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Issue 10



Welcome to our new weekly update of what's happening in the world of CIfA – for members, about members, driven by members. We will cover a broad range of news, including events, training and resources, advocacy and policy, collaborative working with partners, and much more. We would love your feedback and suggestions about what we could cover in future issues. Email your ideas and comments to: admin@archaeologists.net

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Members in the News

In a new section in the Weekly Update, we will be featuring CIfA members and Registered Organisations who have made the news recently. If you have a news piece that you would like to share, email: carl.smith@archaeologists.net

New study of Scotland's ancient burial monuments

CIfA members Dr Helen Spencer, Dr Simon Gilmour and Dr Gavin MacGregor have made the headlines on the [BBC News](#) for their work on launching a new project which will investigate Scotland's Early Neolithic burial monuments.

The project, Scotland's Earliest Megalithic Monuments, will include small-scale excavations at a handful of locations, and aims to identify opportunities for enhanced management and interpretation. Made possible by a bequest left to the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland by the late Audrey Henshall, who was a pioneer in the study of Scottish chambered cairns, more information on the project can be found [here](#).

Update from Advisory Council Chair

Last week's [Advisory Council](#) meeting saw our first step towards better understanding the needs of our members and creating a pathway towards a membership-driven CIfA.

We had a productive discussion on developing a new membership-needs survey that will allow us to hear the voices and needs of individual members across the field. The survey, which will be designed by a dedicated working group of Advisory Council members, aims to amplify the voices of our members and guide bottom-up changes within the Advisory Council and CIfA. Our goal is to ensure that our work aligns with the evolving needs of our members and remains fit for purpose.

If you are interested in learning more or contributing to the working group, please contact Advisory Council Chair, Mike D'Aprix, at advisorycouncil@archaeologists.net.



Marine Archaeology Group AGM

The Group invites members to its [AGM on Tuesday 10 December](#), when they will discuss initiatives over the past year and future plans. They will also share the results from their Group member survey, what they learned about the demographics of the group as a result, and how this could impact the work which they carry out in the future.

Forensic Archaeology Group AGM

Members are invited to the Group's [AGM on 17 December](#) as they reflect on the achievements of 2024, and outline their goals for the year ahead. The meeting will provide an opportunity not only to learn about the initiatives the Group has been involved with, but also to participate in discussions about their future direction.

New guidance on the reburial of archaeological sites

Historic England has just published updated guidance on the reburial of archaeological sites, which is an appendix to the 2016 guidance on the Preservation of Archaeological Remains, kindly highlighted by CIfA member Jim Williams, Historic England Senior Science Advisor. [Preserving Archaeological Remains is free to download](#).

The guidance covers the processes and materials required for the successful reburial of an archaeological site, providing definitions of reburial and backfilling, and explaining when each method might be used. Critical to the process of any site reburial is the creation of clear reburial objectives.

The headline message from the document is that reburial schemes require: an assessment of significance (of the material being buried); a condition assessment (of the state of preservation of the materials being buried); and an assessment of impacts (identifying threats and assessing risks to the reburied material).

A reburial checklist is provided in the document (and is also available to download), which provides a helpful framework for working through the

aspects of the guidance as you develop a reburial strategy, making sure that all elements are considered.

Four new case studies have been produced to accompany the new guidance which also use this same framework to illustrate how the guidance works in practice.



CifA Area and Special Interest Groups news

CifA's [Groups](#) represent different specialisms, geographical areas and themes across the historic environment sector, established by CifA members to provide a forum for discussion regarding good practice, and assist in setting high professional standards. CifA members can [join any groups for free](#), and [non-members can join a group](#) for an annual fee of £10 per group.

[Marine Archaeology SIG](#) has had a busy week preparing for their AGM. [Register here](#) to join the Group for the upcoming **Marine Archaeology AGM, which is being held next week on Tuesday 10 December from 12:00 – 13:00**. Join them as they share updates about the latest Group work, the results from their recent member survey, a deep dive (pun intended!) into their findings about the group demographics and how this may impact the work which they carry out as a group in the future.

[Wales/Cymru Group](#) have nominations open for a chair, secretary, treasurer and three ordinary members to join the committee to help them to achieve the Group three-year plan, develop networking opportunities and support collaboration with the wider Group membership. Joining a committee can expand your professional network, enhance your career, and provide **demonstrable commitment to developing and improving the sector in Wales**. If you would like more information about what is involved, please email groups@archaeologists.net

Future of archaeological archives report

A report on [Future Demands of Development-Led Work in England: Archaeological Archives](#) has just been published by Historic England for the Future for Archaeological Archives Programme, and is free to download. Its remit was to provide a forecast of the volume of archival material which may be produced through development-led archaeological work and require deposition in a National Centre for Archaeological Archives in the next ten years, 2023-2033.

The report brings together research carried out by CifA (funded by Historic England) drawing together data on the scale of archaeological work carried out each year relative to development and the archive it produces, together with research by Nathaniel Lichfield and Partners on the historic and potential future scale of development in England.



