the HER Forum emerged to provide further support. The HER Partnerships Team at Historic England facilitates a platform for discussion through an active JiscMail group where the ‘Friday afternoon’ questions and discussions have become infamous. Two meetings a year are held with a variety of presentations, discussion points and networking opportunities. Membership of the HER Forum is wide ranging and includes those from commercial, community and academic backgrounds, as well as retired HER officers!

In Scotland the HER Forum (<https://smrforum-scotland.org.uk/her-contacts/>) fulfils a similar role, combining technical discussions with a national overview, as well as opportunities for training and updates regarding recent data projects and opportunities.

There are also several specialist and technical groups are essential to the development of HERs, including FISH (Forum on Information Standards in Heritage) and the OASIS Management Board. The three main HER software providers (HBSMR, HEROS and Arches) also have user groups to aid their technical development.

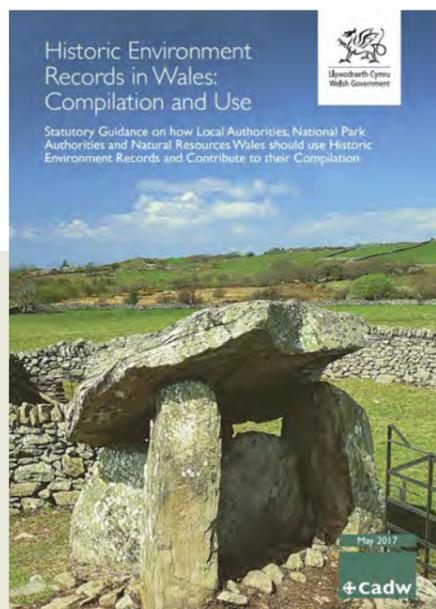
**Formal status**

The ambition across the heritage sector has been to ensure HERs are on a firm footing regarding their official recognised status. Although this has been achieved somewhat in Northern Ireland and Wales, substantial work has taken place over the last 25 years regarding the other nations. Perseverance was rewarded when in 2023 the Levelling Up and Regeneration Act put HERs in England on a statutory footing, making it a requirement for local authorities to manage and maintain the HER (although a timetable and plan for implementation is still forthcoming). Scotland recognises (under the INSPIRE Directive) that HERs fulfil a duty of ensuring access to environmental information and they also appear within the National Planning Framework 4; however, they are the final nation to achieve more formal statutory recognition.

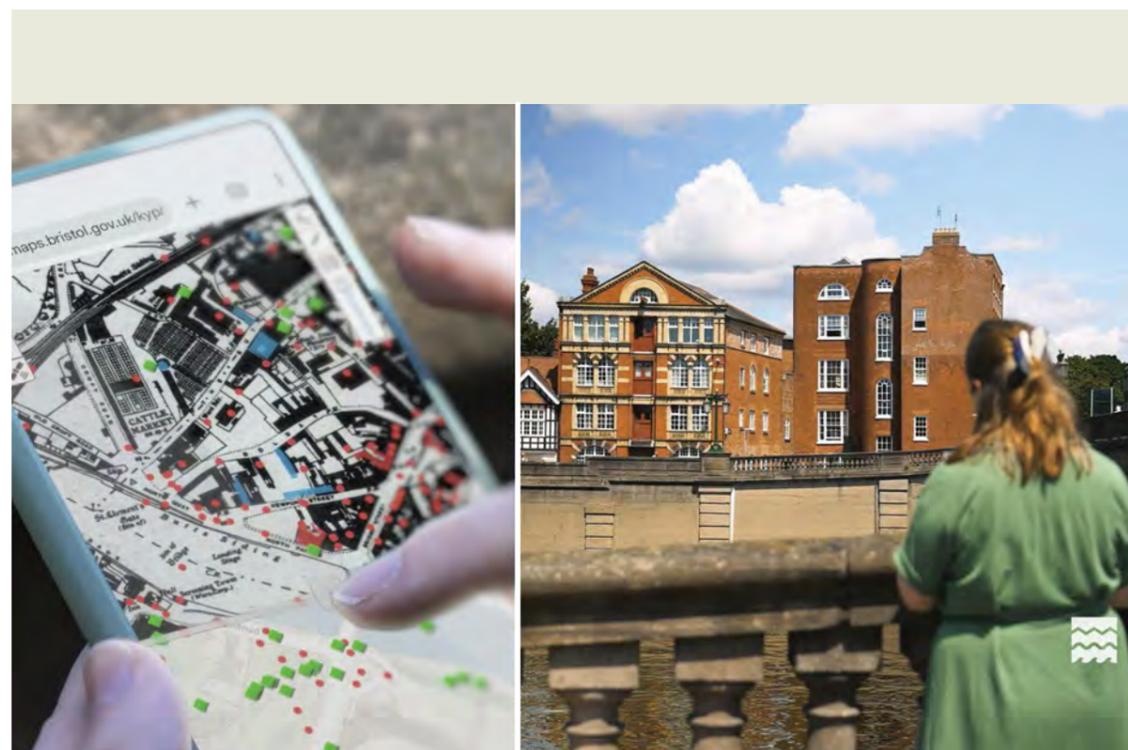
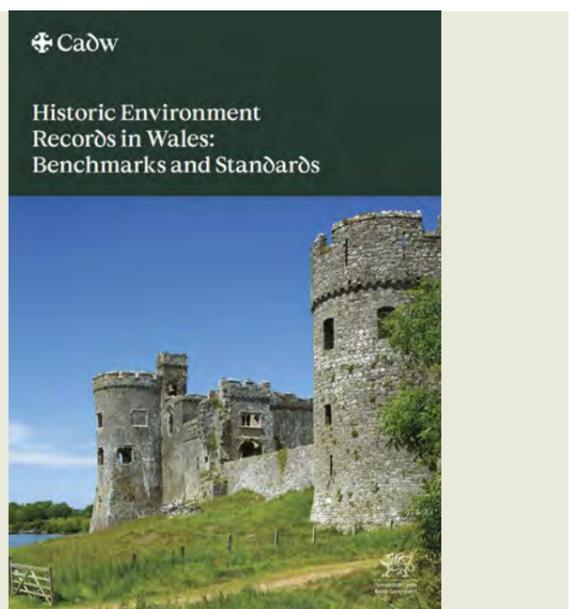
**The future?**

The ubiquity and size of digital data in all its forms, with the multiplicity of digital packages, presents opportunities and challenges for HERs. AI recognition of sites, data trawling and natural language processing may provide

*The rich variety of users often feed new data back to the HER, whether this is resulting from commercial and planning-led archaeological investigations or a photo of an object found whilst walking the dog.*



*HER guidance documents in Wales. Credit: Cadw*



*Accessing HERs on tablets to support community engagement. Credit: Historic England*

*You will find HER teams welcoming and friendly, so please do contact your local HER officer and discover where the signposts to the past may take you next!*

ways to tackle HER backlogs but conversely create more data requiring some form of human validation too.

New data sources might well be interrogated all the more with HER data, providing new insights into the past, as well as prompts for the future. HER users and enquirers now have greater expectations – such as landscape-scale rewilding and greater object type indexing; public benefit and social value are required, going beyond a

purely archaeological focus. Within a period of continued budgetary restraint, ensuring value for money remains a requirement for all HERs – both for users and host authorities. However, as HERs have shown, developing first from card indexes and paper records, they continue to grow, reflect and adapt. You will find HER teams welcoming and friendly, so please do contact your local HER officer and discover where the signposts to the past may take you next!

A more in-depth version of this article including useful links to resource and contact information can be found here: <https://www.archaeologists.net/groups/information-management>

**Ben Wallace**

Ben is Team Manager for Records in the Ecology, Historic Environment and Landscape team at Warwickshire County Council. He manages both the Warwickshire and Solihull Historic Environment Records as well as the Warwickshire Biological Records Centre and is the current chair of the ALGAO HER Committee. He has a degree and a master’s in Archaeology (Leicester University) and worked on archaeological sites across Europe and the United States before finding his niche in the world of HERs. He has been instrumental in lobbying for the provision of statutory HERs in England and continues to work towards supporting HERs across the UK.



**Keith Elliott**

Keith is HER Forum (Scotland) Chair and Archaeology Officer at Scottish Borders Council. Prior to this he was Assistant Historic Environment Record (HER) Officer with the council, assisting the then Archaeology Officer in a Historic Environment Scotland and Scottish Forestry funded project to polygonise the Scottish Borders HER (which briefly featured in *The Archaeologist* number 100). As the sole archaeologist within Scottish Borders Council, his remit has expanded across all curatorial roles for an area a quarter the size of Wales.



# A CAREER IN CONTEXT: from trenches to tables

Gary L Duckers MCIfA (5930), Idox Software Ltd

I didn't begin my career with informatics in mind. In fact, I started out in construction and changed career! I viewed archaeology as a way of combining my interests in history with working outdoors and surveying. So, my early archaeological interests were rooted in landscapes and the stories embedded in places. But over time, I found myself drawn to the systems behind the scenes — the databases, workflows and spatial tools that quietly shape how we understand and protect the historic environment.



My academic path began with a BA in Archaeology, followed by an MA in Landscape Archaeology, GIS and Virtual Environments. These studies opened my eyes to the potential of geospatial technologies in heritage work. Later, my PhD explored change and transition in the Welsh Marches, combining LiDAR, viewshed analysis and border theory. It was a formative experience — not just in research, but in learning how to bridge disciplines and make complex data meaningful.

Professionally, I've worked across many specialised areas: community archaeology, regional HER management, and now consultancy. Each role has deepened my appreciation for the labour of information stewardship. At Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust I progressed from HER Officer to Head of Technology, Information and Planning. I led IT infrastructure, digital preservation strategies, GIS integration, and planning support — always with a focus on clarity, standards and public value.

Now, as a Historic Environment ICT & GIS Consultant with Idox Software, I support HERs across the UK who are using HBSMR, the UK's leading database & GIS application for the management of Historic Environment Records. I help migrate data, configure systems and deliver training — often acting as a bridge between developers and heritage professionals. It's rewarding work, and I'm constantly learning from the people I support.

I try to stay actively involved in the wider sector. I'm a Chartered Geographer (GIS) and a Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCIfA), and I regard these as responsibilities rather than accolades. They remind me to uphold professional standards, share knowledge and contribute where I can. I have served on the CfA Professional Standards Advisory Panel and advise the Information Management Special Interest Group — a community I value for its generosity and insight. My technical work often involves scripting, diagnostics and metadata wrangling — tasks that can seem distant from field archaeology. But I believe

*The early days, surveying at a moated site on the Wirral. Credit: Gary L Duckers*

they're part of the same ethos. Whether I'm writing a tool to batch export features or designing SQL views for HERs, I'm trying to make archaeological data more transparent, findable and usable.

