Archaeology for All

Community Archaeology in the Early 21st Century: Participation, Practice and Impact

Edited by
Michael Nevell and Norman Redhead
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University of Salford
CONTROLLORS

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The editors would like to thank all the contributors to this volume. Many of the authors spoke at the ‘Archaeology for All’ conference, part of the Dig Manchester community archaeology project, held at the University of Manchester in November 2006, but the works in this monograph are not a set of conference papers. They represent a summary of archaeological and historical work on a variety of community archaeology projects from the early 21st century and also new research specifically for this volume.

One of our intentions was to include unpublished or little-known community projects by local groups. This has proved a fruitful source of first-hand testimony from those at the ‘trowel edge’. We were also anxious to include primary data as well as oral and written testimony to the community archaeology experience, and this can be found right across the current volume.

For assistance with the production of the monograph we would like to thank Catrina Appleby of the Council for British Archaeology for editorial support, Lesley Dunkley for proofreading the book, and those authors who kindly agreed to write new material for the current volume.

Finally, we are most grateful to the Heritage Lottery Fund for their financial support of the Dig Manchester community project, the inspiration for this volume.

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As Suzie Thomas says in her concluding overview to this collection of chapters, “community archaeology is not going away any time soon.” Built on decades of practice and an army of volunteers, community involvement is part of the DNA of archaeology in Britain, as it is in other parts of the world. This is clear from a rich range of case studies: Royton Hall; the Chester Amphitheatre; landscapes; and Dig Greater Manchester, with its roots in Dig Moston. But, as Suzie Thomas also points out, there is an overarching need to ensure that this broad movement compromises neither the archaeology nor the community. And here there is a tension, not fully resolved, that gives this volume a particular edge of relevance.

Firstly, the concept of community is too often used broadly and loosely, resulting in lazy assumptions. In Sian Jones’ words, “we need to recognise that community archaeology is always going to be an intervention into an existing social context where people are already actively producing and negotiating identities and where the past is plural and contested.” Community archaeology may well contribute to social cohesion; in their chapters here both John and Ann Hearle and Michael Farely show how this works, and Councillor Paul Murphy is explicit in his wish to use fieldwork to counter the spike in crime and disorder characteristic of the long August school holidays. But outcomes are not invariably beneficial; “once archaeologists engage with the heritage process they are engaging with the politics of recognition” (Laurajane Smith). And recognition and inclusion must, by definition, also differentiate and exclude.

Secondly, there may be a complex play between individual motivations and benefits and any sense of community. Participation in projects may primarily be to augment the school curriculum (Clare Pye and Sarah Joynes’ chapters here) or as part of therapeutic practice (Barry Fortune, Roy King and Gemma Lacey; Brian Grimsditch and Doug Hawes). Recognising the importance of individual motivation has led to new and significant forms of evaluation, pioneered for the Dig Greater Manchester project. Mike Nevell: “volunteers and participants usually have more personal reasons for engaging with community projects: to gain confidence, for the enjoyment of working with others, and for the empowerment that comes from giving the present more meaning. Simply by taking part in the process and engaging in these activities, individuals can acquire new life-skills at the same time that some of our larger academic questions are being addressed.”

Thirdly, funding is often a challenge, both because resources are increasingly scarce, and because funding may impose conditionalities that, in themselves, make the relationships between communities and professional archaeological practice complicated. One of the valuable aspects of the collection of chapters here is the depth of experience of many of the contributors who have, through their own experience, seen the effects of changing funding regimes.

Norman Redhead is able to trace the changing fortunes of community archaeology across Greater Manchester over the last thirty years, while Peter Liddle gives a synoptic view across Leicestershire as a whole. Rebecca Mason and Rob Isherwood write about the benefits and challenges of Heritage Lottery Funding, which has had a major impact across Britain in recent years, and Norman Redhead reflects on the vulnerability of the last few years, as support from universities has drained away.

Given these vulnerabilities, broad political support for the objectives and practice of community archaeology is evidently essential. Here, comparisons with other countries are valuable. Pamela Cressey and Kathleen Pepper provide a formidable account of community archaeology in Alexandria, Virginia, where they have exercised constant vigilance within the day-by-day issues of local politics. As Stephen Young puts it, “a failure to embrace community-based possibilities will result in the loss of society’s curiosity concerning our shared heritage and ultimately this will cost us any support for the discipline.”

Despite these tensions, but also because of the vibrancy and relevance that they create, all those writing here are positive about community archaeology and its future. For Don Henson the circle of participants and audiences is widening, demonstrating relevance to local people. Rob Isherwood sees community-oriented research as gaining recognition in its own right, opening up
new and tantalising issues for exploration. And Councillor Murphy offers a direct challenge to professional archaeologists to listen more to community participants, words that serve well as an epigraph for the chapters that follow:

“I would like to lay down a gauntlet to academics to take risks in order to do things differently and to ultimately have faith in people, particularly people from working class and deprived communities. I’ve told you what community archaeology can do for communities but what can it do for academics and institutions? I want to challenge academics to get involved and take a risk.”

Martin Hall

Vice Chancellor, University of Salford
Part 1

Increasing Public Participation in Archaeology

Introduction by Adam Gutteridge

This book begins with a section that defines the theoretical landscape of our debates surrounding community archaeology. The three papers it contains demand that we develop and maintain accurate self-awareness in our theory and practice, and, through doing so, not only come to properly evaluate the contemporary socio-political contexts of community archaeology’s current floruit, but also to gauge the impact that archaeologists’ practices have on the communities with which they work. As we look outwards and open archaeology to all, they urge, we must at the same time look to ourselves and our own practices.

Jones begins the section’s first paper with a vital piece of contextual evaluation, surveying the particular circumstances that have led up to today’s manifestation of community archaeology. In many cases, there are political compulsions and motives that have established the policy conditions that allowed participatory heritage projects to thrive: distant top-down directives that launched a thousand HLF applications. But we are taken deeper than that, and asked to consider the relationships between the past’s resources and the present’s needs. The rhetoric of instrumentalism, so prevalent throughout New Labour’s term of office (and beyond), has inculcated a belief that the past can and should be used as a resource to meet the quantifiable needs of the present. Rendered into assets, the material past became viewed as something that could be made to serve the present’s political rhetoric, in this case its demands for ‘empowered’ communities. Heritage, pressed into service, was being put to work for its existence. As is perhaps fitting, there was a strong temporal dimension to the policy-prose deployed around these issues: heritage would regenerate, turn back the clock, reinvigorate those tired post-Thatcherite civic networks which were assumed to all conform to the image of lifeless, rain-lashed hollowed-out husks that were nothing like the bright shiny machines-for-living that Mr. Blair’s slick sunny can-do motivational homilies demanded we inhabit. The arbiters of this language, of communities in need of a rescue that could only arrive through the nebulous process of ‘empowerment’, predicated on participation, in which heritage played a defining role that was in some way linked to identity, may have vanished from our landscape, but as Jones outlines, its echoes remain. The generalised emphasis on community empowerment-via-participation remains with us still, finding itself neatly folded into Coalition cant and emerging, in a modified and neoliberal form, as ‘The Big Society’. Jones’ case study of Hilton of Cadboll and her exploration of the way in which its past was subject to an incursion by discourses of knowledge and practice that originated from beyond the community’s bounds demonstrates that community and archaeology don’t always (and in fact rarely) meet in nice, neat, controllable and quantifiable ways, despite what the political rhetoric from both sides might have us believe.

This awareness of the problematics of discourse leads us into Smith’s investigation of the power dynamics that are systemically embedded within ways that archaeologists and communities interrelate. These networks of authority are frequently inequitable, even when heritage practitioners undertake their ‘outreach’ work with the best of intentions: archaeology’s disciplinary baggage, the legacy of its emphasis on professionalism and expertise, and the way in which it transacts certain types of knowledge into privilege, all mean that in any community heritage framework there can be an extremely unequal distribution of power. Smith’s ongoing work into the genealogies of archaeological knowledge and her anatomisation of heritage’s circulatory power systems are providing community archaeologists with the means to self-critically reflect on the discourses they carry with them. Here, she describes how other ways of perceiving the past,
ones that might run counter to prevailing fields of discourse defined by ‘professional knowledge’, can end up marginalised or subsumed through the process of participatory heritage research. Community archaeology can never be a neutral endeavour, never be a disinterested observer or an impartial instrument: it is always enmeshed in networks of power and authority which will inevitably interact with a community’s own complexities. Smith affirms that this in no way implies that we cannot or should not undertake the work we do: it just means we should always be aware of its real implications, which go well beyond the edge of the trench.

The section concludes with Young’s paper examining over a decade’s worth of first-hand experience of community archaeology, providing a retrospective on some of its inherent problems and a perspective on some of its possible positive futures. Underlining the power imbalances frequently bedevilling archaeology’s attempts at outreach and community inclusion, Young’s clear-eyed assessment of the situation’s necessary correctives emphasises the pragmatic need for better ways of working. Collaboration in community archaeology cannot merely be a series of half-hearted attempts to comply with the feel of the thing; instead, it has to thoroughly run through the entirety of the project’s operation and be founded on the mutual respect of skills, knowledge and judgement. Co-operative ways of working cannot be corralled into just one phase of a project or be linked to one set of decisions about a single demarcated aspect of heritage: it must be the framework within which all processes take place. As Young’s case study of his own work with the community archaeology charity CLASP draws out, there can be real-world beneficial outcomes to the implementation of more equitable working relationships that embrace power-sharing, in spite of inevitable everyday pressures of time and money. Young’s invaluable experience of boots-on-the-ground community archaeology means that he provides a vital set of guiding strategies for the successful outcome of this kind of project work.

As readers of this first section, we are constantly reminded that we can’t talk about community archaeology without defining our categories: which community? what archaeology? These aren’t pure Platonic categories: they are created notions that need to be problematised and deconstructed, so we understand at every turn precisely who is benefitting from the projects, and whose pasts are under investigation. If we are perpetually sensitive to context and the political and intellectual shadows under which we work, we can take nothing for granted. There are as many communities as there are archaeologies.

All three papers stress, again and again, the importance of self-awareness. Those undertaking community archaeology need to have a clear-sighted and realistic understanding of their own desires and goals, and a self-reflexive appreciation of the discourses (political; socio-economic; academic; professional) in which they are embedded and which may create potentially uneven power relations. Such self-appraisal need not be overly complex or abstrusely theoretical: it just demands that the archaeologists be sufficiently humble to take stock of how others might see and perceive them, and thus how they can alter the postures they assume to ensure authority is always shared.

We know, in our heads and hearts, that ‘archaeology for all’ is the right slogan, the right sentiment, the right impulse: those who gather under its banner are the good guys, fighting to advance the causes of inclusion, of social equitability, of shared knowledge and practice. The papers in this section, though, remind us that the issues are complex and the contexts are shifting. We can even, on occasion, find our sentiments seemingly hijacked by political rhetoric which seems alien, unfriendly, and uncomfortable, used in support of policies that seek to dismantle or deregulate the (largely) benevolent matrices of planning and caretaking that strive to safeguard heritage. If we worry that what was a language of inclusion and social justice has been press-ganged to support the state-slashing chatterings of the Right, and we feel perplexed by the epistemological headaches induced by concerns about defining ‘community’ or ‘archaeology’, these three papers offer lucid maps for moving forwards: cautiously optimistic, pragmatic and considered, they can be taken together as a means of ensuring the ways that we think about and do community archaeology in the years to come are as socially efficacious as possible.
Chapter 1

Archaeology and the Construction of Community Identities

Sian Jones

Introduction

The role of the historic environment, including archaeology, in British society is currently a focus of much attention. In some senses this is nothing new. In the parliamentary debate surrounding the Ancient Monuments Protection Bill in the 1870s the role of archaeological remains in promoting identity was a prominent thread in the arguments presented both for and against the Bill. Nevertheless, the current debate has a particular flavour and set of ideas associated with it. The role of material heritage in providing us with a sense of roots, identity and place is reiterated. But this has also taken on a new urgency in a world perceived to be under threat from globalisation, fundamentalism, fragmentation, intolerance and economic crisis. In this context, the historic environment is increasingly seen as a means to create social cohesion and inclusion, as well as civic participation. Archaeology is no exception and archaeological institutions and practitioners have come under increasing pressure to engage with communities and to use archaeological heritage as a means to counter social exclusion.

