

---

## ARCHAEOLOGICAL ARCHIVES FORUM – ANNUAL MEETING

13.30, Wednesday 12 October 2011

Deepstore Visitor Centre

13:00 – Lunch

14:00 – Tour of Deepstore

Chair – Quinton Carroll

In attendance

Catherine Hardman (ADS), Claire Tsang (English Heritage (Secretary)), Duncan Brown (English Heritage), Elizabeth Walker (National Panel for Wales), Hedley Swain (Arts Council), Jim Spriggs (ICON), Kirsty Lingstadt (RCAHMS), Nicky Scott (SMA), Quinton Carroll (ALGAO (Chair)), Roland Smith (FAME), Sarah Howard (CBA), Rachel Edwards (Arboretum Archaeological Consultancy (presenting))

Thanks given to Deepstore for hosting the Meeting today and their warm welcome

1. Apologies: Amanda Forster, Brian Williams, John Lewis, Gareth Edwards, John Shepherd, Rhonda Robinson, Andrew Jones, Ian Frasier, Robert Dickenson
2. Minutes of last meeting

In previous minutes Philip Wise was not identified; this has been corrected

Welsh Membership: The chair welcomed Elizabeth Walker to the group, who will be representing the National Panel for Wales

SCUFA: Mike Heyworth is a possible candidate to represent this body

**Action: QC to contact Mike**

Selection and Retention: Alasdair Brooks (Leicester University) is writing guidance on 20<sup>th</sup> Century Material. The AAF would like an update on progress.

**Action: DB to contact AB**

IFA conference: went well, and thanks to CH for creation of the Leaflet

Membership: CT has checked the list is up to date. There is still gap for IFA MAG – a better solution possibly a single IfA represent, Amanda Forster could be central contact and report back to the various groups.

**Action QC to discuss with AF**

Northern Ireland membership is still in question; AF had recent contact with the NI curatorial teams, she may be able to suggest a candidate.

**Action QC to discuss with AF**

John Lewis is the new representative for the Society of Antiquities and Noel Fojut post has changed and he is looking for a replacement for him on the Forum

To ensure attendance we must make sure there are video/telephone conferencing facilities at meetings

**Action: CT**

---

---

### 3. Archives Projects Underway:

#### Wales (EW):

In March 2012 the Welsh Government's Historic Environment Group (HEG) tasked EW to undertake a review of the current and future positions regarding the storage of archaeological archives in Wales. At the same meeting EW was also asked to chair the National Panel for Archaeological Archives in Wales. Since March the Panel has met three times. It has agreed its remit, met to discuss how archaeological archives might sit within any future Heritage Bill for Wales and also has drafted proposals to undertake two pieces of work. One will be to review and update the existing standards document for the collection and deposition of archaeological archives in Wales whilst the second will be to undertake the review of storage of the archaeological archive. Both documents are to be presented to HEG at their November meeting.

#### Scotland (KL)

Scottish Organisations are currently trying to tackle physical storage issues. There has been a recent workshop with speakers from units and repositories spoke, budgets and box charging were included in discussion as was retention policy, access and future use. In addition a survey was sent out the week before this meeting on box charging, selection and archive content. The workshop highlighted issues for RCHMS. RCHMS has also been evaluating material held externally deposition in the next 5-10 years and a digital review. This will allow them to take forward policies, modelled on findings. In July there was a Ministerial request to create new organization, and this is due for delivery in early 2013. There is also a review of Historic Scottish Environment, and which is taking opportunity take into account new legislation required by changes to RCHMS.

#### SMA/EH (RE)

Rachel reported back on her results of her and FAME survey; Archaeological Archives and Museums 2012. The major change from previous reports undertaken by Hedley Swain and Kathy Perrin is that issues are deepening into crisis situations. DB asked if there was further need to get data on the quantification of archives over time and deposition by year as there had been limited response of 17 organisations. HS suggested there was no need to gain further detail because the results from the organisations show what we should expect to see, more projects being deposited but less volume per year, and that work is now needed towards solutions.

The Report to be published digitally, its title is 'Evaluating the Archaeological Resource in Store.'

HS stated that an issue is that when he was with the MLA the problem was not clearly identified, similarly with the Arts Council now. When a crisis arises they are not being raised, the exception being Sheffield where the public and the local MP flagged the loss of the Archaeological Curator and this led to funding of a 2 year contract, by the AC, to sort out backlog. Stakeholders were gathered at a meeting to discussion solutions, but there was a lack of interest from non-museum organizations, and this is required to find solutions.

ALGAO are to discuss archiving at next meeting, as it is now part of planning requirement. Similarly ALGAO has its own black holes where there is no HER support

---

---

HS reported that the issue of storage and collecting is a similar problem for Natural History collections and the Arts Council has been in discussion with Natural History Museum about the problems.

The HLF have been asked if they are willing to prioritise funding towards storage issues, and they are not. The Arts Council are funding an SMA project to review failed application attempts.

The Chair thanked the RE, KL and EW for their reports.

4. Deepstore - How Cambridgeshire are to make use of it  
Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) is the receiver of the archive. Their plan is to operate a split store, with fragile, exceptional and regularly used material being stored with CCC. The remainder, including documentary archive will go to Deepstore. Deepstore mainly store paper archive, and will not guarantee against breakages of archaeological finds, handling training will be provided by CCC to Deepstore staff, the National Archives have done this as well. Storage at Deepstore meets BSI standards. The archives will be fully catalogued before deposition with Deepstore, this catalogue will be bolted on to HER. The retrieval costs are reasonable, particularly with good notice. It is the intent of CCC to pass that cost on to the researcher, particularly onto funded research.

5. Member updates

CBA: The CBA have been working on archiving digital material with the ADS and disaster plans for data recovery.

ADS: Leading on from recommendations of the Bedern group, the ADS are reviewing various bodies' digital archiving strategies including the Royal Commissions, English Heritage and Museum of London to gain a UK wide picture of standards for digital archiving. Also being undertaken is the Sword-Arm project, this will and enhance ADS's ingest and charging process by creating a SWORD client to streamline and automate deposit. This will make the deposition of archives through ADS-EASY more efficient and will benefit depositors of smaller projects. Also being undertaken is a HRC funded project which is review the application of thesauri in archaeology, this is being led by Glamorgan University. As well as Impact: a JISC funded project researching the economical value of archaeological archives.

Arts Council: As part of the Renaissance project there is £13.5m set aside for funding projects

EH: As well as funding the SMA project, EH is also working on a project to develop a single point of access for HER information and local planning policies. DB, with the IfA, has also been providing training groups on archaeological archives and these have been successful.

6. A.O.B.

Nothing was raised

7. Date of next meeting

21<sup>st</sup> March 2013, K/111 Lecture Room, University of York

---