I've also been fortunate to teach, as a visiting lecturer and demonstrator. Teaching and passing on skills have been deeply rewarding. Working as a visiting lecturer and demonstrator has strengthened my communication: explaining workflows, breaking down complex problems and responding to different learning styles has made my technical practice clearer and more resilient. Seeing students and community learners apply tools and methods to their own projects is one of the most satisfying parts of my career. It continually reminds me that the ability to teach — to explain, simplify and listen — is itself a vital, transferable skill that improves practice and collaboration.

Looking back, I see my career as a series of translations: from trenches to tables, from policy to platform, from story to system. I've learned that good informatics isn't just about data wrangling — it's about empathy. It's about understanding what people need from data, and how to make that data serve them.

A final note of practical advice for those starting or navigating this sector: cultivate and maintain transferable skills. The sector can be challenging in terms of job security and progression, so a broad toolkit — GIS, coding, project management and communication — opens options you might

not expect. Coupled with MCIfA, gaining Chartered Geographer (GIS) status has helped me demonstrate competence beyond archaeology and stay connected to wider networks. In a sector where roles often span disciplines, the ability to adapt and translate your skills is essential.

I'm grateful to the colleagues, mentors and communities who've shaped my path. And I'm hopeful for the future. It's a challenging time, with AI technologies reshaping the way we work — but also an exciting one. We have a real opportunity to make these tools work for the sector, and to ensure it remains a place we all want to work in.

*Teaching LiDAR and GIS at the University of Chester. Credit: Gary L Duckers*



*HBSMR: a software solution for data management, analysis, presentation, and the publication of heritage data. Credit: © Idox plc*



*Part of the team receiving an award for a community archaeology project (with CWAC Museums). Credit: Gary L Duckers*



**Gary L Duckers**

Gary is a historic environment professional specialising in GIS, data governance and remote sensing.



BioArCh facility, University of York. Credit: Alex Holland, University of York

# Introducing the Heritage Science Data Service

Julian Richards MCI(FA) (73), Archaeology Data Service and Heritage Science Data Service, and Jo Tozer, Heritage Science Data Service

**In October 2024 the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) launched the Research Infrastructure for Conservation and Heritage Science (RICHeS) programme. Over the next five years, this £80m investment will create a distributed infrastructure led by a dedicated RICHeS Infrastructure Headquarters (IHQ) team co-located at Sci-Tech Daresbury in Warrington. The new distributed infrastructure will include 17 laboratory facilities, 13 reference collections and a single Digital Research Service: the Heritage Science Data Service (HSDS), managed by the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) in York.**

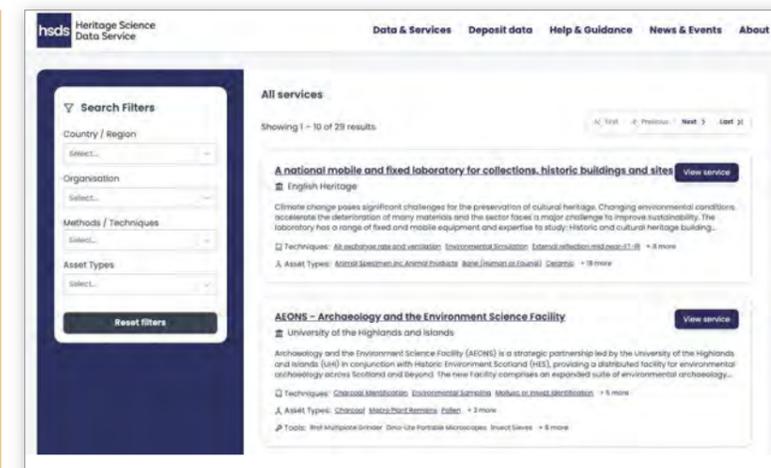


The facilities and collections embrace a broad spectrum of scientific techniques and national reference collections. Facilities include X-ray and 3D imaging centres, a marine survey laboratory, laboratories for biomolecular tools and archaeological dating, and a national network of integrated national mobile and fixed laboratories to address climate change impacts on heritage preservation, sustainability and energy efficiency. Reference collections include archaeozoology and archaeobotany, thin sections archives, and paint samples, to give just a few examples. (The full list is available on the RICHeS website: <https://www.riches.ukri.org/>)

These facilities and collections will open for external users in 2026, with usage costs covered by a central RICHeS Access Fund. Applications are welcomed from a broad range of individuals and organisations, including commercial companies or freelance specialists working in collaboration with eligible partner organisations. Most of the facilities and collections are also able to undertake chargeable work and the RICHeS Access fund is not intended to be used as a substitute for standard post-excavation costs and analyses required as part of curatorial briefs. However, it can be used to undertake more advanced analyses, outside the scope of commercial development control archaeology.

The HSDS is a core component of the RICHeS programme. In October 2025 we launched a catalogue of heritage science datasets and a catalogue of facilities and collections (based on information collected by our partners at Manchester Metropolitan University). The data catalogue is underpinned by a trusted digital repository, managed by the ADS, encouraging access and re-use and ensuring that all datasets are preserved for the future. All beneficiaries of the RICHeS Access Fund are required to deposit their research data with the HSDS, and all digital reference collections are also being safeguarded by the HSDS. Working in collaboration with the software engineering and technical teams at the STFC Hartree Centre, we are also developing a suite of Virtual Research Environments (VRE) and software tools to allow researchers to visualise and analyse data. The first of these will become available in summer 2026 and will be free for all to use. We have also launched a small grants programme for preparation of datasets for deposit with the HSDS and development of Virtual Research Environment applications. The first call has now closed but there will be a second call opening in summer 2026.

Because the HSDS is embedded within the ADS it benefits from 30 years' experience. The additional HSDS staff have been integrated within the ADS team, bringing it to nearly 40 staff. HSDS shares the same technical infrastructure and data and metadata stores as ADS and has the same charging policy for



Catalogue of Services. Credit: HSDS

commercial data deposition. It also uses the same online data ingest system. Hence for archaeological researchers and contractors there should be no change to their normal workflows. Where they deposit datasets that are relevant to heritage science and conservation, our curators will tag them so that those archives will appear in both the ADS and HSDS data catalogues, at no extra charge. Similarly, if specialist scientific reports are uploaded via OASIS they will appear in both catalogues.

At this point the HSDS data catalogue contains mainly heritage science data already archived by ADS, but this will be supplemented by datasets from a wide range of core partners: Historic England, Historic Environment Scotland, Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales, the British Museum, the National Gallery, the National Archives, The Natural History Museum, and the British Geological Survey. Our set-up phase continues for another two years and there are opportunities to influence the shape of the service by contributing to user needs analysis being undertaken on our behalf by the National Heritage Science Forum.

### Julian Richards

See page 5.

### Jo Tozer

Jo is the Service Manager for the HSDS. She has worked in archaeology for 20 years, firstly as Editorial Manager for *Antiquity* during Martin Carver's editorship and then as Research Manager for the Department of Archaeology at the University of York. She has considerable experience managing projects from conception to completion from a broad range of funding sources. Outside of work, you can usually find Jo buried in a classic crime novel or walking with her two dogs.



# Navigating conflicting regulatory requirements for historic environment information

Martin Newman MCIFA (940), Historic England

**Data and information regulations often overlap and contradict, with specific considerations for the sector. This article outlines how some challenges can be addressed, with case studies from Historic England (HE).**

## Setting the scene

The Reuse of Public Sector Information Regulations (RPSIR) (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2015/1415/contents>) and the INSPIRE Regulations (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/2018/1338>) require the publication of some public sector data under an open licence. There are similar requirements from funding organisations, eg UK Research and Innovation (UKRI). However, the Government's *The Rose Book: guidance on knowledge asset management in government* (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/knowledge-asset-management-in-government>), requires the public sector to consider monetising knowledge assets. The Freedom of Information Act (FoI) and Environmental Information Regulations (EIR) require the release of information in response to requests, but the release and publication are complicated by Intellectual Property Rights (IPR) and UK General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR).

There are also ethical considerations, including the FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) and CARE (Collective benefit, Authority to control, Responsibility and Ethics) principles. The most common forms of open licensing are Creative Commons (CC) and Open Government Licence (OGL), with the latter developed for the public sector by The National Archives and based on CC-BY, the most open of the CC licences that still reserve rights.

Some organisations look to lock down access, apply exemptions or cite copyright and GDPR as reasons for not publishing or for limiting usage. Compliance is often seen as a low priority because RPSIR and INSPIRE are not proactively enforced by the Information Commissioner.

However, open publication is an ethical as well as regulatory issue and such issues can be overcome by working with information rights and legal teams, as has been done at Historic England.

## Publishing the NHLE under OGL

When the National Heritage List for England (NHLE) was first published in 2011 it was made open access, but requests to reproduce had to be made.

When Historic England launched its Open Data Hub, clarifying the licensing situation became important as the metadata was open, and linked to the descriptions. Within the NHLE, the Parks and Gardens and Battlefields Registers were owned by Historic England and DCMS owned the remainder. Old printed lists contained a range of copyright statements, some said 'Crown Copyright', others had a paragraph explaining when copying was permitted, and some had nothing. The DCMS-owned entries were Crown and Crown Copyright, which can be licensed under an OGL. Additionally, because Historic England

combined datasets to create the NHLE and the list entries have been amended to such a degree since, Historic England could claim database right over the whole of the NHLE. *Database right* is an area of copyright concerning information held in databases. Here, the normal provisions of copyright law apply to the content of databases and remain with the authors; however, the creation of the database itself also earns copyright, even if the data includes third-party copyrighted sources. The Copyright and Rights in Databases Regulations 1997 (<https://www.legislation.gov.uk/uksi/1997/3032/contents>), states by 'reason of the selection or arrangement of the contents of the database the database constitutes the author's own intellectual creation'. The author is the person who 'takes the initiative in obtaining, verifying or presenting the contents of a database and assumes the risk of investing in that obtaining, verification or presentation'. For NHLE, the author is HE, whose staff provided the intellectual input representing substantial investment. This can include third-party IPR provided three criteria are met: it is not excessively long; it is directly relevant and it is referenced. The most cited non-Crown Copyright sources in list entries are Pevsner and VCH. A sample of these were checked and in all the cases the information met the three criteria. Direct quotes remained a concern; although no full paragraphs from other publications were found, there were texts of inscriptions on monuments included that came from sources such as poems. The risk of a complaint for breach of copyright was adjudged to be low, and mitigation was put in place through DCMS agreeing that the Minor Amendment procedure could be used to edit descriptions if a copyright complaint was made. Following this assessment and mitigation, DCMS agreed that the whole NHLE could be published under OGL.