The concept of ‘community archaeology’ has now become commonplace, and its practice is increasingly widespread, even though there is much ambiguity and debate about what it involves. Many of the other chapters in this volume testify to the exciting, vibrant and diverse projects that have emerged under the umbrella of community archaeology. In this article I intend to stand back from the practice of community archaeology itself and ask ‘what is the link between archaeology and community?’, ‘how are community identities and senses of place formed?’, and ‘how do archaeological remains and archaeological research figure in these processes?’ First, however, it is important to understand why the idea of community has become such an important aspect of policy and practice in relation to the historic environment.

The Historic Environment and the Idea of Community

Since the 1990s the idea of community has become increasingly important in the context of political discourse and government policy in the UK. The former Labour Government placed great emphasis on the idea of community. Strong, healthy, diverse communities became conceived as part of the bedrock of society. The idea of community became central to strategies aimed at countering forms of alienation, fragmentation and homogenisation associated with modern life. In the political discourse of New Labour, communities were perceived to be both threatened by these processes, and the means to counter them. Thus building and supporting strong, diverse communities was seen as a means to counter social exclusion, and create social cohesion. For instance, the Department for Communities and Local Government aimed “to create thriving, sustainable, vibrant communities that improve everyone’s quality of life”. This Department also played a lead role in relation to Public Service Agreement 21: Build more cohesive, empowered and active communities, where the ideas of community described above were in strong evidence. Published in October 2007, its stated aim was “to create thriving places in which a fear of difference is replaced by a shared set of values and a shared sense of purpose and belonging”. This goal was explicitly set against a backdrop of social change and it was argued that “to find common solutions, local people and communities need to be empowered to lead change, and given the confidence, skills, and power to influence what public bodies do for them”.

Not surprisingly the idea of community and the political discourses surrounding it permeated the Labour Government’s approach to the historic environment, and were incorporated into authorised heritage discourses. For instance, in Tessa Jowell’s (2005) essay, Better Places to Live, the value of heritage...
was embedded in discourses about identity, belonging, Britishness and community well-being. Set against the backdrop of September 11th, 2001, the then Culture Secretary focused on social exclusion and alienation and emphasised the importance of building an inclusive sense of Britishness. The national community was the most prominent concern, but communities of varying scales were also emphasised right down to the local, and in all of these heritage was portrayed as “contributing to a sense of civic pride and confidence, developing shared values and bringing people together to strengthen communities” (ibid. 16). These kinds of ideas permeated the policies developed by the Department of Culture, Media and Sport (hereafter DCMS) under the former Labour Government,6 which also contributed to meeting the expectations of Public Service Agreement 21. Thus, People and Places: Social Inclusion Policy for the Built and Historic Environment7 emphasised that:

The historic environment is a vital part of the social and cultural identity of our nation. It holds the memory of peoples’ [sic] hard work and experiences. Each place can be home to hundreds and thousands of people. Whether people feel “at home” with a place can affect how socially included they feel in society. Finding ways of regenerating pride and interest in local places using the historic buildings can help build confidence in community involvement in local decision-making. In particular, historic places which are public by their nature, such as public buildings, parks, and places of worship and commemoration should be a focus of attempts to contribute to tackling social exclusion.

As many people have pointed out,8 the Labour Government pursued an instrumentalist socio-economic approach to cultural policy implemented via targets, performance measures and funding agreements. Through these mechanisms community cohesion and social inclusion have become integral to the policies and practices of DCMS’s sponsored bodies and its quasi-autonomous agencies.9 For example, English Heritage is often asked to take a lead in promoting DCMS policy across the sector.10 In 2003, English Heritage established an Outreach Department to “work with local communities on creative projects which encourage a greater understanding of England’s diverse histories, and help to build strong communities through promoting sense of place and identity”.11 Beyond sponsored bodies and quangos, similar agendas came to influence other professional heritage organisations, the charitable sector, and community organisations. The Heritage Lottery Fund (hereafter HLF), which adopted ideas of democracy, inclusion, participation and community empowerment under New Labour,12 was particularly influential in this respect, influencing other organisations through its funding frameworks and priorities.

The concept of community remains an important component of government rhetoric and policy under the Conservative–Liberal Democrat Coalition Government formed in May 2010. The concept of community has been repositioned within the framework of the ‘Big Society’, but as McCabe13 points out there is both continuity and discontinuity between the former and current governments in this regard. Continuities can be detected in various guises, for instance in the emphasis on community empowerment, transfer of public assets to community management/ownership, and an emphasis on the role of community in social enterprise. However, there are also clear discontinuities, such as the Coalition Government’s withdrawal of the welfare state under the pretext of dismantling big government, and the decrease in government funding of community and voluntary initiatives in the pursuit of deficit reduction. The language surrounding community has also shifted. There is now an emphasis on terms like liberation, freedom, and social action, alluding to the removal of ‘big government’ and the trappings of the state. There is also less emphasis on social justice and inclusion, language that was characteristic of the New Labour administration, and in their place a concern with ‘fairness’.14

Despite these shifts we can also see a continuing emphasis on community with respect to the historic environment. Coalition Government rhetoric and policies are clearly evident in Baroness Hanham’s speech to the 2010 Heritage Champions National Conference. In particular there is a strong emphasis on the historic environment as a vehicle for developing civic activity free from the trappings of state bureaucracy, as well as the need for localism and devolution in the planning process. Nevertheless, there is considerable continuity in the fundamental link she identifies between the historic environment and community cohesion, providing local distinctiveness and a sense of place and identity. Heritage organisations have also maintained an emphasis on community, even if many have also adopted the language of the ‘Big Society’. For instance, in a press release on ‘Heritage, Localism and the Big Society’ in October 2011, English Heritage state that “the historic environment is the Big Society in action, helping to build communities and giving people a real investment in the past, present and future of where they live and work”. The 2011 Heritage Counts survey also focused on heritage and the Big Society, and new initiatives relating to the empowerment of local communities continue unabated even though these are now set
against radical funding cuts to the heritage sector.

In terms of archaeological practice, the Labour Government’s communitarian focus, with its emphasis on countering exclusion, building community cohesion and so forth, crystallised around the concept of community archaeology. Thus, in their first report on *The Current State of Archaeology in the UK*, the All Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group stated that:

Community archaeology can encourage social inclusion and active citizenship and help to reinforce a sense of community by applauding cultural diversity. It contributes to local sense of place and local distinctiveness as well as tourism.

As Isherwood has argued, forms of community engagement with archaeological remains and archaeological practice can be traced back many decades if not centuries. Furthermore, the recent growth and formalisation of forms of archaeological practice that involve direct community engagement in some form or other is informed by a complex range of factors that extend beyond national boundaries. However, in the UK, the political language of community and the HLF have played a key role. Isherwood has argued that the HLF provides the majority of funding to the bulk of community archaeology projects. The Local Heritage Initiative scheme, for instance, helped fund around 166 community archaeology projects in the United Kingdom. In this funding context, the community component becomes as important as the archaeology component. The language of funding frameworks, and thus successful applications, is explicitly communitarian, with outcomes oriented towards social cohesion and inclusion, building community confidence and skills, contributing to a sense of identity and place, and so forth. Despite the potential devastation to the heritage sector as a result of radical funding cuts, a number of commentators suggest that community archaeology will continue to be a growth area, not least because of increased funding for the Heritage Lottery Fund and the new National Planning Policy Framework with its emphasis on public engagement.

There is no doubt that people attach meanings and values to the historic environment around them and
that it is one mechanism through which identities of various kinds are produced and negotiated. There is also ample evidence of people’s desire to have an active role in investigating the past. This enthusiasm is evident in the range of archaeology projects stemming from community groups themselves, some of which can be found on the Council for British Archaeology’s Community Archaeology Forum website. However, community archaeology also raises a number of questions, issues and tensions. For

Fig 1.2: The location of Hilton of Cadboll.
instance, there are practical issues concerning levels and kinds of public participation, control over funding, design, method and interpretation. Is it enough for professional archaeologists to facilitate public participation whilst remaining in control of methodology, recording, interpretation and so forth, or does community archaeology demand greater collaboration? Often, in practice, these issues come down to tensions between professional constraints, interests and modes of practice, and community ones, as Isherwood has shown in his ethnographic research focusing on community archaeology projects.

Beyond these issues, however, there are more fundamental ones concerning the very nature of community identities and boundaries. Much of the time when we talk about community archaeology, we take for granted the existence of communities. In recent political and popular discourse community is also viewed in a rather uncritical, optimistic fashion as something ‘traditional’, ‘positive’ and ‘good’; in Bauman’s words “like a fireplace at which we warm our hands on a frosty day”. We tend to talk about communities as if they are discrete, bounded objects, or as if they are living entities, organisms even, that can act almost like people. We ask things like, ‘what does the community want, or think, or say ….?’, and the answer is often attributed some kind of privileged status. We also tend to identify communities with particular places and frequently talk of ‘the local community’ when carrying out archaeological projects. There is a tendency to assume that communities have clear-cut histories relating to the places they are associated with. The danger is that community archaeology becomes a process of identifying a local community and encouraging them to discover or engage with their history as if both are self-evident things that simply need to be brought together for the greater good. However, as we shall see, communities, and their relationships to the past, are complex and some understanding of the processes involved is important for the practice of community archaeology.

The Construction of Communities: the Case of Hilton of Cadboll

The concept of community is unquestionably a compelling and meaningful dimension of social life in the UK. Yet, anthropological research focusing on the nature of communities reveals that they are far from self-evident, clear-cut entities, with singular integral identities, capable of objective definition and description. The concept implies a group of people who share something in common and who can be distinguished in some significant way from people who are members of other groups. As Cohen points out in his influential book, The Symbolic Construction of Community, communities are therefore founded on a relational idea because what defines communities is the difference between those who belong to them and those who do not, or to put it in terms of people’s experience, the difference between ‘us’ and ‘them’. This kind of relational idea or opposition defines the boundaries of all communities and is a fundamental aspect of their existence. However, what exactly defines this boundary, i.e. the difference between those who belong and those who do not, is rarely obvious, or fixed, or even something which is mutually agreed by those who see themselves as members of a community and those who don’t. Often the content of community boundaries is a product of a complex matrix of meanings, values, social relationships, institutions, birth, kinship, locality and tradition. What comes to symbolise community boundaries varies for different people in different situations. For instance, in her study of the village of Elmdon in Cambridgeshire, Strathern shows that different inhabitants define the village in diverse ways. For some it designates a place different from other places in the region. For others who see themselves as real ‘Elmdoners’ it is about kinship and class. Thus communities, defined through the construction of their boundaries, are rather fluid subjective ideas, through which people negotiate their identities and their relationships to places. The concept of ‘belonging’ to community and to place is also important, but multiple community identities may be associated with particular places and their histories, and this is also something which is fluid, contested and negotiated.

To illustrate some of these aspects of community, I want to draw on some of my own ethnographic research focusing on the village of Hilton of Cadboll (hereafter Hilton) and surrounding communities on the coast of Easter Ross in north-east Scotland (see Figures 1.1 and 1.2). From the outside Hilton might appear to be a discrete, coherent, bounded rural community of long-standing association with place extending back to time immemorial. Yet, a brief survey of the village’s history reveals that in archaeological terms it is of relatively recent creation. Archaeological remains indicate prehistoric human activity in the Easter Ross peninsula from the Neolithic period onwards. The Sandwick, Nigg and Hilton of Cadboll cross-slabs indicate the importance of the area in the early medieval period, and other medieval remains include the Hilton of Cadboll chapel, Old Sandwick Castle, and Cadboll Castle. Yet, like many other towns, villages and cities in Britain, the present-day village of Hilton is a product of 18th and 19th-century agricultural and industrial developments. Between
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1750 and 1850 the Highlands underwent enormous change in the name of agricultural ‘improvement’. One of the most overriding transformations was the massive depopulation of the region to make way for sheep farming, a process commonly referred to as the Highland Clearances.30 Seaboard villages like Hilton, and its neighbours, Balintore and Shandwick, provided a refuge for displaced people during the late 18th and early 19th centuries, and grew rapidly as a result. Furthermore, such coastal villages were also the focus of concerted efforts among Highland landowners to stimulate other forms of industrial production, namely fisheries and kelp farming. Following its rapid expansion in the early 19th century, the population of Hilton remained relatively stable between 1850 and 1950 but then grew again in the 1970s as a result of the oil boom, and more recently it has become popular with Inverness commuters and retired people. The 1991 census put the combined population of Hilton, Balintore and Shandwick at 1,529 people, and it has been estimated that there are about 300 people living in Hilton.