Current Archaeology awards

Nominations for the *Current Archaeology Awards* have just been announced. Across the categories - *Archaeologist of the Year*, *Book of the Year*, *Research Project of the Year*, and *Rescue Project of the Year* - there's a wealth of fantastic archaeology from 2024. [You can explore all of the nominated projects here.](#)

CifA Registered Organisation, Cotswold Archaeology, has been nominated in the category of Research Project of the Year for *Building Roman Cirencester and beyond: Roman tile production in the north Wiltshire countryside.*

Indie Jago, Community Engagement Officer with Cotswold Archaeology, writes: At Cotswold Archaeology, we're particularly thrilled to see the community excavations at [Brandier Farm, Minety](#), recognised. As Neil Holbrook (Cotswold Archaeology Chief Executive) aptly said, "*This recognition is entirely due to the amazing efforts of everyone who worked on-site over three summers to unearth these remarkable discoveries.*"

This project has been a joy for us at Cotswold Archaeology to deliver, and we've thoroughly enjoyed working with the local community—especially the 100+ volunteers who made this project possible. Over the course of the excavation, we were able to establish that this kiln was the sole producer of stamped tiles for Corinium (Cirencester) and was probably owned by the Cirencester town council. In addition to supplying tiles for Cirencester, this kiln also transported tiles to other urban centres, significantly enhancing our understanding of Roman Britain's industrial landscape.

Funding for level 7 master's degree apprenticeship at risk

The government has recently announced that it plans to 'rebalance' how it spends the employer training levy to include shorter programmes and to restrict spending on level 7 apprenticeships, which are becoming an important avenue for training the next generation of archaeology specialists. CIfA has added its voice to government consultation on these proposed changes, but we would like you as members to also add your voices to ensure that the importance of these apprenticeships to our sector is fully understood by government.

Our sector is seeing increasing numbers of apprentices on the level 7 archaeological specialist master's degree as more employers start to see the benefit of using this qualification to train up the next generation of specialists. The qualification was developed by employers to directly address a shortage of specialists in our industry and is plugging a well-identified training need, as well as providing an alternative route into the sector.

It has been widely recognised for many years that there's a shortage of specialists in key areas, such as pottery specialists, or post excavation, and the sector is currently reliant on a small, ageing demographic of specialists many of whom are past retirement age. As many specialists are self-employed (their services having been outsourced over the years) the structures to train the next generation are not in place without support.

It can take years for a specialist to train, and without targeted education and training programmes in place we face a skills vacuum which will lead to delays in the completion of projects (eg HS2) and a failure to advance understanding and genuine social value from archaeological work. Specialists are the people who create knowledge and understanding from data.

In addition, archaeology as a discipline is not diverse. Level 7 apprenticeship programmes offer the only alternative to full-time study for aspiring specialists from different backgrounds who cannot afford not to be working while they study.

Many people in our sector are keen to see this apprenticeship continue and so CIfA members, other stakeholders and Historic England are putting a case to the Department of Education to re-think this proposed withdrawal of funding from this programme. If you'd like to add your voice to this, please get in touch at assessment@archaeologists.net



We're on the hunt for inspirational photos of archaeology

Have you taken an archaeology-related photo that you're proud of and would like to share with us and the world beyond, for use in CIfA publications, our website, social media posts, or promotional material?

The image could be of a colleague working on-site, digging, using a piece of specialist kit, excavating an artefact, surveying a site, a close-up of a find, a quirky shot of an archaeological feature, a marine wreck, a burial monument, community archaeology in action, etc. Or maybe the photo features post-excavation work in a lab, a pottery specialist at work, a dendrochronologist, forensic archaeologist, landscape archaeologist, archivist, marine archaeologist – the list of specialisms in our wonderful profession is almost endless, and we would love to reflect this through the images that we use.

We're looking for photos that are striking, unusual, beautiful, and high-resolution. We would love your photo to inspire colleagues, non-archaeologists, those thinking about a career in our profession, and other colleagues in the heritage sector. Your reward for sharing your prized photographs? Alas, we can't offer you financial riches, but we will always acknowledge your copyright of the image, and whenever you see it used, you can proudly say to whoever is close-by, "I took that."

Please email your images to carl.smith@archaeologists.net. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to ask.

Council for British Archaeology safeguarding course

The CBA has announced funding for 55 people to take part in an [online Safeguarding course](#) (this can be taken at any time during the year). Safeguarding is the action taken to promote the welfare of children and adults at risk and protect them from harm during an event or activity.

The course is available to individual organisers or community groups rather than organisers who are part of a local authority or national organisation which already have an organisational Safeguarding policy in place. In order for the CBA to list events as part of their annual Festival of Archaeology, they now require organisers to have a safeguarding policy in place.

For further details of the CBA's Safeguarding course, and information on their own safeguarding policy which can be adopted by event and activity organisers, [click on this link](#).



Are you interested in reviewing a book?

CiFA currently has dozens of books on a wide variety of subjects available for members to review. With titles ranging from *The Material Culture of English Rural Households c.1250-1600* to *Unearthing the A14: 50 objects from one of Britain's biggest digs*, there is bound to be one that interests you.

You can see the full list of books available, as well as any previous reviews, [on our website](#).

If you are interested in reviewing a book, or have a publication you would like to be considered for review, please contact Michael Sharp at Michael.sharp@archaeologists.net

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