## Transferring the data from the former NMR dataset to local Historic HERs under OGL

Under Principles 1 and 2 of the Heritage Information Access Strategy 'HERs should be the ... primary trusted source of investigative research data' and Historic England 'should be the ... primary trusted source of national datasets, such as the NHLE'. To achieve this, a series of projects are incorporating the former NMR dataset into HERs under OGL. There were similar issues concerning third-party IPR. As this database had been published online for many years on the former PastScape website without complaints, the risk was adjudged to be low. There were GDPR concerns, as records contained the names of living people associated with the sites, such as excavators, and members of staff who wrote reports. It could be shown that this information is already in the public domain through published reports and the like. There must be lawful basis for processing that is reasonable and fair in

• • •  
*However, open publication is an ethical as well as regulatory issue and such issues can be overcome by working with information rights and legal teams, as has been done at Historic England.*

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List Entry Number	List Entry Name	Grade	Date first listed	Date of most recent amendment	Capture scale	NHLE link	Area (ha)	National Grid Reference	Easting	Northing
1021466	20 and 20A Whitbourne Springs	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>	0.012	ST8338544428	383389	144430
1021467	TENNIS CORNER FARMHOUSE ...	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 82839 50851	382839	150851
1021468	CHALCOT HOUSE	II*	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 84294 48824	384294	148824
1021469	FIVE LODGS FARMHOUSE	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 82772 50187	382772	150187
1021470	PENLEIGH MILL	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 85722 50467	385722	150467
1021471	PENLEIGH HOUSE	II	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 85622 50828	385622	150828
1021472	PENLEIGH FARMHOUSE	II	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 85641 50884	385641	150884
1021473	CHURCH OF HOLY TRINITY	II*	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 84949 49813	384949	149813
1021474	The Old Vicarage	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM	9/8/1988, 1:00 AM	1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 84943 49714	384943	149714
1021475	20, High Street	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 85304 49940	385304	149940
1021476	CHURCH OF ST MARY	I	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 85860 49039	385860	149039
1021477	UNIDENTIFIED MONUMENT IN ...	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 85852 49031	385852	149031
1021478	9 PETTODAT LANE	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST8550449795	385504	149795
1021479	BRIDGE FARMHOUSE	II	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM	1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 85854 49773	385854	149773
1021480	COULSTON HOUSE WITH OUT...	II	9/2/1980, 1:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 95185 54177	395185	154177
1021481	THE COTTAGE	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 95051 54352	395051	154352
1021482	BAYNTON HOUSE	II	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 95134 53859	395134	153859
1021483	THE HOUSE OF STEPS	II	9/11/1968, 1:00 AM	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM	1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 94929 53977	394929	153977
1021484	IVYMILL FARMHOUSE AND MILL	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 92229 54280	392229	154280
1021485	TWO ORAM MONUMENTS IN T...	II	11/5/1987, 12:00 AM		1:2500	<a href="https://historicengland.org.uk/">https://historicengland.org.uk/</a>		ST 92608 53280	392608	153280

Metadata for the listed buildings dataset on the Historic England Open Data Hub.  
 Credit: Historic England

terms of individuals' expectations; for staff names, it was viewed that they wrote reports knowing they would be made public, as they were for inclusion in a public archive. It was also important to identify authors, as the person's specialist areas of knowledge were important for evaluating their findings. It was also deemed low risk as there had never been any complaints.

**Conclusions**

- although the RPSIR is under review, it appears requirements to publish under an open licence won't change and these take precedence over guidance prioritising the commercialisation of knowledge assets
- when deciding whether you are required to publish open data, consider any funding agreements, and whether it is covered by your organisation's public task or one of the exemptions in the regulations. Recent guidance on this has been published by Government Office of Technology Transfer, including a decision-making flowchart (<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/re-use-of-public-sector-information-regulations-2015-and-crown-copyright-in-knowledge-asset-commercialisation>)
- making data open does not prevent charging for services utilising it or products derived from it
- publishing under an open licence reduces overheads of managing FOI/EIR and licence requests
- inclusion of third-party IPR does not prevent an organisation claiming database right over a dataset
- GDPR does not prohibit the publication of information containing the names of people, provided you can show that those names are already public; it's reasonable to assume that they knew their name would be made public and why including names is important
- with copyright and GDPR, take a risk-based approach – how likely is it a complaint will be made?
- data ethics go further than regulation. We have a duty to publish the results of research, and open data is part of this and meeting the FAIR principles. With some data this will also include the CARE principles; these don't prevent open publication but do require the involvement of the communities who own the data.



**Martin Newman**

Martin is Spatial Data Analysis Manager at Historic England and former Chair, and founding member, of IMSIG. As well as being a Member of ClfA he is a Chartered Member of CILIP. While studying for his chartership he developed an interest in information regulation, copyright, licensing and ethics, particularly in relation to information held in databases. He is an advocate for the publishing of open data. <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-7542-1721>

# IMSIG and the quest for FAIR data

Edmund Lee MClfA (934)

**In 2007, a proposal to establish the Information Management Special Interest Group (IMSIG) was agreed by the (then) Institute of Field Archaeologists (IFA) Council. The original constitution was developed by a steering committee that included Edmund Lee. Nearly 20 years on, IMSIG is going from strength to strength, with an overarching aim to promote standards and good practice for the management of all aspects of historic environment and wider heritage sector information through the activities of ClfA.**

Between 1996 and 2005 I worked on the development and application of standards for the data held by English Historic Environment Records. With sector partners on the Forum on Information Standards in Heritage (FISH), this work created the MIDAS data standard, and the MIDAS-based data exchange formats that underpin data sharing through the Heritage Gateway portal. One motivation I had for helping to set up IMSIG was to see if the experience learned from MIDAS and FISH could be applied to the records from archaeological investigations. Context record sheets and recording systems were similar across the sector, but the differences meant it was not easy to compare data from investigations by different units, as documented by the Roman Rural Settlements Project 2015-17 – see ADS archive (<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/view/romangl/index.cfm>). The 2025 'Trowel and error' report on public user needs highlighted the disparate nature of datasets as an issue reducing wider engagement with archaeology. The aim was (and remains, in my opinion) the production of FAIR (Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) data in line with the principles for research data adopted in other disciplines. My paper presented at the 2019 ClfA conference, 'But it's not FAIR! Making data findable, accessible, interoperable and reusable' outlines my thoughts on this topic – see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=doGk7keDbwQ>.

Commercial and project grant competition, and limits on time and expertise, mean FAIR data from archaeology is still a challenge. The technological solutions are well established; what is needed is a dialogue between excavators, archivists, researchers, IT developers and end users to develop expertise, trust and a common agenda for development. Promoting this conversation remains among the objectives for IMSIG.

Back in 1993 when I was working at the National Archaeological Record, I received an enquiry asking if I could send a printout of all Roman sites where fish bones had been found in wells. I remain optimistic that I will be able to answer that query in a few years' time...



**Edmund Lee**

Edmund is a retired archaeologist who worked mainly in the national heritage agencies in England between the 1990s and 2025. He has published on data standards issues, project management and knowledge management for the UK heritage sector.

# EXPLORING PERSPECTIVES: a conversation about the impact of information management in archaeological archives

Theodora Anastasiadou MClfA (8039); Jessica Irwin, MClfA (8490), Wessex Archaeology; Katie Green, MClfA (8680), Archaeology Data Service

**In the three questions posed below, we share our experiences of and perspectives on information management in an archaeological archives setting, whilst outlining challenges, opportunities and the importance of adhering to the FAIR guiding principles.**

**What have been the biggest information management challenges in the large infrastructure projects era?**

**Theodora:** Three things: firstly, I would highlight a lack of early consultation with archivists. A key issue discussed in past AAG events is that the project should only be considered closed by all parties on the day the archive leaves for the designated repository. Secondly, organisations working on infrastructure projects not being able to easily co-operate with each other to compare notes about the software designed for the field and its challenges. This is largely a result of working in a commercially competitive environment, but even where collaborations are possible, the different systems used lead to inevitable interoperability issues and inefficiencies in project delivery. Lastly, the need for clarification of project roles at the start of each project, with properly allocated budgets, especially where large teams are involved in producing vast amounts of data and trying to adhere to FAIR principles.

**Jessica:** I think the speed with which technology moves has made it challenging for organisations to keep up. There was a constant need to react to changes rather than plan for them and a lot of digital systems have evolved over time in response to external pressures. This has increased the need for data processing to be undertaken prior to the preparation of an archive, requiring consultation with the archives team throughout, impacting the time it takes to prepare and deposit an archive. Alongside this is the variability of museum requirements across the country; this lack of consistency adds to the complexity of archive tasks which also impacts on time.

**Katie:** The scale of the data being collected. Large files are difficult to transfer, process, disseminate and download with standard desktop computers. As the numbers and variety of file types increase more effort is required to compile the metadata and documentation to accompany them. This is exacerbated by a lack of appropriate

information management skills within the sector. Around 80 per cent of all digital archives deposited with the ADS (Archaeology Data service) are returned to a depositor at least once because of errors in the data, metadata, or simply missing documentation. This is time consuming and costly for the depositors and for the ADS. There is also the barrier to re-use to consider with large files, as researchers who do not have access to high-performance computing resources cannot re-use the files.

**What areas do you think the sector should focus on to improve information management?**

**Theodora:** Responding more quickly to current needs: I hope that the development of two new roles, – Digital Archivist and Data Officer – will contribute to better architecture systems so data can be passed on to the repositories in a coherent fashion, allowing access for all relevant parties and the general public.

**Katie:** Skills and training. This will be a focus for ADS in the coming year as we launch our new deposit system with improved guidance on data deposition and data preparation. But this also needs to be supported with better skills training in information management across the sector.

**Jessica:** I agree with Katie that skills and training should be the focus. As we move towards fully digital recording systems it is crucial that staff at every level appreciate the importance of information management and the impact it has on the creation and preservation of the archaeological archive.

**What do you see as the biggest opportunities that information management will bring to archaeological archives in the future?**

**Theodora:** The ability for data to be used by all internal and external stakeholders faster and accurately to produce an informative publication with potential for re-interpretation and funding of new projects.

**Jessica:** There is no doubt about the increased opportunities information

management brings to archaeological archives, enabling researchers and members of the public to freely access grey literature reports and digital archives from anywhere in the world. The growth of regional research agendas and linking of data across online platforms throws open the doors for new and innovative approaches to re-using the archaeological resource that would previously have been inconceivable.