In terms of community boundaries and identity, Hilton of Cadboll and its neighbouring villages are differentiated along numerous lines. Divisions between the ‘fishers’ and ‘farmers’ remain a prominent aspect of identity and interpersonal relationships amongst people who were born and brought up in the villages. Historically, these were rooted in proprietorial and class relationships between landlords and tenants, with Hilton belonging to the Cadboll Estate until 1918. Class distinctions are powerfully reinforced by topography, with the villagers on the raised beach below the cliff and the landowners/farmers above on the rich arable land. The tensions created by these class identities are perhaps most visible in conflict over ownership of, and access to, land and it is in these contexts that they come to the forefront in terms of the construction of community boundaries; the villagers being defined by this fishing history and their association with the sea in opposition to those with a farming background who live above the cliff.

Equally important, however, are the boundaries drawn between ‘incomers’ and ‘locals’. As in other villages in rural Scotland, these categories are prominent features of daily discourse within the villages, operating in a fluid and situational manner to draw lines of inclusion and exclusion.31 Complex gradations of ‘insiderness’ and ‘outsiderness’ are defined, depending not only upon the actual number of years a person has been resident, but also their kinship connections through descent or marriage, their ‘feeling’ for local issues, and their perceived loyalty manifested in various ways, such as whether they have ever lived elsewhere intermittently and how involved they are in community activities. The situational identification of self and others within such schemes, alongside those based on class and village categories, serves to create and reproduce hierarchies of authority and knowledge in a wide range of contexts.

The idea of people belonging to places is also very important in terms of the construction of community boundaries and identities – people must be ‘placed’ and where they are from is a crucial aspect of who they are.32 In the Scottish Highlands and Islands, place of birth is a fundamental aspect of ‘placing people’ within a network of social relationships, and in particular negotiating one’s status within the villages. The question of where people were born is a regular focus of social discourse in Hilton and the other seaboard villages, particularly amongst those who define themselves as ‘local’. It is something which is generally established at the onset of any new acquaintance, and is then reiterated regularly in daily conversation, thus being incorporated into the body of public knowledge which serves to ‘place’ people in relation to others. Being born in Hilton, or related to someone who is born in Hilton, is central to being accepted as a ‘local’, an authentic member of the community. Those related through marriage to ‘Hiltoners’ achieve a certain level of insider status, but are still, often after many decades, perceived as ‘incomers’ by themselves and others.

As in many rural and urban communities,33 knowledge about the village, whether about its history, landscape, people’s relationships and way of life and so forth, is subject to a degree of social control. Certain people are given greater authority in terms of relating this knowledge than others. The distinction between ‘locals’ and ‘incomers’ is particularly important in this respect. Thus, those who were born and brought up in the village often preface stories about the history of the village, genealogical relationships, ways of life and so forth, with statements like, “I was born and bred here”. Similarly, those who were not born and brought up in the village frequently preface such conversations with statements such as “well, I’m just an outsider”, or “I’m looking at it from an outsider’s point of view”, or “I’m not from here”, and at the same time they often defer to specific ‘locals’ who, they say, would have a deeper knowledge. For instance, talking about the history of the village, Angus, a long-term resident of Hilton, but who was born and brought up in a nearby town, told me, “so they, the Hilton ones, were the sea people. Now I’m an incomer so this is just what I’ve really been told about Hilton”. People’s position within the village, their kin relations and other kinds of relationships therefore define their place within a hierarchy of knowledge. Those born and bred in Hilton have the greatest socially conferred authority, but even here distinctions are drawn on the basis of whether they have remained living in Hilton all their lives, which families they ‘belong’ to, the number of generations

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Fig 1.3: The Hilton of Cadboll early medieval cross-slab on display in the National Museum of Scotland.
these families have lived in Hilton, and so on. Furthermore, incomers are not entirely excluded from relating knowledge about the village, but distinctions are drawn depending on their connection, whether they are related through marriage or some other means, the length of their residence, and their conduct, whether they get involved in local activities and so forth. In the case of incomers due deference is almost always made to locals, and such deference is important in gaining social acceptance of their right to retell stories about the village.

There are numerous different ways of engaging with the past in and around Hilton. We have already seen that kinship, the question of whom people belong to, where they were born and where their families come from, is a regular topic of conversation. Oral histories also play an important role, providing stories in which family histories are located in relation to key events and places. These also provide the basis for shared experiences and the production of forms of social memory, for instance, about what the village was like before street lighting, during the war, or in times of hardship. There are also stories about relationships between the villagers and the laird or other landowners. Buildings and places also stimulate memories of events and activities, for instance, which families lived in which houses in the past and which houses were known for céilidhs and visits. Public buildings and the committees and institutions associated with them also provide a context for oral histories and the negotiation of community relationships and boundaries. Threats to such buildings and their social institutions, or the construction of new buildings like the new Seaboard Memorial Hall, also provide a basis for the symbolic construction of community, as the idea of community is mobilised to pursue particular economic and political interests.

Relating to the more distant past there are also myths, folktales and archaeological monuments, knowledge of which allows people to make connections between the recent past and a kind of deep immemorial time. I heard many stories about buried treasure, ancient ruins, caves and carved stones. Archaeological remains such as burial cists, the Hilton of Cadboll medieval chapel, Old Shandwick and Cadboll Castles, and the early medieval cross-slabs in the area also inform people’s sense of place and community identities (Figures 1.1, 1.3 and 1.4). They come to stand for the villages they are associated with in a symbolic fashion. As Ken informed me during a conversation about the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab:

Well it’s part of the village really and let’s look at it this way, if you take the stone away from the village, the village is no different from any other village in the country but
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that’s why if you put the stone there then that’s Hilton stone and Hilton village.

Such monuments also provide props for the production of social memory and oral history, for instance stories about the picnic that someone’s grandmother had at the chapel site, and about the role that someone else’s great-grandfather played in removing the upper part of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab to Invergordon Castle, the home of the laird, in the 1860s. There is a sense of ownership and belonging attached to those monuments and ruins that are associated with Hilton either by location or name, and this is intensified by the removal of monuments like the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab. The folktales surrounding these monuments, such as the King’s Sons folk story surrounding the three cross-slabs of Hilton, Shandwick and Nigg, also play an important role in the symbolic construction of community identities in the eponymous villages.

Yet it is important to emphasise that none of these ways of engaging with the past are fixed or uncontested. People are continuously retelling stories and engaging with places, buildings and monuments in new ways – and in their retelling the stories often change little by little. Furthermore, they are debated and negotiated, people disagree about what happened when and where and how. And these engagements with the past provide a means not just to support a sense of shared identity but also to negotiate one’s own status in relation to community, to assert belonging and to exclude others, to differentiate between ‘locals’ and ‘incomers’, Hiltoners and non-Hiltoners. The way in which boundaries of community are drawn also shifts in response to changing circumstances, and the past is put to use strategically to try to make sense of, and influence, events in the present.

An archaeological intervention like an excavation intensifies these processes. It becomes a forum for people to actively produce and reproduce community identities and boundaries in relation to the past. In the summer of 2001, a team of archaeologists from Glasgow University Archaeological Research Division (GUARD) were commissioned by Historic Scotland to excavate the long-lost lower portion of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab along with thousands of fragments which had been discovered earlier in the year (see Figures 1.5 and 1.6). This was not designed as a community archaeology project. There was plenty of provision for public access, including a viewing platform, regular site tours, an open day and school visits. But the excavation was a resolutely professional affair. There was a limited timetable, budget and excavation brief to recover the lower section and fragments, and establish the stratigraphic relationship between the setting and the medieval chapel walls.

Yet local residents actively resisted what they saw as their exclusion and repeatedly attempted to assert their authority and ownership in myriad different ways – both covertly and overtly. The very existence of an excavation which brings a group of professionals who are publicly recognised experts on the past into a community disrupts the existing forms of knowledge and authority described above. As these forms of knowledge and authority are integral to the construction of social memory, identity and community boundaries, excavations constitute a significant intervention whether or not they are designed to facilitate community engagement. There was plenty of evidence of this effect during the Hilton of Cadboll excavations in 2001 as various members of the community mobilised to assert local forms of knowledge and protect established positions of authority. Many visited the excavations regularly to assert local forms of knowledge to the archaeologists and other visitors, and also challenge expert and archaeological forms of knowledge (Figure 1.7). Whilst these activities were in part aimed at the professionals and other outsiders, they were as much about negotiating established positions and interests within the community and reasserting community boundaries at a time when they were in
flux. The most overt resistance, however, came over the excavation and removal of the lower section. There was considerable protest about the intention to excavate the lower section and a fear that once lifted it would be taken to the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh where the upper two thirds is now on display. A fraught debate at a public meeting held at the site (Figure 1.8) resulted in an agreement that once lifted the lower portion would remain in the village until its ownership could be established through legal channels. It remains there to this day and is currently displayed in the parish hall, although legally ownership has now been attributed to the National Museums of Scotland.

The important point for this discussion is that this conflict provided a forum for the mobilisation and expression of a unified community identity. From outside it appeared as if the community spoke with one voice with one notable exception. Indeed, an authoritative community stance had been constructed, but not without disagreement and negotiation behind the scenes. Furthermore, the situation provided the forum for further negotiation of internal categories and community boundaries. It was said that the one person who spoke out publicly in favour of the lower portion going to Edinburgh did not really ‘belong’ to Hilton despite his strong local family ties because he had lived away for a couple of decades (in fact in a nearby settlement about 7 miles away). In contrast, incomers who strongly supported the campaign, and thus were seen to act in the correct way, were given a greater degree of insider status.

Thus, in my research surrounding this excavation I found that it provided a forum for the symbolic construction of the community and its boundaries in many different ways. It provided a situation in which people could negotiate their position in relation to community in new ways, some achieving a greater degree of inclusion whereas the actions of others led to varying degrees of exclusion, at least in this context. In the process, as people negotiated their own positions, community boundaries were reproduced, objectified and transformed. Furthermore, the excavation reinforced the iconic status of the Hilton of Cadboll cross-slab and its ability to symbolically represent the community as a whole. Oral history and folklore had ensured that the monument retained an important role in this respect, even after removal of the upper portion by the Laird of Cadboll Estate in the 1860s. However, the rediscovery of the lower section through excavation brought this into much sharper focus and made it a powerful source of symbolism. Finally, the excavations, and in particular the idea that the remains would be removed to the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh, resulted in a mobilisation of community against a backdrop of social disadvantage.
and economic decline. One man, Alan, was particularly explicit about this relationship:

I look at Hilton stone when it’s in the Edinburgh museum it’s just a dead headstone among other headstones, just a dead you know, whereas in Hilton it could be a living stone, hopefully as a focus of a living community again and also indirectly basically the catalyst for more development in the place.

And:

I feel that while that stone is in Edinburgh museum it’s a dead stone but it could be made live [...] And when it’s alive it’ll be back in Hilton and the stump of the stone is a catalyst for this and it’s you know, I feel our community in some ways is dying because, eh, you know we don’t, as you say we don’t have a post office or a shop or whatever, we don’t have an awful lot of work about us, we don’t have power, we don’t have high tech industry, we don’t have anything really in a way, but we do have a wee bit of community spirit and we do have an appreciation of what the past was.

In this context then, the past and the present intersected with one another, and through the excavation, provided a basis for the mobilisation of the idea of community in an effort to resist social disadvantage and marginality.

Conclusions

There is no question that archaeological monuments and the research surrounding them inform the production of community cohesion, identity, and sense of place as claimed by governments and heritage institutions. In my report for Historic Scotland on the social value of the Hilton of Cadboll monument (Jones 2004), I concluded that it provides:

- a sense of connection with the past;
- an essential reference point for the production of community identities;
- a sense of historical engagement and agency for a disempowered group of people;
- an important icon or symbol of community and place.

However, the point I have been at pains to emphasise in this article is that the relationship between archaeology and communities is not straightforward. We need to recognise that community archaeology is always going to be an intervention into an existing social context where people are already actively producing and negotiating identities and where the past is plural and contested; constantly being remade, debated and negotiated. Any archaeological project, whether a community

Fig 1.8: A fraught public meeting held at the Hilton of Cadboll excavations in 2001.
one or not, is thus likely to become yet another mechanism or forum through which identities and histories are negotiated. As a result, community archaeology may bring about greater social cohesion and inclusion, but it may also be a mechanism for people to differentiate between themselves and others, to express difference and engage in exclusion. This is inevitable because these are fundamental aspects of community identity. Without boundaries – without a sense of who belongs and who does not – communities cease to exist. Nevertheless, any tensions that might ensue are evidence of active engagement with the past, and even in situations of conflict, indeed sometimes because of conflict, community archaeology can be powerful and rewarding.37 Furthermore, through community archaeology people may become more aware of the nature of community identities and also of the interrelationships between communities.

What I think we must do in advocating and practising community archaeology is recognise and understand the processes of identity construction at work in relation to the historic environment. Although governments tend to adopt instrumentalist approaches in the sphere of cultural policy, the idea that the social processes surrounding communities can be controlled in a top-down, instrumental fashion is flawed.38 Indeed, community projects that are initiated and designed from ‘outside’, without considerable community input, are less likely to achieve favourable community outcomes than those that are initiated and developed by people closely associated with particular communities.

The fundamental question of which community or communities are relevant to a particular project requires a ‘bottom-up’ approach, because communities can be defined through diverse and fluid criteria, and the emerging nature and goals of the project will inform which communities engage with it.39 Furthermore, the focus on targets, results and performance measures is ultimately counter-productive in terms of the practice of community archaeology, because such measures require fixed objects and outcomes, which fail to accommodate the complex dynamic nature of community identities and boundaries.40

Finally, as archaeologists we need to acknowledge that we too are engaged in the construction of our own community identities, albeit in this context ones associated with our profession.41 The boundaries we draw between ourselves and others, whose identities and interests relate to the sites we investigate, conserve and present, are also an active part of community archaeology.

Notes

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2) Fremeaux 2005.
4) Ibid. 1.3.
5) Smith & Waterton 2009, 21-34.
7) DCMS 2002, 12.
9) Rees Leahy 2007, 705.
11) English Heritage Community Projects website.
13) McCabe 2011, 4-6.
14) Ibid. 6-7.
16) Isherwood 2009.
19) Ibid.
22) Isherwood 2009.
23) Isherwood 2011, 9-10; McClanahan 2007; Smith & Waterton 2009, 39.
29) For more detail see Jones 2004; Jones 2005a; James et al 2008.
34) Jones 2005b.
35) See Jones 2004 for a detailed discussion.
38) McCabe 2010.
Chapter 2

Archaeology and Communities: Negotiating Memory and Heritage

Laurajane Smith

Introduction

The term ‘community archaeology’ is a problematic term. It implies an essentially assimilationist relationship between archaeology and communities, however we may define those communities. It suggests a top-down relationship, where archaeological expertise is privileged and where communities must engage with archaeological values and understandings of past and present. While I am not suggesting that there is necessarily anything ‘wrong’ with archaeological outreach programmes, and taking archaeological knowledge into communities for community use, what I am suggesting is that the top-down relationships between the discipline and communities, often established under the auspices of ‘community archaeology’, are not necessarily as productive or fruitful as they could be. Indeed, there is much archaeology can learn from communities, but this is hampered by the ways in which relationships between communities and archaeology are established and organised.

This paper examines the differential power relations between communities in general and the particular community of archaeologists, and explores the implications of this for the development of community archaeology programmes. In exploring these issues, I also want to examine the idea of heritage itself – those things that archaeologists often identify as their data, and which many others identify as something that engages their sense of self and cultural understanding. I want to offer a re-theorisation of the idea of heritage, and in doing so examine the social, political and cultural work that heritage does, and highlight the diverse meanings and uses of heritage. This diversity of meaning and use has implications for the relationships between archaeologists and the communities with which they work. The argument developed in this paper is that archaeologists often hold a privileged or authorised position as experts whose job it is to ‘tell’ communities about their pasts, and regulate what this means for the present. However, this role often misunderstands the cultural and political work that archaeological data and knowledge, conceptualised as heritage, does in, to and for communities. This misunderstanding can sometimes have negative and unintended consequences for community self-identity, cohesion and respect.

What is Community?

In addressing these issues we first must consider what is community? Communities may be geographically defined, as in the ‘local’ community, or communities may be more geographically dispersed but cemented through shared cultural, social and/or political experiences and values. An important point for us is the acknowledgement that some communities self-identify, and that others have that identity thrust upon them. Community identity and membership is also never static but is often in flux, and communities may form, disperse, reform, merge and so forth. The issue of controlling self-identification and expression is paramount for many communities, as to control one’s individual and collective identity has important cultural and political implications – a point returned to below. Archaeologists are themselves one such community – a self-identifying community of shared values and knowledge (Figure 2.1). While aspects of that community may shift and change according to changing archaeological values, the core sense of what it is ‘to be’ an archaeologist tends to remain strong.1 (As in all communities the archaeological community includes and excludes individuals, often by the process of identifying who does and who does not hold the appropriate values, experiences and knowledge to be recognised as a member of the archaeological community or, if you prefer, ‘The Discipline’.)
However, unlike many other communities the archaeological community occupies a privileged position of authority over the resources often associated with the authorisation or legitimisation of memories and identities. This makes the archaeological community's relationship to other communities not only rather unique, but also one with a range of inherent tensions. Understanding these tensions rests on understanding two issues. Firstly, the privileged position the archaeological community occupies over the disposition and interpretation of heritage resources and, secondly, the nature of those resources and the cultural and political work that they do.

The values and knowledge base that bind the archaeological community – that give archaeologists a collective identity – rest on their adherence to a certain type of rational intellectual knowledge. As Zygmant Bauman reminds us, intellectuals and the knowledge they produce are granted cultural and political legitimacy in Western societies. Such intellectuals have the power to make binding and authoritative pronouncements about the state of the world – or, in the case of archaeology, the state of past and present culture and society. Intellectual communities also have the ability to make judgements upon, and interpret knowledge developed outside of, legitimised academic communities. Archaeological judgements effectively authorise or de-authorise that knowledge, and in the processes of interpreting it inevitably appropriate it. Many non-archaeological communities’ knowledge of the past is often based on unauthorised or academically illegitimate forms of knowledge – such as memory and cultural and social experience. As such, knowledge about their own identities is either not given as much legitimacy as archaeological pronouncements, or must be confirmed or refuted by archaeological expertise.

The power/knowledge nexus of the relationship between archaeological and other communities is given added tensions by the institutionalization of archaeological authority and legitimacy. The identity of the archaeological community as ‘experts’, and the overall authority of archaeological knowledge, is enhanced and reinforced through the institutionalisation of archaeological values, knowledge and identity within heritage planning, policy and legal instruments and bodies. The incorporation of archaeological values and knowledge into the legislation governing the management and preservation of heritage resources, in planning documents such as PPG15, PPG16, PPS5 and the NPPF, and the employment of archaeological expertise within bodies such as English Heritage, Historic Scotland and the National Trust, coupled with the existence of organisations such as the CBA, ICOMOS and so on, has significant consequences for the community of archaeologists, and the relationships it attempts to develop with other communities. Obviously, this institutionalisation immediately places archaeology in an adversarial relationship with developers, landowners, and other groups with economic interests in heritage. However, it also helps to reinforce the authority of the archaeological community with other types of cultural, social and geographical communities. The unequal power relations I am describing between archaeologists and culturally and socially defined communities is important, and I recognise that archaeological knowledge can be less powerful than some interests, such as those that privilege economic development. However, the authority of archaeological knowledge gained in this process cannot be overlooked or denied, and it has significant consequences for community archaeology. These consequences may be entirely positive or unproblematic in archaeological relationships with communities that share similar knowledge values to those of the archaeological community. A range of successful archaeological community projects throughout the UK attest to the existence of local communities who have enjoyed or benefited from archaeological outreach programmes (Figure 2.2). However, the relationship between communities and archaeologists can become entirely fraught and problematic when communities do not share or indeed reject the knowledge base and values of archaeology. In post-
colonial contexts, this is most starkly revealed in the tensions and conflicts between archaeologists and indigenous communities. However, the values of communities and archaeologists do not need to be as polarised as they often are in indigenous conflicts for tensions and disharmony to arise.

In the UK there are many instances of communities’ concerns conflicting with archaeological values – the Seahenge case being perhaps the most obvious of these. Even when communities may share the same basic cultural values as those underpinning archaeological knowledge, not all communities will necessarily see archaeology as providing the full story, or as having a monopoly on understanding the past and its role in the present, nor will they necessarily accept the role of archaeological knowledge as legitimising their own collective memories or experiences. This disjunction can not only cause tensions, but may also impede communication between archaeologists and community members. This in turn has a consequence not only for communities, but also for archaeologists who may miss an opportunity for learning about new ways of seeing and understanding the past.

The argument here is that the power/knowledge relations between archaeologists and other cultural and social communities creates an unequal relationship. This inequality is in itself an impediment to communication between archaeologists and communities, even when individual archaeologists may wish to create space in their working relationships with communities to engage honestly and equitably with community knowledge and experience. However, what can work to impede communication further is the discourse of heritage around which archaeologists and communities interact. This discourse both creates a problem of communication, and helps to underpin the authority of certain speakers who possess expert knowledge. Moreover, it not only further enhances archaeological authority – but will also work to privilege certain national narratives and consensual views of history, that will in turn labour to make invisible or delegitimise the experiences, memories and identities of certain sub-national community groups. In short, the discourse of heritage itself works to legitimise or delegitimise certain cultural and social claims to identity.

**Authorised Heritage**

There is an Authorised Heritage Discourse (AHD) that stresses the material, or tangible, nature of heritage, along with monumentality, grand scale, time depth and aesthetics. While it identifies the symbolic importance of heritage for representing social and cultural identity, it pays scant recognition to the dynamics of how identity is actively constructed or created in association with heritage. This is because the dominant discourse of heritage naturalises the assumption that heritage is inextricably linked to identity to such an extent that how and why these links occur are hardly ever considered – the heritage/identity dyad just ‘is’. The AHD, informed by archaeological concerns with materiality and assumptions about the representational relationships between material culture and identity, obscures or marginalises those identities constructed or created using conceptualisations of heritage that sit outside of the AHD. However, the existence and nature of the AHD does more than render certain identities or populations as subjects of archaeological pronouncements, judgements and interpretations. The authorised heritage discourse not only defines what is or is not ‘heritage’, it also stresses and authorises a particular ethic. In this ethic, current generations are put under a moral obligation to care for, protect and revere heritage items and places so that they may be passed to future generations for their ‘education’ with the assurance that a sense of common identity based on the past is being maintained. The idea of inheritance, which is embedded in authorised definitions of ‘heritage’, is very important here. ‘Heritage’, synonymous as it is with concepts of ‘legacy’, ‘tradition’ or ‘birthright’, is
a discourse that inevitably invokes a sense that the present has a duty to pass on unchanged its inheritance from the past, to protect that legacy and ensure that it remains unsullied by the present so that the next generation may benefit from the past. Subsequently, current generations simply become caretakers of the past, disengaged from an active use of ‘the heritage’. The appropriate experts, who act as stewards and trustees, ensure that heritage is protected and that the present does not actively rewrite the meaning of the past and thus the present. In short, the continuity of the past is maintained, its influence on the present is maintained and, as ‘the present’ becomes ‘the past’ of future generations, social values and meanings represented by ‘the past’ are perpetuated. The symbolic values of heritage, identified, documented and preserved by the stewardship of heritage experts such as archaeologists, are themselves preserved, and competing interpretations or the active utilisation of heritage to create and recreate identities of relevance to the needs and aspirations of current generations and communities are made problematic.