**Katie:** I think the biggest opportunity lies in greater interoperability of data. If we can make our archaeological archives more interoperable with each other, we would create a wealth of opportunity for research and innovation within the archaeological sector in the form of cross-site and cross-organisational investigations. Improved interoperability will also enable our data to be used outside the sector in innovative ways, maximising their value, impact and legacy.



*In store with one part of a physical infrastructure project archive. Credit: Headland Archaeology on behalf of MHI*



*Hybrid physical and digital recording of a feature on a rural site. Credit: Wessex Archaeology*



*Digital tablet recording on an industrial site. Credit: Wessex Archaeology*



*Barcoding boxes for tracking archives in storage. Credit: Wessex Archaeology*

**Theodora Anastasiadou**

Theodora has a bachelor's degree (University of Birmingham) and master's degrees (University of Birmingham/University of York) and is an archives specialist with over 30 years' experience. This is combined with a detailed knowledge of fieldwork practice in UK commercial archaeology and the Greek Archaeological Service (Ministry of Culture). She is the current Chair of the AAG for a second term and an Ordinary Committee member for IMSIG.



**Jessica Irwin**

Jessica is the Archives Manager for Wessex Archaeology, overseeing the archives team across five national offices. Beginning her career as a field archaeologist in 1999, she undertook a BSc at Sheffield University, joining Wessex Archaeology in 2011. Jessica is an Ordinary Committee member of both the AAG and IMSIG and represents ClfA on the OASIS Management Board.



**Katie Green**

Katie is Head of Collections Development at the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), where she has worked since 2013. Katie is responsible for managing the team of digital archivists, collections growth, and key partnerships. She is the Vice Chair of IMSIG and an Ordinary Committee member of the AAG and represents ADS on the Archaeological Archives Forum.



# AI and cultural heritage: critical reflections and future pathways

Laura O'Connor MCifA (10992), IMSIG Chair, Historic Environment Scotland

In October 2025, the ClfA Information Management Special Interest Group (IMSIG) hosted a day of the ClfA Innovation Festival to showcase artificial intelligence (AI) in cultural heritage. It was a very popular and well-attended event, reflecting a strong appetite across the sector for considered, practice-led discussion around AI and its implications for heritage and information management.



The *AI and Cultural Heritage: Critical Reflections and Future Pathways* session positioned AI not as a novelty, but as an increasingly implemented element of everyday heritage practice. Across papers and panel discussions, AI was consistently framed through familiar professional concerns: data quality, governance, ethics, transparency, skills and long-term sustainability.

A recording of the session can be accessed at: (<https://www.archaeologists.net/events-training/events/innovation-festival>)

### Morning session: case studies in practice

Holly Wright (ADS) opened with an introduction to the EU-funded COST Action Managing AI for Archaeology (MAIA). This international interdisciplinary network builds a shared community of practice around the responsible use of AI in archaeology, focusing on training data, bias and transparency. ArchAIDE and AUTOMATA were referenced as AI projects supporting ceramic and lithics identification, illustrating both the potential and the long-term sustainability challenges of AI in archaeological practice. Wright also highlighted the need for archaeologists to remain critically literate participants when it comes to AI-enabled workflows.

Anthony Corns (Discovery Programme) presented the *ADAF Tool* (Automated Detection of Archaeological Features), which uses machine learning to identify archaeological monuments in ALS (LiDAR) data. By training models on known features, large landscapes could be analysed efficiently. Again, human-led expert validation remains essential. Corns emphasised familiar information management challenges: inconsistent site survival, data quality and the principle that 'rubbish in, rubbish out' still applies.

Laura Hone (Historic Environment Scotland) demonstrated modelling bat roost suitability across HES sites using HDBSCAN clustering and ELAPID (a Python-based MaxEnt alternative). The tool analyses environmental and structural predictors to prioritise HES properties with limited survey evidence. The model performance aligned well with existing literature, producing spatial predictions and habitat suitability heat maps that were successfully integrated into operational workflows.

Evie Brown (Welsh Government) illustrated how AI has been used to create a dataset of historic woodland in Wales using 19th-century Ordnance Survey mapping. Through extensive manual labelling and model training involving nearly 600,000 generated images, AI technology enhanced identification of lost or altered woodland areas. While early results are promising, misclassification highlighted the need for iterative refinement and quality control.

Tom Elliott (Historic England) explored the use of machine learning in lithic sourcing for Mesolithic assemblages from the Lower Wye Valley and Welsh Marches. Using

Session panel members Laura O'Connor (IMSIG Chair), Robert Sutton, Evie Brown, Anthony Corns, Holly Wright, Laura Hone, Jessica Irwin (IMSIG Committee member), Tom Elliot and Ben Wallace. Credit: Laura O'Connor



geological sampling data and scientific analysis, the work demonstrated how AI can assist in recognising patterns within complex datasets, augmenting – but not replacing – specialist interpretation.

### Afternoon panel: four themes

The afternoon panel comprised the morning speakers plus Robert Sutton (Cotswold Archaeology) and Ben Wallace (Warwickshire County Council), to explore four key themes:

#### • Opportunities:

AI's ability to uncover patterns within large, complex datasets to support prioritisation and decision-making. Panellists emphasised the value of iterative development – fail, learn, improve – alongside careful model training and appropriate tool selection.

#### • Challenges:

Data quality, bias and interpretation. Heritage datasets are often fragmented and incomplete, and panellists cautioned against outputs appearing authoritative without sufficient context. Validation, quality control, quality assurance, documentation and transparency were repeatedly advocated for.

#### • Ethics and legal considerations:

References were made to frameworks such as BRAID UK and emerging organisational guidance, including work underway at ADS. Key issues included environmental cost, data sovereignty, authorship, copyright and the need for clarity around AI-generated outputs. The importance of robust quality assurance and ethical governance was also clear.

#### • Future directions:

Skills and capacity building. AI literacy – encompassing data sourcing, ethics and knowledge building – was seen as essential. Panellists highlighted apprenticeships, mentoring, and evolving roles, noting that new professional roles will continue to emerge. Collaboration and shared standards were consistently identified as key to responsible AI adoption.

When asked to summarise their hopes or warnings for AI in cultural heritage, panellists urged the sector to 'master but not trust' AI, remain proactive and be 'playful but mindful'.

‘AI is a tool to try to master but not trust’
‘Awareness of possibilities but also risks’

‘Excited but cautious’
‘To be comfortable in its use’
‘Be proactive, not reactive’

‘Collaboration is key’

A summary of the panel's concluding thoughts on their hopes and/or warnings for AI use and cultural heritage. These can be viewed in full via the YouTube session recording

### Conclusion

The session reinforced that AI is not a magical solution; it must be mindfully integrated, with a continued need for 'human' involvement. In terms of information management, AI is another layer against an already complex backdrop of data creation, interpretation and stewardship. Arguably, responsible use depends less on technology itself and more on professional judgement, governance, skills and collaboration.

IMSIG is well placed to lead on these discussions. By bringing practitioners together to share insights and build guiding principles, IMSIG can support informed engagement with AI's practical, ethical and strategic challenges. As this event demonstrated, the use of AI technology is becoming more prevalent in heritage; the challenge now is to ensure it is used thoughtfully, transparently and in line with the values that underpin professionalism within our sector.

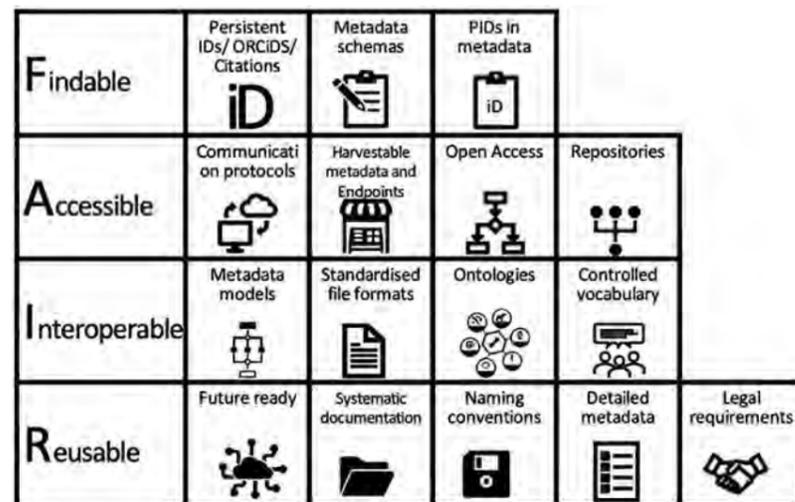


Laura O'Connor

Laura is Senior Digital Innovation Programme Officer at Historic Environment Scotland and Chair of ClfA's Information Management Group. With 18+ years in archaeological survey and mapping, she has delivered major digital documentation and archaeological survey projects at sites including HS2, the Roman Baths, Skara Brae, Stirling Castle, Mousa Broch, and Crumlin Road Courthouse.

# Making archaeological grey literature work harder: FAIR data and AI as allies in information management

**Grey literature (the reports, assessments and technical documents forming archaeology's backbone) represents both the sector's greatest resource and its most persistent information management challenge. Thousands of excavation reports sit in archives, rich with data that could transform our understanding of past societies. Yet accessing and reusing this information remains frustratingly difficult. The question isn't whether we have enough data; it's whether we can find and use what we already have.**



The FAIR data principles as interpreted for this article. Credit: Go-FAIR n.d.

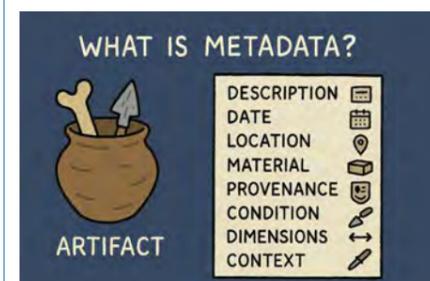
Consider a typical research scenario: someone investigating medieval diet in northern England needs bioarchaeological data from excavation reports. Where do they start? Which archives hold relevant reports? What terminology did different authors use for the same conditions? These aren't edge cases, they're everyday challenges that consume countless research hours and often lead to data simply being regenerated rather than re-used.

Recent research examining heritage data governance within England's High Street Heritage Action Zones programme revealed similar patterns. Despite extensive creation of valuable datasets, the long-term accessibility and reusability of project data was not a focus, meaning the legacy is uncertain. Archive deposits were made in some cases, but whether future researchers could effectively access and understand that information was far from guaranteed. This extends beyond

individual projects to affect entire regeneration programmes, where extensive community engagement created highly valuable content, but current practices risk this information becoming effectively invisible within a few years.

The answer lies not in creating more documentation requirements, but in making smarter use of what we produce. Two approaches offer practical pathways forward that archaeological organisations can adopt now, regardless of size or technical capacity: FAIR data principles and artificial intelligence.