The ‘Value’ of Heritage

Another crucial theme of this discourse is the idea that ‘heritage’ is innately valuable – heritage is inevitably about ‘the great’, ‘the good’ and ‘the important’ that contributed to or ‘created’ the cultural character of the present. Assumptions about the innate significance and value of heritage are also interlinked to assumptions about its materiality. In the Western AHD, ‘heritage’ is material, it is an object, place or landscape (Figure 2.3). However, what is useful to consider here is that heritage is ultimately ‘intangible’. The idea of intangible heritage is one that has taken on some urgency within recent heritage debates, particularly following UNESCO’s adoption of the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2003. This convention recognises that not all heritage is represented by physical objects, but can also include intangible events. However, the idea of the intangibility of heritage is one that is difficult to accept within the Western AHD, as witnessed by the refusal of many key Western countries to become signatories to the intangible convention. Moreover, the idea of intangible heritage that I am developing here rests on the idea that while heritage may be represented by a tangible thing, or an intangible event recognisable under the 2003 UNESCO Convention, ‘heritage’ is also usefully conceived as a point or moment of negotiation. This negotiation may occur at places or in association with objects identified as having important cultural or social symbolism, or during the performances of ‘intangible’ heritage events – but that heritage is a process in which identity and social and cultural meaning, memories and experiences are mediated, evaluated and worked out. This negotiation may occur within groups who share a common and collective sense of identity, or between different collective cultural or social identities. This is not to negate the importance of physical place or object, but rather to de-privilege it. Sites, landscapes or objects of heritage provide a sense of place, or borrowing from Raphael Samuel, a ‘theatre’, in which to negotiate and work out cultural and social identities and the values that underpin them in response to changing cultural, social, economic and political needs and circumstances. Subsequently, I want to suggest that heritage is both a discourse and a performance - it is a way of thinking, talking about, identifying and acting out the cultural and social values and meanings that communities wish to consider and reflect upon and then rework. It is not necessarily about social and cultural stasis, or necessarily about cultural change, but it is a process in which decisions are actively made about cultural expression, identity and development. The possession or cataloguing or physical conservation of heritage places or items is far less important in this process than how those heritage sites, artefacts or landscapes are used as cultural tools in the processes of remembering, forgetting and commemoration. What makes any heritage site a place of heritage is not any innate value or simple fact of its existence, but rather the way the place is used and the values given to it as a cultural tool in the performance and process of negotiating cultural and social value and meaning.

So how does this reworking of the idea of heritage throw any light onto the relationships and tensions between archaeological expertise and community interests? Does it throw any light onto my starting assertion that community archaeology is assimilationist? As noted previously the power of the AHD and its institutionalisation within heritage agencies and management and conservation practices creates a substantive barrier in communicating and understanding the heritage aspirations of certain communities. The English AHD is itself a particular heritage discourse that works to underpin archaeological and other forms of expertise, but more importantly actively works to rehearse and validate national narratives, and the cultural and social status quo of England – heritage in this particular discourse is about cultural stasis. The dominance of this discourse and its institutionalisation simply means that other discourses of heritage – other ways of constructing and negotiating sub-national identities – are obscured, and consequently many sub-national community identities are themselves marginalised in contemporary England, or actively remade into or assimilated into the dominant cultural and historical
narratives.

The ability to control the moment of heritage – the cultural processes and negotiations that occur at heritage places – becomes vital in community projects concerned with the self-determination of identity and expression. However, the process of negotiation and mediation of identity and cultural values is inevitably arbitrated by not only the AHD, but also by the bodies of expertise, such as the archaeological community, who validate and deploy that discourse. The AHD has become naturalised within the management and conservation process, and facilitates the regulation and arbitration of competing knowledge about the past, and conceptualisations about the meaning and nature of heritage places and objects. This becomes a problem for community archaeology because of the role the heritage process plays in the politics of recognition. Political struggles for social and economic equity are often facilitated or impeded through the recognition – or misrecognition – of community identity. Consequently conflicts over community identity are not simply abstract debates about how certain archaeological artefacts or sites are interpreted, but are part of the political processes of recognising, or not, the political, social and/or economic aspirations of individual communities. This is because such aspirations, or claims to certain resources or rights, are often tied to shared community experiences, values and identities. Archaeological interactions with communities may, often unwittingly, have important consequences in the politics of recognition that will feed back to specific struggles over resources and social equity – issues implicit in the social inclusion policies of the current Labour Government. Failure by ‘experts’ to recognise the social, cultural and political work that heritage as a cultural process or performance does, and the role of archaeologists in arbitrating this process, not only impedes communication with communities, but more significantly renders communities subject to the regulation of archaeological expertise.

Fig 2.3: The late-18th-century bridge at Ironbridge, one of the UK’s first World Heritage Sites approved by UNESCO.
Conclusion

So, is the process I have been describing necessarily a ‘bad’ or avoidable thing? The answer is probably not, but what is problematic is archaeological ignorance of the political nature of community archaeology. Archaeological participation in community projects can never legitimately be viewed as simply providing a community with information about their past, or the techniques to explore their past – not only because (and let’s face it) many communities already have their own knowledge and techniques anyway, but also because once archaeologists engage with the heritage process they are engaging with the politics of recognition. As such, archaeologists are making active choices to legitimise or delegitimise community experience, values and identities. This may seem like I am making the old cry – ‘archaeology is political’ – beloved by Cambridge post-processualists. However, archaeology is political, and we should not shy away from being political, recognising that we have agendas and act on them. Recognising and acknowledging our agendas is actually vital for successful and meaningful community relationships, and to avoid blundering into internal and external community politics. As an archaeologist who has worked with community groups both here and in Australia, I would point out that many of the hard-learnt lessons in dealing with indigenous communities and their concerns and aspirations are equally relevant in this country.

In summary those lessons are: firstly, understand the consequences of your actions, not only in immediate terms within the community, but also in terms of the work and consequences archaeological practices and discourses have in wider social and cultural debates and conflicts. Secondly, be honest about your intentions, listen to community aspirations and be honest about your ability to support them, in either practical or political terms. Thirdly, develop relationships of trust; such relationships require the ability not only to be honest, but also to listen to community values, needs and aspirations. To be able to listen requires us to understand that archaeology is itself a community with its own particular ways of knowing and understanding that are not necessarily shared or required by all. The ability to listen opens up the possibility of discovering new ways of understanding others’ experiences, and consequently new ways of looking at, interpreting and understanding archaeological data.

Notes

1) Edgeworth 2006.
2) Bauman 1987.
3) DoE & DNH 1994; DoE 1990; DCLG 2010; DCLG 2012; Council for British Archaeology; International Council on Monuments and Sites, which acts as adviser to the UNESCO World Heritage Committee.
4) See Smith 2004 for fuller discussion.
5) Smith 2006, 29.
6) See Smith 2006 for further discussion.
9) Smith 2006.
Chapter 3

‘Slicing the Gordian Knot’: A Personal Reflection on Community Archaeology

Stephen Young

Introduction

This paper emerges out of over a decade working with and in the community, recording and interpreting (Figure 3.1) the archaeology of a locality. The opinions expressed here are intended to reflect both the common frustrations with and the massive potential of public engagement and ownership of the archaeological process. It is the culmination of an attempt to combine a common-sense methodology with real social inclusion and to identify an effective operational mechanism for community archaeology.

Context and Rationale of Community Archaeology

My personal view is that community archaeology continues to be a much undervalued asset and its place in the mainstream of archaeological practice remains, with some notable exceptions, almost totally consigned to the role of a fringe activity. The choice of the myth of the Gordian knot for the title of this paper symbolises the nature of the issues we are about to explore and the potentially radical solutions that need, in my opinion, to be applied. Anyone with any interest in community archaeology knows just how complex the issues are surrounding the rationale, working structures, management and relationship aspects in developing a successful approach to the subject. This is also inextricably bound up with a lack of appreciation for the potential value of community involvement in the mainstream future of archaeology. Therefore for me the story is an appropriate metaphor for portraying an intractable problem that appears beyond our capacity to resolve in a rational way. Indeed we will need to be like Alexander the Great, flexible in our approach and bold with our solutions, if we truly wish to achieve a meaningful future for public engagement in community-based initiatives.
critical nature of collaboration in relation to the development of community archaeology, and the importance of accessibility and inclusivity.

However, before embarking on this practice based odyssey, one of the first things we as archaeologists must recognise is the widespread antagonism that exists between the worlds of academia, professionalism and the amateur practitioner. The schism, should we choose to describe it thus, manifests itself as a measure of antipathy between the different groups in relation to their roles and capabilities. The failure to admit to this state of affairs acts as an inhibiting factor in advocating egalitarian community-based archaeological structures. The nature of the prejudice is not always overt in the way archaeology transacts its business, nor is it necessarily represented in a conscious policy of exclusion amongst those charged with looking after our archaeological heritage. It can be summarised either as a sense of the “expert knows best” or in the perception that those outside this magic circle will be patronised in any potential partnership.

Naturally enough, the very terms we use to define the different partnership groups have come to influence perceptions and relationships within archaeology. One is aware of a lack of understanding that has fostered scepticism and ill-informed opinion.
concerning those working in the different sectors, the main consequence of which is the generation of a negative working environment. This must be reversed and the dominance of dogmatic attitudes challenged if we are to achieve an equitable relationship between the disparate groupings.

Therefore it follows from this basic conviction that the treatment of community-based fieldwork cannot be principally conducted in a cosmetic way because that is open to misinterpretation and the growth of condescending or demeaning attitudes towards the very society we seek to enlist in our support. First and foremost we must try to engage in a fair fashion with local communities. To do this practitioners should display clarity of vision, sense of purpose and an empathetic quality of leadership to facilitate and sustain a consistently high-quality performance. This often requires a change in long-held systems of belief concerning the core roles of management and leadership and often the need to embrace more maverick attitudes towards the balance of power in personal and project-based relationships.

Defining an Ethos for Community Archaeology

Several philosophical tenets underlying community archaeology must also be promoted in a wholehearted manner if we wish to reach any sort of enlightenment on the subject. These require us to examine closely a key aspect of the approach before outlining the cardinal principles that should define the methodology and the management style required to achieve the desired archaeological outcomes. The predominate theme must be an exploration of what we mean by the ‘ethos’ of community archaeology. Without doubt the future success of everything we do in relation to public involvement is dependent on adopting the right ethos that will underpin and permeate our thinking on the practice.

In my experience there are four major elements that need to be integrated into a conceptual framework (Figure 3.2). These approaches basically divide into two distinctive areas of activity: those that are relationship based and the rest, which are focused on the rationale that justifies any fieldwork. In the relationship group we have the notion of an empathetic quality of leadership to facilitate and sustain a consistently high-quality performance. This often requires a change in long-held systems of belief concerning the core roles of management and leadership and often the need to embrace more maverick attitudes towards the balance of power in personal and project-based relationships.

Having accepted that the fundamental bedrock of any community archaeological project should be that it is collaborative and non-partisan, one is forced then to engage with the accessibility and inclusivity aspects of that agenda. This means these activities should seek to maintain strong non-hierarchical links between the community volunteers, academics and professional practitioners. We should be endeavouring to further a co-operative alliance founded on teamwork and mutual respect if we seek to avoid unnecessary mistakes in leadership, organisation and interpretation of the quality of the data retrieved. I am referring specifically to a facilitating style of collaboration which gives an equal recognition to all of the contributions involved, that emphasises the importance of the combined outcome and does not dwell on the divisiveness of a controlling intellect. In short we are talking about a culture that is not autocratic or mendacious in its outlook but is a truly joint archaeological venture that can assimilate all the skills, know-how and experience available from all three major areas of the discipline in an open way.

The level of accessibility and inclusivity either ‘allowed’ or ‘contrived’ within the community initiative depends entirely on the opportunities for learning, decision-making, practical application and fieldwork proffered. Make no mistake - these avenues should be available to all those involved in a project from the initial gathering of data to publication. Promoting such a view may appear archaeological heresy, but to me it is a common-sense tactic that helps mitigate the worst type of scenario, often encountered, of an elitist-dominated approach to the past that cares little for the context within which work is undertaken. However, accessibility and inclusivity need not demand that every individual’s contribution must be exactly the same at every stage or level of the initiative, as those involved must be allowed to decide their own level of input to ensure an effective participation.