The FAIR principles (making data Findable, Accessible, Interoperable and Reusable) provide a framework that translates abstract ideals into concrete actions. This isn't about achieving perfection; it's about incremental improvements that compound over time. Much of it is easily operable. What matters is having a plan: where will materials be deposited, and how will they remain available? *Findable* means creating metadata that helps people discover work. Using effective IDs and ensuring these are in the metadata keeps resources discoverable. *Accessible* doesn't require expensive infrastructure, rather it requires collaborations with archives such as the Archaeology Data Service, encouraging data to become as open as possible. *Interoperable* means using standards that allow data to connect across projects. Simple choices like using Getty vocabularies for object types or open file formats create compatibility without additional work. *Reusable* depends on clear documentation. Future users need to understand methodology, terminology and restrictions. Rather than generic file names like 'Report\_Final\_v3.pdf', descriptive titles and proper catalogue entries make the difference between data being lost and being discovered five years later.

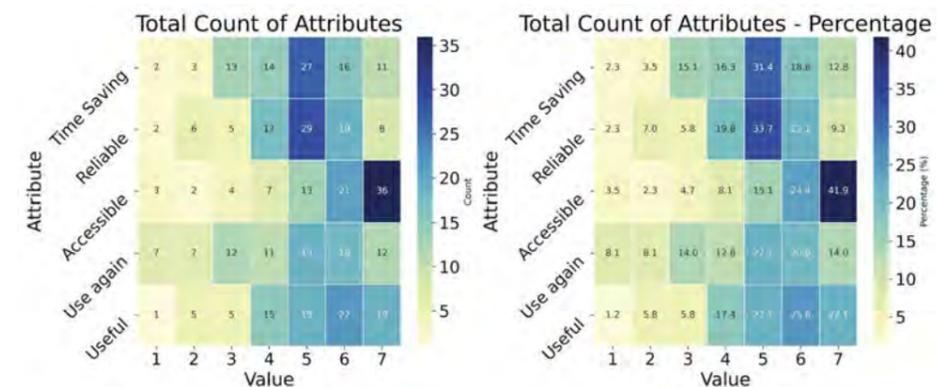


Metadata and how they apply to archaeology. Credit: Alphaeus Lien-Talks, using GPT

Alphaeus Lien-Talks, Historic Royal Palaces

Natural Language Processing offers tangible solutions to grey literature challenges. This isn't distant future technology, it's here now. Recent work with Crossrail excavation reports led to the development of OPES (Osteoarchaeological and Palaeopathological Entity Search), a system that automatically identifies and extracts bioarchaeological information from report text. Using Named Entity Recognition, the system can process hundreds of pages in minutes, identifying skeletal elements, pathological conditions and demographic data that would take days to extract manually.

The results were encouraging. The system achieved strong performance across different report styles and terminologies, successfully handling variations like 'cribra orbitalia' versus 'orbital cribra'. Evaluation with 83 participants across expert, student and public groups demonstrated that AI-assisted search significantly improved people's ability to find relevant information, reducing time spent and creating tools that were useful. Performance metrics showed the system could identify bioarchaeological entities with accuracy rates comparable to human experts, whilst dramatically reducing extraction time.



Combined results: (a) count of respondents for each score 1–7 (Value) with 7 being most agreed with; (b) proportions of that score. All criteria showed statistically significant differences between groups ( $p < 0.05$ ). Credit: Lien-Talks, 2026

## References

Lien-Talks, A., 2026. Evaluating Natural Language Processing and Named Entity Recognition for Bioarchaeological Data Reuse [online]. Preprints.org preprint. Posted 10 September 2025. Available at: <https://doi.org/10.20944/preprints202509.0822.v1> [Accessed 14 January 2026].

This matters because it demonstrates feasibility, not just possibility. Archaeological organisations don't need massive technical teams to benefit from these approaches. Open-source tools exist, and collaborative development can spread costs and benefits across the sector. The OPES system was built using freely available Python libraries and training methods that could be replicated for other archaeological specialisms.

Practical steps organisations can take now include adopting consistent metadata schemas, depositing materials with trusted digital archives like ADS, and exploring partnerships for developing shared tools. The Computer Applications and Quantitative Methods in Archaeology (CAA) offers one venue for connecting with others working on similar challenges.

By embracing FAIR principles as a roadmap and viewing AI as a practical ally, the sector can make grey literature work considerably harder. The data exists; what's needed is ensuring it remains findable, understandable and useful. The alternative means repeatedly rebuilding knowledge that's already been created. The sector can do better, and increasingly, it has the tools to prove it.



Alphaeus Lien-Talks

Alphaeus is a PhD Candidate in Digital Archaeology at the University of York, working with Historic England and the Archaeology Data Service, as well as a Heritage Scientist at Historic Royal Palaces, researching heritage data governance and approaches to making archaeological data more accessible through AI and digital preservation. He chairs the CAA UK national chapter and CAA Special Interest Group on Machine Learning and AI and develops practical tools and frameworks that make archaeological information more findable and reusable. Find out more at [www.AlfieTalks.com](http://www.AlfieTalks.com)

# PRACTISING ETHICAL COMPETENCE IN ARCHAEOLOGY

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Professional membership organisations such as ClfA have a central role in maintaining integrity and trust across a wide range of industries – from engineering and finance, medical and legal, to education, technology and archaeology. These professional organisations set standards, guide behaviour and ensure the accountability of their accredited members. Through their codes of conduct they set out the expected ethical standard of conduct, shaping how individuals and organisations act in ways that protect the public interest and enhance the reputation of their professions.

The ethical standards set out in these codes of conduct go beyond compliance with laws. The principles and rules in ClfA's *Code of conduct* have been created by ClfA professionals and encompass honesty, fairness, responsibility, integrity and respect. They are there to help members consider and deal with situations and make responsible decisions, where right and wrong are not easily perceived and may not even be fixed.

Ethical challenges are rarely black and white and often require us to balance competing interests. Professional organisations can also help with this by offering training and resources to support members in navigating these dilemmas.

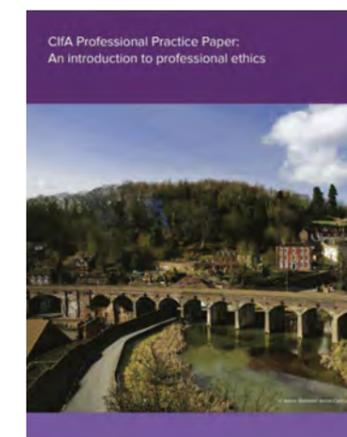
ClfA has a range of different resources available, listed below, and runs regular online ethics workshops. These interactive workshops allow participants to consider case studies developed from real-life experiences in archaeological practice. The case studies explore the different roles members may have, and the conflicting perspectives and motivations. The workshops tease out the ethical dimensions of everyday work and where these may go beyond the contract when perspectives and motivations differ. They allow those taking part to practise making ethical judgements by discussing the various considerations with peers and provide techniques for comparing options which can be taken away to use for ethical decisions in real life.

Having awareness of ethical standards and being able to make judgements based on these are important skills to develop. They help to enhance the credibility of individuals and offer assurance that

decisions are made within a recognised framework and in the public interest.

The other ethical resources available on our website [www.archaeologists.net/work/profession/ethics](http://www.archaeologists.net/work/profession/ethics) include

- ClfA *Code of conduct*
- *Everyday ethics* elearning module – an introduction to professional ethics, also explaining how the *Code of conduct*, standards and guidance help us to avoid acting unethically
- the archaeological ethics database – brings together sources on archaeological ethics in a single place for the use of students, researchers and professional archaeologists. It includes over 500 sources relating to ethics in archaeology
- *An introduction to professional ethics* Professional Practice Paper – a starting point to help archaeologists develop awareness of ethical issues in the profession. It examines what ethics are and what comprises ethical behaviours, and then, using specific case studies relevant to archaeology, sets out a series of questions and discussions on how these issues could be addressed. The case studies cover topics such as gifts and hospitality, equality and diversity, conflicts of interest, and archaeology
- ethical case studies – this document includes a variety of ethical scenarios which may be familiar to professional archaeologists. These are in addition to the case studies contained in the Professional Practice Paper



An introduction to professional ethics  
Professional Practice Paper. Credit: ClfA

“ [The ClfA ethical competence workshop] was really good and thought provoking. It definitely made me more aware of ethics. It's something we all deal with all the time but actually thinking about it is so useful ”

# A life on the tiles: a conference in memory of Dr Philip Mills

Ulla Rajala MCIfA (5739), Jeremy Evans and Mark Bell



Phil in Syria in 2008.  
Credit: Ulla Rajala

**The world of Roman pottery and CBM studies suffered a huge loss 18 months ago with the passing of Dr Philip Mills, a CfA member for 24 years and former Chair of the CfA Finds Group. On 20 September 2025 a group of colleagues, friends and family members gathered at the Birmingham and Midlands Institute to honour his memory at a day conference. The idea came from Dr Jeremy Evans, former employer and colleague, assisted by his co-organiser Mark Bell.**

The day started with Phil's widow, Ulla Rajala, talking about Phil as a private person. This showed the personal side of Phil's life as a family man.

This was followed by Professor *emeritus* David Mattingly (University of Leicester) sharing his memories of Phil as a PhD student. This was a warm talk that emphasised the personal growth Phil went through from timid PhD applicant with a 2:2 and no master's

degree to confident specialist in Mediterranean CBM trade networks.

Duncan Brown followed with 'Not subliminal', concentrating on Phil's legacy in the CfA Finds Group. He showed how Phil progressed from a fervent critic to chair of the group. Phil contributed to the creation of the Toolkit for Specialist Reporting (<https://www.archaeologists.net/work/toolkits/specialist-reporting/introduction>) and promoted proper contracts for finds specialists, something that is still not standard practice.

Dr Hilary Cool (Barbican Associates) presented 'Glasses, pots and beer. Exploring glass use in Meroitic Nubia', referring to Phil's liking of a good pint. She made a convincing case for local glass production in Meroe against the current consensus of glass being imported from Roman Egypt.

Colin Wallace, in his 'Sorting pottery in the dark – how I met Phil Mills and was led to the light', pencilled the outline of Phil's work in Bulgaria.

Dr Peter Warry presented 'The Brandier Tillery: 3 kilns, 9 drains, 218 stamped tiles'. This talk was pure CBM heaven for the aficionados but a little obscure for those who were not.

After lunch, Professor Kevin Butcher (University of Warwick) remembered Phil's fondness for bad Kung Fu movies in 'The afterlife of ancient coins'. He suggested that some of the chance finds of unusual Roman coins in unexpected places would be a result of the use of any suitable base metal coinage as loose change as late as 1971!