Obviously the appropriateness of the extent of opportunities on offer to those engaged in these projects may be inextricably connected to the resources available to undertake any initiative and the envisaged role of the different contributors as set out in the original rationale. I personally believe there is no really credible argument against a full level of integration. One is aware that inclusivity in the decision-making process in particular might be seen as onerous or inconvenient because it could impact upon the perceived authority of individual influential contributors. However, these types of concerns are of limited importance and are more to do with the management of interpersonal rapport than the need to maintain redundant power relationships. I also appreciate that in some ways community archaeology is certainly more emotionally demanding than might be thought at first glance. I only make the point that should authority, control and personal ego be a major issue for you then community archaeology is
probably not the right showcase for your talents and you would be far better employed in a different sector of archaeology.

Having established the context of the relationship parameters attached to the ethos of community archaeology, I can now reflect on those aspects that underpin the rationale for undertaking fieldwork, which are so important for achieving a tangible public engagement. The first of these elements is the necessity to make the thrust of every initiative relevant to the archaeological environment. The rationale behind community archaeology cannot be predicated on the simplistic ‘we did it because we can’ approach as this challenges the central assumption that the purpose of all archaeological work is to enhance our general understanding. An ability to undertake something is not sufficient grounds for initiating work as it ignores the reality that invasive methodologies are destructive and can never be repeated in the future - once we lose archaeological information it is gone forever. In addition, such funding as exists is too precious to be accessed just to provide a rationale for professional employment.

Therefore it is critically important that any work undertaken is specifically linked to research agendas, frameworks and training opportunities to ensure the necessary degree of professional credibility can be employed to justify the rationale behind the fieldwork. The relevance of the archaeological work in relation to the wider context of the discipline will then raise the status and usefulness of the data obtained and provides a totally valid and justifiable reason for going ahead. The adoption of a logical rationale also facilitates a sharper focus on the appropriateness of the methodology employed and helps maximise the potential of the findings being recovered. An insistence on a plausible rationale has the added advantage of fostering an awareness of the archaeological environment in the community and demonstrates the importance of that engagement.

A transparent understanding of the context and format of community-based work undertaken allows a consistent approach to be embraced regarding the fieldwork methodology. It is essential that the methodologies applied are appropriate to the task in hand and are worthy of eliciting the full range of information available from the physical evidence. Again funding is an obvious problem area in the deployment of suitable field-based practices and it can have a disproportionate effect on community-based provision, but its potential impact must not be allowed to affect the capacity to reflect an integrated approach. Therefore methodological issues will need careful handling whether you are trying to characterise a single site or the range of settlement within the broader landscape associated with the examination of one or more periods of study. In my own experience I have found this to be achievable and preferable to less transparent schemes.

The final element I would recognise as being part of the ethos concerns the term ‘empowerment’, a somewhat glib descriptive term which is often misused and misunderstood by practitioners even though habitually utilised as a talismanic watchword to validate funding forays into the world of community archaeology. For me empowerment should strive to inform, train and prepare those involved from the community to achieve a degree of competence in the discipline leading to an enlightened engagement if not proactive ownership of their past. It is about the preparation of communities for their involvement in the future recording and preservation of the upstanding and buried remains of their localities.

**The Principles of Community Archaeology**

Should your ethos encompass accessible and inclusive collaboration and a relevant and appropriate rationale as well as supporting empowerment it is then possible to start to think about the principles that can be employed to promote those ideals. One should remember the principles themselves will beget the practical approaches through which your actual strategy can be effectively conveyed. For me there are four characteristic qualities needed when building a community-based programme. These traits are a robust vision, good communication strategies, maintenance of an effective code of personal and professional integrity, and a level of interpersonal skills that allows a genuine respect for the opinions and abilities of others. If one abides by such strictures many of the potential management, organisational and practical considerations become a lot easier to handle.

Central to these principal traits is an obligation to have a clearly thought out vision of the proposed work. Because without this it will be extremely difficult to inspire the interest and commitment that will be required to sustain the project. To assist in this process it is also important to establish effective strategies for communicating your proposals to those involved in the initiative and you will pretty soon realise this needs to be an ongoing process. The rationale underpinning the work should be made self-evident in any of the protocols you create which outline procedures and processes. Such protocols will establish the rights and responsibilities for the community-based initiative you wish to enthuse. It is also critical when creating project boundaries that these demonstrate respect for the opinions and abilities of others. Be particularly mindful of the obligation to assert in your dealings a personal and
professional integrity that others can grow to trust implicitly. Your integrity is the hallmark by which you and any community-based project will be judged and it is important that your vision and organisational structures are founded on this reality.

Sometimes you will get it wrong, and you must reflect on these experiences and learn from them whenever possible. Knowing when to let go of the decision-making process, sharing control and being able to delegate can be difficult skills to master and require a great deal of trust and belief in others. It is also imperative that the management and organisational systems employed concentrate on addressing and incorporating the aspirations of the disparate element embroiled in the initiative. An aptitude to challenge long-held personal beliefs, prejudices and biases, both yours and the local volunteers, through self-reflection and an ability to act on the insights derived in this way will come in handy.

A Personal Experience of Community Archaeology

I don’t intend to concentrate here on a range of specific solutions to the issues outlined above in relation to ethos, principles, management and outcomes, but my intention is to share some of the working practices adopted by CLASP.¹

In my own case, working with the community has been something of a personal quest in that very little of my traditional experience of archaeology had prepared me directly for the trials, tribulations and possibilities ahead. Had I been constrained at the very beginning to explain the concept of community archaeology I would probably have betrayed a very superficial understanding of both the potential and the subtle philosophical nuances behind the term. It takes some time to realise there are two potential strands to community archaeology and that both are fighting for a wider acceptance.

One viewpoint endorses a reactive role for the community that concentrates exclusively on facilitating the work of professional practitioners and academics and reflects the commercial realities of archaeology. It is already widely established in the thinking of those who may realise the importance of a community-based link but who prefer to engage in a well-defined, hierarchical and profoundly limited fashion with the general public. However, the second standpoint is intrinsically a proactive stance which without doubt would be more contentious to many in the discipline, that local communities should take a major role in identifying the full potential of the archaeological resource within the landscape and assist in shaping the archaeological agendas of the future. This approach is currently extremely under-
represented in British archaeology and having to fight continually for approval, and where it does exist it is most likely subservient to the whim of a professionally appointed ‘community archaeologist’. These two strains are not necessarily compatible and it is the need to effectively reconcile them that should dictate future debate on the relative merits of both approaches.

One understands that archaeology cannot be unregulated or unstructured but neither should it seek the wholesale replacement of multifarious methodological pathways with a single professional route. We must reverse the trend that characterises the established British archaeological experience, which in general discounts the community's capacity to become involved in a system of proactive fieldwork. The unfettered rise of the ‘free market’ provision based on developer funding, enshrined in PPG16 and now the NPPF, which has gained political acceptance in contemporary Britain, is not a sustainable model because of its overweening dependence on the commercial environment and its susceptibility to adverse economic indicators, situations and financial rationale.

Like other practitioners I believe the reactive rationale forced on British archaeology by the commercial imperative has distorted the strategic overview and has managed to redefine the archaeological priorities and the way we respond to heritage issues. Commercial pressures tend to lead to the dismissal of aspirations like ‘ongoing commitment’ to the wider archaeological context even though it is so obviously required. We need the type of engagement and commitment local communities possess in abundance to redress the balance somewhat. I am heartened that organisations and institutions such as English Heritage, the Council for British Archaeology, the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists and the Council for Independent Archaeologists are all aware of the issues and increasingly are trying to establish workable solutions for more effective integration of community involvement into mainstream archaeology.

Outside my university commitments I work principally with CLASP, a registered community archaeological charity based in central Northamptonshire. My function is to facilitate the various projects undertaken by CLASP as its Archaeological Director and although an influential voice, I see my role as only one amongst many. The charity’s mandate is to act as an umbrella organisation to arrange and coordinate community-led archaeological projects in the rural areas of the county. CLASP’s aim is to bring together local societies and individual archaeological enthusiasts in an effort to raise awareness and ownership of their local past and heritage issues in general whilst working in tandem with professional and academic practitioners. A small membership fee is charged for individual membership and the societies affiliate their memberships through yearly donations.

Each society and the collective individual membership have a representative on the central organising committee which then appoints its own chairperson, secretary and officers to organise fieldwork and deal with the administrative issues of CLASP-promoted projects. The charity represents ten local heritage and history groups and a metal-detecting association as well as over a hundred interested individual enthusiasts. The affiliated groups do not have sufficient resources to undertake fieldwork by themselves but are happy to be involved in CLASP activities which allow them to explore the archaeology of their localities. In all, nearly 500 people have been involved in various initiatives since its inception post-millennium. In addition, the charity is governed by a separate Management Board comprised of locally based trustees. The majority of its members hold no position within the organisational set-up and this avoids conflict of interest in setting the overall framework of CLASP within which the organising committees work.

However, certain trustees have dual membership of both the trustees committee and the organising committee to ease the level of communication between the different layers of management. All of the trustees, officers and committee members have to stand for re-election at the annual general meeting and the charity produces an annual report outlining its activities and action during the previous year. The Archaeological Director is also part of the organising committee and a member of the trustee board but he is not the chairperson for either group, limiting his political influence and ensuring his impartiality. Members of the charity are also kept informed on a dedicated website and via newsletters and are able to access any minutes and thereby the decisions of the various committees. The charity is designed to be as democratic as possible and it has a series of checks and balances to ensure the process adheres to this tenet. A fundamental facet of the mission statement is that every project initiated is designed to be inclusive. This enables the organisation to promote involvement across the methodological divide and at all levels of practice from management to publication and fieldwork. CLASP inherently recognises the right of the individual within the community to influence and express themselves in the initiatives with which they are involved. The charity encompasses, to misquote Hartley, the idea that the past should not be another country to the very society it represents but the bond between the landscape and its people. It seems logical to me to make the most of those communities whose roots and sense of place are most attuned to the sensitivities of their locale. This
involvement is probably the only long-term sustainable and credible resource available to allow a much more proactive fieldwork strategy to ‘fill in the gaps’ in our current knowledge that otherwise through the economic realities of modern archaeology would be overlooked. CLASP has undertaken work and been involved in running two major period-based projects which are deliberately and consciously linked in their design. These are a rescue excavation of a small Anglo-Saxon family cemetery and an ongoing detailed examination of the roadside station and ‘small town’ of Bannaventa (Whitton Lodge, Northamptonshire; Figure 3.3). The linked period-based study centres on the research excavation of a Roman villa complex and its surrounding estate, under the auspices of the Whitehall Farm archaeological group, and a detailed landscape survey (Figure 3.4) exploring and characterising settlement in the surrounding area. The former was funded partially by South Northamptonshire District Council and the latter by the Heritage Lottery Fund and Harpole Parish Council. These schemes are interdependent because we are trying to understand the development of a landscape and raise awareness locally of the scale of the surviving archaeology for a given archaeological period. It enables those involved to gain a realistic impression of the archaeological potential of their locality and the research possibilities for the future as well as acquire the necessary skills to attempt further work.

Our research excavation at Whitehall Farm initially utilised students from all over the world but mostly British universities to create a vocational environment where local people can gain experience and skills before assuming responsibility for the archaeological work itself. Links have been maintained and forged not only with the University of Northampton but also universities such as Durham, Nottingham and Loughborough whose academics support community enthusiasts in specialist areas of recording or in developing new avenues of research. Currently collaboration is burgeoning with the glass, painted plaster, coin, pottery, bone and tile assemblages retrieved from the Whitehall Farm excavation and neighbouring settlements in the locality. The landscape and settlement characterisation project employed mainly non-invasive fieldwalking and geophysical techniques to investigate artefactual assemblages from the plough soil associated with Roman rural settlement as well as occasional test pitting and trial trenching to ascertain stratigraphic survival. The first stage was called ‘Local People: Local Past’ and was begun in the August of 2001, with fieldwork finishing in August 2004. This project’s success both in the standard of fieldwork and the range of findings enabled a second stage to be developed for investigating a far more extensive area centred on the rural hinterland of the Romano-British roadside stations and local centres of Bannaventa (Whilton Locks) and Lactodorum (Towcester). A desired outcome is the production of a computerised archive and interactive interpretive website that would disseminate the findings to the wider community as well as interested specialists.