Jerry Evans presented, on behalf of himself and Phil, the talk 'Big data on Romano-British pottery and dating – a first attempt'. This interesting paper showed a real and dramatic drop-off in pottery use after the 190s AD that persisted for at least a century. This is possibly linked to the Antonine plague.

Dr Nick Beaudry (Université du Québec à Rimouski, Canada) gave his paper 'A city behind the frontier: the late Roman fortress of Zaldapa Bulgaria' via Teams. Beaudry gave an outline of this international project, for which Phil was an integral contributor to the research proposal.

Alice Lyons presented in her paper 'Recent work and new discoveries: a view from the east of England' her favourite find type – ceramic cauldrons. Lyons pieced together the known examples of these beautiful objects and was looking for more. She also presented hope for the future as Oxford Archaeology trains up new Roman pottery specialists.

Afternoon tea and surprise champagne, courtesy of Jerry Evans, was followed by Ian Rowlandson's paper. 'By fire and violence? A review of the pottery from Adrian Oswald's excavations' showed the excavations of Norton Disney as an example of how current events affect interpretation of sites and that the settlement at the site continued longer than Oswald suggested.

Pete Wilson's paper 'Building understanding: Phil and Yorkshire' highlighted the effect of the loss of Phil; he had participated in the analysis of some key sites in Yorkshire and helped in the functional interpretation of many of the sites.

The conference was finished in style with professor *emeritus* Martin Millett (University of Cambridge), who in his paper 'Patterns of deposition at Aldborough (*Isurium Brigantum*)' presented the preliminary results of the study that started in 1985, coincidentally the year of Phil's first ever excavation. He presented a preliminary study of soil volumes and find densities from different types of sites in Yorkshire.

Throughout the conference the atmosphere was uplifting and cheerful but tempered by the more

serious realisation of the importance of Phil's work and the lack of a younger generation of finds specialists.

The papers were all videoed and are available to view on YouTube at <https://www.youtube.com/live/tEaPm5m4zy4?si=bG343uXnfpeoc6xq>. They will also be available on The Study Group for Roman Pottery website.



The audience listening to Martin Millett's lecture. Credit: Mary Smith

## Ulla Rajala

Ulla is Phil's wife, fellow archaeologist and mother to their son Alexander. She is currently affiliated with Stockholm University, Sweden. She and Phil edited the Oxbow volume *Forms of Dwelling* together.



## Mark Bell

Mark has a BSc in Archaeological Sciences from the University of Bradford and an MPhil in Computer Simulation from Staffordshire University. He currently makes his living in IT but still has archaeology as an interest.

## Jerry Evans

Jerry is a freelance Roman pottery specialist with a PhD from the University of Bradford. He is a Director of Barbican Research Associates.

# CIfA SCOTTISH GROUP IN-PERSON NETWORKING EVENT

Lisa Bird ACIfA (9096), AOC Archaeology Group and CIfA Scottish Group Secretary

## Meeting new people in the Early People gallery

The CIfA Scottish Group networking event took place at the National Museum of Scotland (NMS) in Edinburgh on 12 September 2025. Designed intentionally as a small event, limited to 30 attendees, the aim was to facilitate small group networking and discussions of archaeological practice to allow equality of opportunity to engage, alongside listening to some exciting and well-known speakers.

## The venue

The day began with an introduction to the NMS by the new Keeper of Scottish History and Archaeology, Dr Rebecca Jones. The purpose-built Museum of Scotland building opened in 1998, after our own chair, David Connolly, had helped complete excavations before the first foundations were laid. The design drew on the work of the modernist architect Le Corbusier and was influenced by Scottish vernacular architecture, with spiral staircases, towers and narrow 'arrow loop' windows in the style of a medieval castle. Dr Jones explored the challenge of keeping the collections up to date in a purpose-built building with architecturally designed exhibition spaces and sculptural artwork, and this includes the Early People gallery, located in the basement of the building

with very little signage. The gallery uses an innovative thematic concept chosen by the original designers, rather than the more conventional chronological approach, which challenged people to look at the past differently. One change already proposed is a new lighting scheme for the Early People gallery in 2026. Further alterations are currently in discussion, and it is an exciting time for the re-imagining of the exhibition of Scotland's more distant past.

## Breaking the ice

An unconventional ice-breaker saw individual objects within the Early People gallery chosen by attendees to present to the group if they wanted to. Attendees were encouraged to choose objects which they had a personal or professional attachment to, or indeed just an interest in talking about with the group. Objects ranged from the Hilton of Cadboll Pictish Cross Slab to a collection of daggers, to the tattered remains of a Roman tent. Professional stories were shared, along with personal connections to the objects. Discussions also arose around the possession and repatriation of objects within local communities in Scotland, the ability of objects to tell stories in the past and in the present and the tangible and intangible linguistic connotations of objects. All round, it was a lively few hours with a lot of chit-chat time with significant group involvement and conversation, exactly as hoped for. When people talk to each other in this way, barriers come down and networking truly works.

## Conversations

Three talks, focused on archaeological practice, were presented during the afternoon:

- Steve Birch (West Coast Archaeological Services): High Pasture Cave – ten key moments from discovery to publication
- Jeff Sanders (Society of Antiquaries of Scotland): Meeting a myriad of archaeological audiences
- Liz Robson (University of Stirling): The practical application of social values in Scotland's heritage

The links between the three presentations resulted in a wide-ranging discussion on the potential for innovative archaeological projects to provide social value and public benefit for a range of different audiences, including those communities which do not naturally identify with archaeology and cultural heritage. It would be interesting to see these discussions transform into some 'talking point' documents that could help inspire innovation and thinking outside the box.

Attendees reported that the day had been enjoyable and productive. The Scottish Group welcomes all feedback from attendees and anyone else interested. It is hoped that the Scottish Group could hold similar events across Scotland in the future, basing networking days at regional museums including (but not limited to) the future new Inverness Museum, The Burrell Collection in Glasgow, Kilmartin Museum in Argyll and the V&A in Dundee (venue willing).

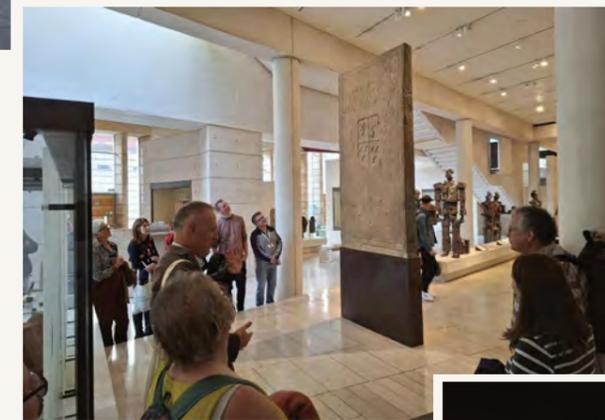
We would like to thank Matt Ritchie (Scottish Group CIfA), Dr Rebecca Jones (NMS), and Cara Burton (CIfA), and all those that made this event possible.



Attendees in the NMS, discussing objects within the Early People exhibit. Credit: Lisa Bird



Attendees listen and participate in talks focused on archaeological practice. Credit: Lisa Bird

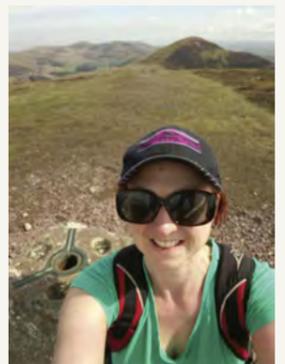


Word cloud created from the discussion of objects from the NMS Early People exhibit. Credit: Lisa Bird



## Lisa Bird

Lisa is Secretary for the CIfA Scottish Group. She graduated the University of Edinburgh in 2015 with an MA (Hons) in Archaeology and subsequently graduated with an MSc (Distinction) in Archaeological Sciences from the University of Bradford in 2022. Lisa works within the consultancy team at AOC Archaeology Group.



# ARCHAEOLOGY IN FOCUS

## a new exhibition area at *denkmal* Leipzig 2026 – a cooperation between ClfA Deutschland and *denkmal*

Svenja Partheil MCIfA (11519) and Sascha Piffko MCIfA (9626), SPAU GmbH

### About ClfA Deutschland: current activities and initiatives

ClfA Deutschland (<https://www.archaeologists.net/groups/deutschland>) is an Area Group of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and serves as a key point of connection into the European Union. We act as a central contact for all those working in archaeology and related disciplines, including professionals arriving from abroad to support major infrastructure projects in Germany. The sector is currently affected by a significant shortage of skilled archaeological personnel, which has direct consequences for the timely and high-quality implementation of development and infrastructure schemes.

Against this backdrop, ClfA Deutschland and the Working Group of Archaeological Specialist Companies have jointly appealed to HTW Berlin to safeguard existing training pathways in restoration and excavation technology and to consider establishing a dual study programme. The closure of such programmes would exacerbate the existing shortage of qualified staff and undermine the professional capacity required across Germany and Europe more widely.

ClfA Deutschland further supports the European Manifesto on the Protection of Archaeological Heritage, issued by the Plataforma Estatal de Profesionales de la Arqueología, which calls for strong, future-oriented structures in archaeological education, practice and heritage management. This aligns with our ongoing efforts to uphold professional standards and strengthen the visibility and resilience of the archaeological sector. Detailed statements about these are available in our LinkedIn posts below.

- ‘Archäologische Fachfirmen appellieren an die HTW Berlin ...’  
<https://bit.ly/3NxpbeO>
- ‘ClfA Deutschland spricht sich entschieden...’  
<https://bit.ly/4qA9rXb>
- ‘Wie wir bei ClfA Deutschland bereits berichtet haben...’  
<https://bit.ly/49QxoCe>
- ‘ClfA Deutschland unterstützt...’  
<https://bit.ly/4a4063T>

In addition, ClfA Deutschland held a highly successful annual conference this year, bringing together more than 80 participants for a focused programme on hazardous substances and health protection in archaeological practice – an issue of increasing relevance across fieldwork and laboratory environments.

### denkmal 2026: archaeology takes centre stage

*denkmal* <https://www.denkmal-leipzig.de/de/>, Europe’s leading trade fair for heritage conservation, restoration and the refurbishment of historic buildings, will place a new emphasis on archaeology in 2026. The event brings together professionals from across Europe every two years and regularly hosts around 500 exhibitors and more than 13,000 visitors. For the first time, archaeology will form a distinct and fully structured component of the programme.