The initial investigation of the Romano-British landscape was chosen for two main reasons: firstly, the potential for exploring the settlement and artefactual evidence of this period is extensive in the area. Secondly, it is easily identified and retrieved by relatively inexperienced fieldworkers and the necessary expertise for its interpretation was available. The mass-produced nature of the assemblages provides an abundance of material for systematic analysis by an amateur workforce in collaboration with professional/academic practitioners. All the fieldwalking surveys were organised, carried out and processed by community-based volunteers, whilst the associated geophysical surveys were undertaken by professional archaeologists from the Northamptonshire Archaeology Unit and the Archaeological Forensic Department of Cranfield University. I should perhaps explain this doesn’t preclude local people from undertaking geophysical surveys but has more to do with being able to maximise our initial understanding of the landscape relatively quickly and accurately with the experience and know-how available to us. It also facilitated the creation of links and communication between the professional and community archaeologists, which is highly desirable if one wishes to adopt a ‘best practice’ methodological approach to fieldwork.

The Management of Community Archaeological Initiatives

For me, any archaeologist should view their personal
Chapter 3: 'Slicing the Gordian Knot': A Personal Reflection on Community Archaeology

contribution to community archaeology in terms of facilitating events rather than dictating and controlling them. Your role involves being a positive force for countering any pressure that would inhibit empowerment for the community. My own particular involvement has focused on instigating projects that inform and raise awareness of the potential of community archaeology for connecting people to their locality. I have found myself responsible for raising funding, shaping the principles, constructing a management structure, determining protocols and defining the archaeological outcomes. In addition I might lead the fieldwork and train those involved as well as monitoring quality control in delivering good-quality archaeological outcomes.

I have always made sure my own motivation for undertaking the role of Archaeological Director of CLASP projects is made quite explicit from the outset and everybody associated with the initiatives knows my reasons for being involved. Obviously part of the rationale behind my particular commitment are the intellectual rights to the interpretation of the material recovered which relates to project designs that I have initiated. An open approach resolves many points of possible contention and reinforces the trust in the vital relationships which need to be nurtured. There is nothing wrong with championing a particular academic focus or agenda as long as this is clearly articulated.

Personally I am interested in characterising the settlement and landscape of the locality in the Roman period and this has coloured my specific engagement, but this motivation has been tailored to suit the overall aims and rationale of the community-based approach sponsored by CLASP. It dovetails into their underlying training and organisational needs at this stage of their development. I would advise those whose motivation may be more financially or employment-based to be careful in their progression of the overall project. It is important not to ignore these situations when they arise because they will only get more difficult if not dealt with early. Sometimes a situation will call for swift and decisive action to ensure the continuity and the maintenance of a healthy environment as well as effective working relationships. The only way of accomplishing the successful resolution of such problems is through force of argument, reason and pragmatism, but on the odd occasion bluntness is the only option. Often when things go wrong it is automatically seen as the fault of those providing or facilitating the leadership and indeed this may well be the case, but a thick skin can sometimes be helpful in those situations when the blame doesn’t lie with you. Any bad news is best heard early and community projects should provide a conducive and non-judgemental atmosphere for individuals to feel free to admit responsibility for mistakes.

Any factions, cliques, unfairness or personality clashes must be eliminated or at least minimised and cannot be allowed to thrive, as they threaten the health and well-being of the group and the project. For some people confrontation is ingrained in their personality but unless it is directed into positive channels it can be extremely damaging. Unfortunately sometimes individual personalities mixed with personal agendas can have a tremendous detrimental effect on the development and progression of the overall project. It is important not to ignore these situations when they arise because they will only get more difficult if not dealt with early.

The management of the pure dirt archaeology is only one of several skills which need to be recognised, honed and practised in the day to day stewardship of the community project. You need to be a diplomat and an all round professional in everything you represent. Should the balance be wrong at any stage it could have catastrophic consequences for the health of a project. There are none of the checks and balances of the world of work here, only the personal bonds and shared aspirations of every individual involved to maintain the project. On occasion this may well mean you are tempted to take on too much so be prepared to say no to some things. This can be another hard lesson...
to learn but one you should fully understand if the community archaeology route is going to be pursued.

Morale must be maintained and the volunteers will look for leadership in this area. A confidence in the research outline, meticulousness in your risk assessment documents and certainty in your dealings with individuals or the group will reward your ventures in the long run. Try to be prepared to act on feedback and avoid being too dogmatic because something doesn’t suit you personally. You should understand and realise that mistakes are inevitably unavoidable and will happen; it is how you react to rectify and minimise them that will ultimately affect the quality of the project findings and vindicate the approach which has been developed. This is no different from professional archaeology, but because the work is being undertaken by ‘amateurs’ it will be exposed to a great deal more scrutiny and comment during dissemination of the findings.

**Protocols and Community Archaeology**

It is also necessary and useful to have a clear set of protocols for the various management, organisational and fieldwork strategies to be employed so that everyone understands what is expected of them and how to undertake these tasks successfully. This sort of framework is not provided overnight and will continually need to be developed as experience and opportunity present themselves. A training manual will enable you to outline the different procedures you may wish to employ and explain any conventions to be used by the project. Typically those for an excavation could include topics such as stratigraphy - including contexts and features-surveying, planning, finds processing, photography, health and safety - and general fieldwork etiquette, which can all be covered in detail.

All those involved in a technical exercise should be aware of the purpose and rationale behind it and know exactly who to ask if unsure of what is required or if the need arises to report problems. The organisational system for fieldwork will require fine tuning because not every activity is continuously riveting or attention grabbing and the ability to concentrate may need encouragement as well as development. A sense of attention to detail, concentration and patience are skills that need to be nurtured just as much as more palpable proficiencies to ensure a methodical application of the archaeological process.

Early identification of individuals, groups and...
organisations who are liable to form the bedrock of your local community initiative should be undertaken to see how they can be involved and encouraged to take part. At the beginning this will take extensive networking and favours the archaeologist with strong local ties. There is nothing wrong with being associated with the term ‘local archaeologist’ and indeed this can often supply you with a cachet that is indispensible in providing you with an acceptance within the community as one of the locals. However, should you lack a local link you must try to appreciate the keen sense of place and belonging that will be driving the commitment of those that volunteer.

Community archaeology should be well supported with training and provide pertinent modes of accredited recognition for the achievements made by those involved. Accreditation of skills and knowledge should be available for all those who wish to demonstrate competence in their capabilities and to help endorse the credentials of those involved in community archaeology initiatives amongst practitioners elsewhere. It should also promote confidence in undertaking fieldwork and enable community volunteers to take on more responsibility for initiating and delivering new and desperately needed exploratory fieldwork. The use of a computerised recording environment should be universally encouraged in order to develop competences in data handling and record keeping and enhance awareness of the many areas of the contemporary archaeological record, as well as to provide easily accessible data for future evaluation and research. Expectations of the work to be accomplished should always be of the highest standard and never allowed to descend to the level of the lowest common denominator. One must be prepared to demonstrate utter confidence in the abilities of those involved and it is up to you to make sure sufficient training and guidance is available for individuals to perform at a credible level their assigned tasks; otherwise you only have yourself to blame.

In my experience the attributes of community archaeology are particularly suited to the requirements of landscape archaeology in local areas where volunteers can make the greatest contribution. Local people have excellent social networks, skillbases and diverse social profiles as well as influential and varied roles in the community. Too often these individuals find themselves largely disregarded by or at the mercy of faceless institutions and bureaucracy, almost an irrelevance in situations that concern them intimately, leaving the community powerless and worst of all disaffected.

At CLASP we are fortunate to be able to call upon a diverse range of talent which is profoundly receptive to the archaeological possibilities on offer. Local people appear to me to possess an acute understanding of the worth of the projects to themselves and the wider community. Living locally enables them to be more available to undertake and organise fieldwork, resulting in a high level of commitment in no way inferior to a professional or academic workforce. Through the simple act of facilitating opportunities for local communities to be directly involved in the interpretation and recording of their collective past, a whole new vista of stakeholder participation can be generated which can help bind these communities together, reinvigorating a sense of place and belonging. The connection between any initiative and the community continually needs to be endorsed and updated through a rolling programme of public lectures and when feasible newsletters or websites. Try not to underestimate the importance of this role, for you will find that it is a continuous process to retain such things in the public psyche.

### Community Archaeology and Communication

A critical component of community archaeology is the role of communication (Figure 3.5). The ability to construct and apply an effective strategy will help define the success or failure of the entire project. One should not underestimate the importance of personal charisma in conveying your passion and enthusiasm for the project. The absence of a crusading belief in the worth of the task or any indication that there is any element of expediency in your approach will undermine the appeal of the scheme. Experience has taught me there are three main strands attached to instigating a successful communication policy, and these comprise: an ability to share the overall vision; an ability to articulate what you require from everyone; and strategies for keeping people informed of developments. Any communication format must recognise the importance of each of these facets and attempt to ensure every one is addressed in detail to prevent misunderstanding and mismanagement.

The best way to make this very clear is to spell out your intentions in the Project Research Design. It should include the rationale behind the fieldwork; details of the site’s location and physical environment; the archaeological background and research/excavation aims; a description of the methodological approach adopted; information on the staff and resources available including archiving provision and the programme of post-exavagation analysis and publication. The document should be updated periodically and provision made for details to be available to the Historic Environment Record.

It is also important to have very clear instructions
and to this end you must have decided your strategies in advance, including the provision of feedback channels. In practical terms for example you must know exactly how you will manage the fieldwork, whether it is excavation, field survey, finds processing or analysing the data. You must be precise in where responsibility lies and have a transparent management structure that individuals can work within and that allows for two-way communication. The simple fact that a strategy exists doesn’t necessarily make the outcomes effective. Be prepared to take advice and review performance. A savvy archaeological director knows when to negotiate, delegate or be insistent. For every aspect of the fieldwork everyone should know what they’re doing and why and who to ask if difficulties occur. This activity can be assisted by formal training sessions, and written guidelines in the site handbook.

The third area of communication which needs to be addressed is that of information exchange, or keeping everybody in the loop and up to speed with developments. You must have channels and opportunities for volunteers to feed back their ideas, thoughts, impressions and experiences. However, this presupposes that you as a facilitator are genuinely interested in these suggestions and are prepared to reflect on and accept some of them. Everybody’s contribution is essential to the success of the project and to ensure community satisfaction it is important to also fully recognise the dedication shown by those involved. This can be done at a variety of levels, from a simple positive verbal validation of an individual’s contribution to a more tangible acceptance from the archaeological establishment of the project on a wider stage in the form of publication or, for example, through exposure on local/national television or radio.

**Community Archaeology: Funding the Fieldwork**

Eliciting financial support and gaining access to funding is a huge issue, as it would be for any commercial enterprise. The adoption of an inclusive approach may well furnish your project with a range of tremendous resources both specialist and general, but without some level of finance to bolster the scheme, prospects for any initiative will be constrained. As fundraising is a prerequisite to ensure a flexible capability it must be adequately addressed from the very start. Involving everyone in the process enables those participating to appreciate the ongoing financial implications of contemporary archaeological fieldwork. Unfortunately appropriate criterion-driven funding has not yet been consistently applied nationally and the allocation of financial resources will need to become more responsive to the different modes of community commitment if it is to have an effective impact.

The management, logistics and resource demands implicit in a community initiative are still as important as in any professional archaeological operation. Undoubtedly the scale of finance required would vary depending on the scope of the project but it is unlikely that everything will have a financially neutral cost. Therefore the overall scheme will have to take into consideration the range of potential financial implications and try and identify possible stratagems to combat the funding problems. Essentials like maintaining an archive base, computerised databases, photographic records, training, use of specialist services, reports and publication besides all the other ephemera of the modern archaeological approach have financial repercussions which need to find funded solutions. The idea that a community-based methodology could somehow be a cost-free resource or a cheaper substitute for other forms of fieldwork is a profound misinterpretation of the potential role for public involvement in archaeology.