### A collaborative initiative

ClfA Deutschland and *denkmal* have strengthened their partnership to establish a dedicated Archaeology Exhibition Area, which will be presented from 5 to 7 November 2026 in Leipzig. This development recognises the central role that archaeology plays in heritage management and the wider cultural sector. The new section is designed to reflect the breadth of archaeological practice and to support knowledge-sharing among practitioners, employers, researchers and policy makers. Exhibitors and visitors will be able to engage with

- archaeological prospection and excavation
- digital and geospatial documentation
- 3D recording, modelling and visualisation
- restoration practice
- public engagement and interpretation



The exhibition aims to highlight how archaeological expertise informs decision-making on landscape management, planning processes, tourism development and major infrastructure projects, including energy-transition schemes across Europe.

### Connection with MUTEK

The exhibition will run alongside MUTEK, the International Trade Fair for Museum and Exhibition Technology. This parallel setting provides opportunities for joint discussion on the presentation of archaeological material, visitor engagement and the use of digital tools in communicating research outcomes. The proximity of the two events supports an integrated view of archaeological work, from field investigation to public dissemination.

### Responding to sector demands

Archaeology in Germany is currently shaped by significant pressures arising from the expansion of national and European energy infrastructure. This context requires coordinated professional capacity, consistent standards and constructive collaboration across the sector. *denkmal* provides an established platform for addressing these issues and for strengthening professional networks.

The archaeological associations ClfA Deutschland and Deutschen Gesellschaft für Ur- und Frühgeschichte e.V (DGUF) will also hold their annual conferences during the event, adding a programme of specialist sessions and discussion forums for attendees.

### Opportunities for participation

The Archaeology Exhibition Area is open to

- commercial archaeological organisations
- heritage agencies and planning authorities
- museums and research institutions
- universities and training providers
- suppliers of excavation, recording and analytical equipment
- organisations working in cultural tourism and outreach



Credit: Büro für Archäologie Neupert, Kozik & Simm  
GbR\_Markus Hirnich

The trade fair offers opportunities to showcase services, research and technology to a broad professional audience. It also provides space for employers and prospective employees to connect. Registration information can be found on *denkmal*'s website at <https://www.denkmal-leipzig.de/de/ausstellen/ausstellungsbereich-archaeologie/>

### A professional meeting point in Leipzig

Leipzig offers a diverse cultural environment, with museums, historic sites and research institutions located close to the exhibition centre, making it a fitting venue for European heritage professionals.



### Svenja Partheil

Svenja is an anthropologist and head of finds management at SPAU GmbH. She studied biology with a focus on anthropology and worked freelance in physical anthropology before moving into corporate archaeology in 2020. Since 2024, she has served as President of ClfA Deutschland.



### Sascha Piffko

Sascha is the Managing Director of SPAU GmbH, a leading archaeological service provider in Hesse. He studied archaeology, history and law in Giessen and is a founding member of ClfA Deutschland, where he serves on the advisory board.

# THE ARCHAEOLOGICAL ACHIEVEMENT AWARDS 2025

**ClfA is a proud supporter of the Archaeological Achievement Awards, which showcase excellence in UK and Irish archaeology. The awards celebrate great examples of sustainability, public dissemination, engagement and participation, learning, training and skills, in addition to the contribution of early-career archaeologists.**

More widely, the awards highlight how archaeology benefits society and can make positive impacts by enriching lives, supporting wellbeing and reinforcing our sense of place while promoting high standards of practice founded on ethical practice.

The judging panel is made up of representatives from across the archaeological community, chaired by the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI)'s James Kyle. This year ClfA was represented on the panel by our Head of Professional Standards, Jen Parker Wooding, who said:

*'This was my first time representing ClfA in the judging of the Archaeological Achievement Awards, and it was an honour to be involved. The work being undertaken by archaeologists across the UK and the Republic of Ireland is inspiring and it was wonderful being part of a process that shines a light on this. It was also brilliant seeing projects involving ClfA members and Registered Organisations.'*

ClfA Co-CEOs Kate Geary and Alex Llewellyn said:

*'The Awards reflect ClfA's aims to promote the public benefit that professionalism in archaeology brings, to show that archaeologists have a value to society equivalent to other professions, and to encourage archaeologists to have pride in their professionalism.'*<sup>1</sup>



The awards were presented at the Great Hall, Queen's University, Belfast, at an event hosted by local poet Morgan L. Ventura. Archaeologists from across the public, private and third sectors attended the event. There were also fantastic performances from local traditional music groups Footnote Productions and Ancient Music Ireland, who provided a display of reconstructed ancient instruments for attendees to view, and performed using some of them.

ClfA would like to congratulate all the shortlisted and winning entries for 2025, but especially

- ClfA Registered Organisation Oxford Archaeology, who were highly commended for their Fieldwork Training Pathways in the Learning, Training and Skills category
- Kayleigh Hibberd, winner of the Early Career Archaeologist award, who successfully completed her Archaeological Technician Apprenticeship Level 3 in 2025. This involved undertaking a combination of employer training and off-the-job training, provided by Cirencester College, with ClfA Qualifications ([www.archaeologists.net/careers/qualifications](http://www.archaeologists.net/careers/qualifications)) delivering her end-point assessment.

Full details of the shortlisted, highly commended and winning entries can be found on the Council for British Archaeology's website: <https://www.archaeologyuk.org/resource/meet-the-winners-of-the-2025-archaeological-achievement-awards.html>

<sup>1</sup> ClfA's Strategy and values (<https://www.archaeologists.net/about/values-strategy>)



*Early career award winner, Kayleigh Hibberd. Credit: CBA/Collette Creative Photography*



*Archaeology and sustainability and Outstanding achievement award winner, Farming Rathcroghan – Sustainable Farming in the Rathcroghan Archaeological Landscape. Credit: CBA/Collette Creative Photography*



*Learning, training and skills award winner, Teffont Archaeology Project. Credit: Albert Barnes*



*Public dissemination or presentation award winner, St Anne's Park Community Archaeology Project (STACAP). Credit: CBA/Collette Creative Photography*



*Engagement and participation award winners, The Big Bronze Age Boat Build and The Close – The Archaeology of Romany Gypsies. Credit: CBA/Collette Creative Photography*

## Member news

### Andy Coupe PCIfA (13416)

I returned to archaeology after 20 years as a history teacher, when I decided that life was too short to miss out on the adventure that is working in archaeology!

I applied for PCIfA accreditation because, having moved from teaching, I had seen the benefits of accreditation and accountability that come from membership of professional bodies, and felt it was important to gain this recognition from one's peers.

ClfA helps to promote archaeology to the companies we work with, providing them with reassurance that we are a reputable profession – ClfA advocates for archaeology and represents us to the industries that we work with.

Also, with the professionalisation of archaeology as a career, a lot of commercial archaeology companies see accreditation by ClfA as an important sign that you are taking your career development seriously.

Finally, joining as a PCIfA was a crucial step in my own journey back into archaeology – moving up (hopefully!) through the levels of ClfA accreditation will be an effective way to mark my progress over the coming years.



### Natalie Wood MCIfA (11191)

As a Principal Historic Environment Consultant at Lanpro, I work across major development and infrastructure projects throughout the UK. I specialise in assessing archaeological potential, managing fieldwork and advising clients on heritage risk, from design inception through to delivery. My work spans Environmental Impact Assessment, desk-based assessments, mitigation strategies and project design, often on large and complex schemes such as nationally significant solar infrastructure projects and multi-phase urban redevelopments.

I began my career in field archaeology before moving into consultancy roles at MOLA and WSP, where I developed expertise in planning policy, heritage legislation and collaborative working within multidisciplinary project teams. I now lead heritage inputs on projects, manage subcontractors, engage with local authorities and support junior colleagues through informal mentoring.

I decided to apply for MCIfA because I see professional accreditation as an important part of maintaining high standards within the sector. Achieving MCIfA accreditation reflects my commitment to ethical practice, evidence-based decision-making and the creation of public benefit through responsible heritage management. I hope it will also help me contribute more actively to the profession, support others in their own development, and continue building a strong and accountable heritage practice.



# Member news Obituaries

## Dr Andy Michael Jones HND BA PhD FSA Scot FSA MCIfA (1080)

*Obituary by Francis Shepherd ACIfA (9103)*

We are deeply saddened to announce the passing of Andy Jones following a short illness. His loss is felt profoundly by his family, friends and colleagues at Cornwall Archaeological Unit (CAU) and the wider archaeological community.

Andy was a leading figure in British prehistory, with a passion for the Neolithic and Bronze Age. Over more than three decades, he made exceptional contributions through fieldwork and scholarship. Joining CAU in 1992, he became Principal Archaeologist in 2011 and Projects Manager in 2019. His work included excavations at Stannon Down, Scarcewater, Camelford School and Sennen, and research projects at Clodgy Moor, North Cliffs and Mount's Bay. He was instrumental in publishing the Whitehorse Hill cist – one of Britain's most significant Early Bronze Age burials – and studied log coffin burials and rock art sites such as Hendraburnick and Trethevy Quoit.

Andy earned his PhD from the University of Exeter in 2005 and published influential works on Cornish barrows, settlement and prehistoric tinworking. A Fellow of the Society of Antiquaries, he served on several professional councils.

Above all, Andy was a devoted husband and father. He is survived by his wife and children. His warmth, humour and generosity touched all who knew him, and he will be deeply missed.



*Andy Jones at the Whitehorse Hill cist in 2011. Credit: Cornwall Archaeological Unit*

## Carl Champness ACIfA (2518)

*Obituary by Oxford Archaeology*

Carl Champness, a cherished colleague and friend, suddenly and unexpectedly passed away in September at the age of 49. His death has come as a profound shock to everyone who knew him.

Carl held a BA (Hons) from University of Wales, Lampeter, and an MSc in Geoarchaeology from the University of Reading. His career spanned over 25 years: he joined Oxford Archaeology in 2004, after spending his early career at Hertfordshire Archaeology and Wessex Archaeology. During his career, Carl worked on some of the biggest infrastructure projects conducted over the last two decades, including Heathrow Terminal 5, High Speed 1 and 2, Thameslink, and Crossrail.

Carl's passion for archaeology was inspiring. He was an advocate for the profession and enthusiastically shared his experience and knowledge with everyone he encountered, whether it be his colleagues and site team members, consultants and contractors, members of the public, or the Young Archaeologists Club.

Carl was one of the most positive people you could hope to meet and will be remembered not only for his expert knowledge but for his friendly and cheerful presence. He will be greatly missed by all of his friends and colleagues at Oxford Archaeology and by the wider archaeological community beyond.

To read the full obituary by Oxford Archaeology please go to their website: OA mourns Carl Champness | Oxford Archaeology (<https://www.oxfordarchaeology.com/news/oa-mourns-carl-champness>)



*Carl Champness  
Credit: Oxford  
Archaeology*

## Richard O'Neill MCIfA (5627)

*Obituary by Wessex Archaeology*

Wessex Archaeology have written a tribute to Richard O'Neill, who sadly passed away in April this year. Richard will be greatly missed. Please see In memory of Richard O'Neill | Wessex Archaeology (<https://www.wessexarch.co.uk/memory-richard-oneill>)

# New members

Member (MCIfA)	9343 Benjamin Camp	14216 Anna Grossi	14058 Sarah Tansey
8270 Victoria Anderton-Johnson	14085 Martha Ground	14088 Gillian Haggerty	14164 Melanie Taylor
8663 Graeme Attwood	13127 Thomas Haynes	14074 Freya Hammersley-Brunnarius	14177 Livia Thackray
10583 Gavin Donaghy	14192 Sarah Holloway	14037 Lois Hannon	14227 Ben Thompson
14093 Andrew Frudd	13592 Alan Holmes	14129 Emily Harding-Norton	14188 Jessica Valentine
14114 Rebecca Hawkes-Reynolds	14105 Rachel Kirk	14072 Emily Harris-Taylor	14217 Kayra Vasquez Salas
4748 Julian Jansen van Rensburg	11609 Natalie Land	14152 Evie Harwood	10767 Aikaterini Vavaliou
14113 Patrick Mayer	11844 Timothy Lemley Jr	14181 Nicole Hassi	14165 Tia Wasson
6675 Jonathan Monteith	11694 Tom McCabe	14066 Georgia Hemingway	14162 Misch Watson
6365 Alistair Robertson	14117 Samuel McDermott	14077 Jas Hierons	14111 Helen Webster
14123 Michael Simmonds	14151 Catherine McGrath	14169 Lorena Hitchens	14041 Kelly Wetherick
6329 Elizabeth Stewart	14089 James Mckenzie	12893 Eleanor Hitchens	14032 Jessica Wilkins
6094 Tara-Jane Sutcliffe	14054 Mackenzie Mckillip	14022 Chloe Jackson	13049 Daniel Wilson
7535 James Thomson	14035 Graziella Nakad	14212 Samuel Jackson	14206 Ciara Wing
12150 Brian Whiting	14226 William Nicoll	13710 Janine Jasper	14186 Hannah Yeung
	14171 Christina Reekie	14149 Rui Ji	14195 Sarah Zaman
	14110 Fynnian Titford-Mock	14057 Daniel Johnson	14199 Shuyao Zhu
	14083 Samantha Wallace	14034 Sadia Kamaly	
	10798 Amelie Wiseman	14086 Beth Kenney	
Associate (ACIfA)	Student	14225 Katie-Linh Kerrison	
14094 Richard Best	14079 Maysofia Aldosari	14210 Isabella Knight	
14209 Bethan Capon	14130 Jodie Allan	14179 Ryu Koshiba	
14119 Martha Carter	14168 Ashley Amendola	14194 Lucie Landel	
8414 Thomas Dew	11815 Summer Austin	14183 Emma Lawrence	
14069 Harvey Doolan	14053 Isaac Baker	14170 Yufei Li	
14006 James Edwards	14108 Maximilian Bardowell	14172 Victoria Liu	
14023 Bethany Joyner	14039 Alex Barlow	14150 Yiwen Ma	
14204 George Knight	14126 Sierra Beard	14154 Jack Mace	
10872 Perry Mesney	14020 Lucy Beasley	14101 Christian Madsen	
14025 Andrea Oliveira	14026 Meja Beck	14190 Connor Magee	
13880 Oluwadamilare Omogbai	14104 Catia Bessa	14185 Faraz Malik	
13959 Ayca Sarionder Kocaoglu	14042 Nicola Beviss	14076 Lucy Mawson	
10876 Jack Smith	14043 Anna Bolton	14131 Tom Maye-Banbury	
14003 Matthew Stead	14099 Harry Bonney	14070 Sarah McAlpine	
14024 Katie Taplin	14178 Leah Boost	14015 Darren McLean	
14068 Hazel Taylor	14167 Aurelia Brice	14161 Nancy Mein	
11762 Marcie Weeks	14157 James Campbell	14044 Cornelia Merten	
13986 Alun Woodward	14107 William Chesson	12081 Stephen Miller	
14002 Xena Wootton	14096 Liz Cochran	14045 Julia Mints	
Practitioner (PCIfA)	12053 Carlos Da Silva Carvalho	14120 Marta Mucko	
12515 Benjamin Allen	14050 Lawrence Dale	14132 Ciara Muller	
12099 Amy Allinson	14228 Ethan Darby	14189 Fuad Mustapha	
10262 Alexander Andrews	14125 Joel Darcy	14153 Laura Parkin	
10801 Josephine Cavaliere	14090 Isaac Davey	14087 Holly Pearlman	
14075 Emma Cottam	13515 Hannah Dennison	14102 Phoebe Piper	
12417 Berta Cunillera Font	14106 Grace Devine	14115 Hannah Preston	
11965 Hayden Dunn	14097 Shreevats Dhyani	14052 Christopher Quinby	
13980 Paraskevi Fournalara	14215 Danielle Dowling	14014 Zackayla Rice	
14017 Mark Jones	14078 Alexandra Drakopoulos	14080 Samuel Roberts	
14118 Jodie Lawrence-Taylor	14124 Finlay Drummond-Cormack	14095 Madison Robinson	
14018 Matilda Little	14082 Michael Duggan	14027 Libby Rock	
14174 Irene Maxwell	14116 Charlie Edmonds	14092 Tessa Rodrigues	
13977 Edward McBride	10435 Suzanne Evans	11373 Jack Rogers	
13956 Rebecca McQuone	14029 Harry Fell	14033 Tabitha Rouf	
13943 Monty Oakley	14028 Tommy Fell	14175 Nigel Rowe	
13974 Gethyn Phillips	14208 James Fielding	14071 Sky Sawyn	
13454 Harry Twining	14214 Lucy Fisher	14229 Esme Scarle	
13979 Callum Warr	14198 Jeremy Foot	14224 Izabella Scott	
10736 Lee Macgregor Yeung	6268 Deborah Frearson	14184 Joseph Seresin	
Affiliate	14182 Shinsei Fujimoto	14193 Ruoyan Shan	
14133 Marianny Aguasvivas Hernández	14065 Rosamund Futers	14040 Keira Shaw	
14128 Marsela Alic	14103 Rob Fysh	14109 Ryan Shaw	
14056 Jennifer Barrs	14156 Zoe Garden	14196 Louis Shenton	
12451 Lisa Bea	14030 Malachi Gee	14021 Katie Elizabeth Sloan	
14055 Hayley Beedham	14197 Sabrina Goldring	14187 Shakira Smith	
14067 Michael Booth	14084 Eva Gomez	14173 Sophie Smith	
13566 Melissa Bueckert	14031 Robert Gomulak	14048 Emily Stevens	
14051 Olivia Bushby	14098 Eva Goodinson	14073 Maximillian Swiniarski	
	14081 Rosemary Griffin	14191 Zahrah Syed	
		14046 Leonie Tancell	
		14205 Chunzhang Tang	

# Upgraded members

## Member (MCIfA)

8377 Michael Briggs	
9022 Kit Byrom	
8230 Kevin Claxton	
9494 Christian Day	
12831 Susan Freebrey	
5225 Andrea Hamel	
7220 Christina Hills	
8227 Kylie McDermott	
10196 Richard Pougher	
8732 Esther Poulos	
8445 Matthew Saywood	
8945 Benjamin Sleep	
10393 George Stewart-Phillips	
9182 Adelina Teoaca	
11191 Natalie Wood	

## Associate (ACIfA)

11267 Cullen Cockburn	
12607 Matthew Fay	
11249 Soren Greasley	
13574 Michael Horner	
11069 Richard McGregor Edwards	
12924 Jemma Moorhouse	
11195 Erik Moreno Perez	
12450 Kate Peacham	
8362 Hannah Potter	
13686 Henry Russell	
11423 Emma Smart	
11414 Sarah Veasey	
13020 Kinnie Wade	

## Practitioner (PCIfA)

12085 Heidi Bain	
12977 Ben Bright	
11579 Eleanor Carter	
13416 Andrew Coupe	
13409 Molly Dowdeswell	
13116 Yashika Kotian	
13351 Peter Layfield	
13697 Jessica Love	
13410 Charlie Palmer	
13135 Luke Stobo	

# NOTICEBOARD

## CIfA2026 – Building connections

28 April to 29 April 2026, John McIntyre Conference Centre, Edinburgh

Sponsored by everywhen (formerly Towergate Insurance)

CIfA2026 will be getting underway in a few months' time in Edinburgh, with two full days of engaging content incorporating keynote addresses, wide-ranging sessions, and training workshops. If you cannot attend in person, don't worry; you will have the option to watch the recorded content in your own time.



### What to expect

The theme for CIfA2026 is *Building connections*, highlighting innovation and good practice in archaeology. It offers a forum for discussion, shared learning and collaboration to strengthen and future-proof our profession. Throughout the event we'll explore current professional issues, showcase new developments and present research from archaeology and the wider heritage sector. As the leading UK conference for professional archaeologists, CIfA's annual conference attracts hundreds of participants from across the heritage environment. Delegates range from heritage professionals to those at the start of their careers, all seeking to deepen their understanding of policy and practice and enhance their skills. Attendees represent the full spectrum of the sector – from local authority curators and planning archaeologists to national heritage bodies, volunteers, consultants, directors, specialists, academics, and industry partners. Come and join us!

### Conference bursaries and booking information

As part of our aim to make the conference as accessible as possible, we have bursaries available to assist with the cost of registering and participating in CIfA2026. For further information and a full timetable of sessions, see our conference website (<https://www.archaeologists.net/events-training/events/conference>).

### Looking to recruit staff this year, or find a training or volunteer opportunity?

Don't forget, you can advertise job vacancies in CIfA's weekly Jobs, Training and Volunteer bulletin, which is the most comprehensive source for the latest jobs and opportunities in archaeology and related disciplines. The bulletin is free to CIfA members, and each edition features archaeological job listings across the sector, information on academic positions and research opportunities, CIfA-approved CPD training courses, and volunteer opportunities.

Not only is the bulletin the perfect source of information on jobs and opportunities in archaeology for those looking for their next step, it's also an ideal place for employers to advertise their vacancies. Adverts will go on our online web page and will also be included in the bulletin, which is circulated to over two thousand subscribers each week. Find out more on our website (<https://www.archaeologists.net/careers/jist>).

Now, for an additional £20, your advert can be a featured job on our social media channels, to help increase its exposure and reach the largest number of applicants.

If you're a CIfA member you can also subscribe to the bulletin as part of your membership. Simply log into the member area on our website and select it in the free bulletins section on your member profile.



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