There are four major sources of funding available to community-based projects and these revolve around self-reliance, sponsorship, donations and grant-aided funding. Some of these modes assume greater importance than others depending on the experience and make-up of your team. At Whitehall Farm and later for the CLASP, fieldwork initiatives were exposed to all four areas of fundraising at one time or another. The most financially successful funding approaches were those secured from the self-reliant routes and grants. Each method has its advantages and shortcomings and unless you are particularly fortunate your initiative will have to investigate a mixture of all these sources to address your overall financial requirements.

Self-reliance is probably the most easily accessed form of funding and can be financially, quite rewarding especially across relatively short timescales. It also has the advantage of helping you to remain independent and free from negative or prescriptive external influence. Open days, open lectures, ‘friends of’ schemes that directly appeal to local support and those who are interested in what you are trying to achieve can generate significant amounts, although time- and labour-intensive. The galvanising of local participation also offers the possibility of developing local funding. In reality the one should be connected to the other if a sustainable approach is to be sought. Indeed we have been partially successful in this area and have been able to tap into limited financial resource at all levels of local government because of the relevance of the work to local communities.

Sponsorship can take many forms in the format of direct financial assistance from individuals or businesses. However, specific funding sources for
community archaeology are relatively restricted and can be difficult to access. Quite often it requires a great deal of effort to pursue grant-aid funding in which the competition can be quite fierce and the evaluative criteria sometimes a little arcane. Collaborative links to archaeological units and academic institutions can prove of great assistance in supporting applications for financial resources. Sometimes these links can assume a pivotal importance and one must ensure that the individual agendas of both sectors are aligned to achieve meaningful community archaeological goals.

One can feel there is very little difference in the effort required to apply for relatively small amounts as for potentially larger more significant sums, but this is part of the learning curve. This is where experience will enhance your ability to attract money and you will find success breeds success. Whatever happens it is of the utmost importance that you meet the conditions set by any awarding body whoever they may be; failure to do so can cripple the momentum of the whole enterprise. The awarding of grants or financial assistance is also a good way of validating and recognising the usefulness of the fieldwork being accomplished and it is something that helps boost the community resolve to see a project through.

The lack of the traditional major financial overheads of the professional unit allows community archaeology a certain degree of freedom in running schemes and a greater degree of independence than in the commercial world. Therefore funding constraints operating on both structures are subtly different and affect the two approaches’ overall ability to deal with either strategic or tactical archaeological issues. The commercial organisation must by and large respond to the priorities set by the developer, which understandably centre on a particular site where tactical solutions have a higher precedence for manufacturing an archaeological record than for exploring strategic contextual issues. The commercial organisation must by and large respond to the priorities set by the developer, which understandably centre on a particular site where tactical solutions have a higher precedence for manufacturing an archaeological record than for exploring strategic contextual issues that inform our wider understanding of the past.

Conclusions

However evangelical the foregoing sentiments might appear, it has become abundantly clear to me from my own exposure to community archaeology that a failure to embrace community-based possibilities will result in the loss of society’s curiosity concerning our shared heritage and ultimately this will cost us any support for the discipline. It is just misplaced to believe cadres of ‘professionalistas’ are the only future for British archaeology. This is especially true because of the present lack of political will and the absence of any coherent methodological paradigm to enforce such a solution. This doesn’t mean I can’t acknowledge that it’s one thing to declare archaeology has to be accessible to everyone and another to implement an enduring strategy that ensures ‘inclusivity’. An ability to incorporate professional principles whilst affirming universal civic engagement is going to be a difficult and tortuous path to navigate for any devotee of the discipline.

All I can say is my willingness to encourage interest has led to an able, proactive and supportive public engagement and the creation of a credible force for underpinning and enhancing the work of professionals and academics alike. A successful community archaeology enthusiast will be the one who can engage everyone’s motivation, disparate skills and interests towards a shared goal. In community archaeology we have a major resource asset and it is time to deploy it effectively in the constant struggle to deal with the increasing requirements of British archaeology. It will be interesting to see if the current round of regional and period-based research agendas sponsored by English Heritage designed to provide the framework for the next generation of British archaeologists manages to integrate the growing potential of community archaeology in a meaningful and productive way.

Finally to return to the analogy of the Gordian knot which I so provocatively suggested as the title of this paper. Does the CLASP experience leave us any closer to understanding how we can resolve the challenges posed by established assumptions and prejudice? Does it also demonstrate the potentially vital role community archaeology could play? The answer to both questions is “Yes”. It demonstrates that professionals, academics and the public can work together on equal terms; and the fact that they are working together for a meaningful archaeological purpose illustrates the invaluable contribution community archaeology can make now and in the future. My personal feeling is that we must have the vision, motivation and belief to trust and accept amateur involvement through the meaningful practice of community archaeology. Without doubt it is a legitimate and necessary expression of archaeological practice and an appropriate choice to ensure a healthy future for the discipline. In essence, I believe the Gordian knot can be severed by the power of the collaborative experience.

Notes

1) Community Landscape and Archaeology Survey Project. This is a network bringing together archaeology enthusiasts to investigate their local past in Northamptonshire: http://claspweb.org.uk/
Part 2

The Impact of Community Archaeology: Inspiring Communities

Introduction by Michael Nevell

The eight papers in this section of the monograph present detailed but varied accounts of local community groups attempting to understand the landscape and archaeology of their home areas. Working in diverse and often difficult circumstances they were inspired either by an individual, a site, or a threat to a cherished landscape to bring their local past to a wider audience. In doing so these community groups have discovered unique and common ways of improving access to their own heritage. Of the themes that emerge from the personal experiences recounted in this section the most significant to my mind are:

- the importance of local knowledge;
- contributing to the wider 'academic' subject;
- an increase in a sense of local identity.

Most of the projects recounted here were inspired by local community groups wishing to explore their local past. Without that spark of interest these projects and groups would not have existed; local knowledge was the key to unlocking their local past. Mellor was inspired by a chance observation; Royton by a chance comment. The whole ethos of the Dig Manchester project was an attempt to inspire local communities to take an interest in their local area, whilst the Alexandrian experience in the USA was focused on developing local knowledge as a way of preserving the past. All these community groups sought to add their local knowledge to the wider archaeological tradition, with the work of the communities in Alexandria and Mellor leading to the long-term preservation of local sites. The Chester Amphitheatre Project and the work in Norway approach the role of community involvement in a more official, structured manner, whilst taking impetus from the local communities involved. All of these projects helped to improve a sense of local identity, but two stand out in this respect. In Norway a lack of a sense of ownership by local communities has been a problem in archaeology with only certain groups licensed to dig, and these being entirely museum-based. Whilst there are also county archaeological officers who advise on development proposals, this approach has restricted community involvement. Yet two initiatives, spearheaded by northern island Norwegian communities, showed how it was possible to challenge professional assumptions about the lack of archaeology in given areas, increasing the heritage value of an area as well as increasing a sense of place and ownership. Dig Manchester was from the beginning designed to contribute to the regeneration of the idea of local community identity, through involving local people in the whole process, from digging, sorting and sieving finds, recording, and taking photographs, to sharing memories and stories, painting, drawing, modelling clay, and writing poetry. The effectiveness of the schools engagement strand is amply demonstrated through Sarah Joynes’ paper in Part 4. There was general consensus amongst participants at the ‘Archaeology For All’ conference in 2006 that the highlight was the presentation by some of the boys she teaches about their own enthusiasm for archaeology. Dig Manchester was also a conscious attempt to change and regenerate local community identity through local heritage. Some of the long-term results were the creation of two heritage volunteer societies, the display of three previously unknown archaeological sites and a recorded increase in self-confidence of some individuals within these communities.

Is there a tool kit, a pattern, for the successful creation of a local community archaeology project?
Probably not, as all the case studies discussed in this section are highly diverse in terms of their background and development. The community archaeology approach of Alexandria City, USA, encompassed the widest variety of approaches to local heritage, approaches that can be seen in all of the other case studies, from saving, studying, sharing and managing archaeology sites, to curating and protecting archaeology and partnering individuals in local community projects.

In Alexandria, Chester, Manchester, Mellor, northern Norway and Royton, archaeology became, for a while, an activity embedded in the daily routine of each community, thus informing the present and shaping the future. That is a vision that should inspire all of us to investigate our local past.
The Dig Manchester Project, 2005-2009: Redefining Community Archaeology?

Michael Nevell

Introduction

The Dig Manchester project was a community archaeology scheme within the city of Manchester that ran from 2005 to 2009. This paper provides an overview of that project, the precursor to which began life under the banner of ‘Dig Moston’ in 2003 and developed in 2005 into ‘Dig Manchester’, finishing in 2009 with the publication of two popular booklets. Throughout its life the project consciously attempted to engage local communities, groups and individuals who would not normally take part in archaeological activity. Reaching out to these communities was seen by some as interfering with the ‘traditional’ voluntary approaches to archaeological fieldwork and drew criticism for such engagement. The project also deliberately collated data on the public and volunteer response to the process or activity of uncovering the past.

Origins: Dig Moston

Whilst public involvement in archaeology within Manchester can be traced back to the fieldwork of Bruton on the Roman fort in the 1900s, active participation by the public, rather than local society members, in the excavation process owes its origins in the region to the 1972 Deansgate Dig Castlefield, run by Professor Barri Jones from the University of Manchester. During the 1980s this idea of involving lay members of the public in the discovery of their own past was furthered by the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit through the support of the national scheme known as Manpower Services (MSC), aimed at tackling long-term unemployment. Through this scheme many archaeological sites were explored across the city region from Broad Mills in Tameside to The Burrs in Bury, but the most prominent and arguably successful was the Castleshaw Roman Fort project. Changes to public policy in the early 1990s led to a steep decline in this kind of state-funded public archaeology in the region. The establishment of the Heritage Lottery Fund in 1994 and the development of community projects such as the Tameside Archaeological Survey and Mellor Hillfort Project led to a revival in the late 1990s of wider public participation in archaeological fieldwork in Greater Manchester.

The inclusive principles that underlay the Dig Manchester project were a direct development of the ‘Dig Moston’ community scheme. This pilot project pioneered in Manchester the concept of an inclusive heritage scheme. It was aimed at encouraging greater civic participation in the most deprived wards of the city and thereby improving public perceptions of these neighbourhoods. In other words, it was rooted in an instrumentalist approach as discussed by Sian Jones in Chapter 1. The initial idea and approach for ‘Dig Moston’ came from the local community and was developed during the years 2003 to 2005 on the site of Moston Hall in Broadhurst Park, northern Manchester. The scheme was run by a community archaeologist, Simon Askew. He liaised with the local community and groups who would not normally get involved with archaeological activity, from those with learning difficulties to teenagers excluded from school. An educational archaeologist arranged the participation of over 1000 pupils from nursery, primary and secondary schools across the city. Training workshops, a ‘drop-in-and-dig’ facility for young people, arts and sports activities all added to the inclusive nature of the project. Open weekends with family-friendly events saw over 3000 visitors in total. As one resident commented, the dig was ‘the most talked-about happening in Moston for years’.

The Dig Manchester Methodology

The success of the first two seasons at Broadhurst Park encouraged both the volunteers and professionals involved to apply for Heritage Lottery funding to deliver community archaeology in other
Chapter 4: The Dig Manchester Project, 2005-2009: Redefining Community Archaeology?

deprived parts of the city from 2005 to 2009 (Figure 4.1).

Through Dig Manchester, local residents, schoolchildren and community groups worked alongside professional archaeologists from the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit and the Manchester Museum on a programme of educational activities and community excavations. Four historic sites on council-owned land were investigated. In 2005 the project continued the work begun by Dig Moston in northern Manchester and completed the excavation of Moston Hall.

From the very beginning the project aimed to engage groups and individuals who had never experienced archaeology or were at risk of social exclusion, a strategy that was not without its critics.

The project prompted a lively debate in the pages of Britain’s leading popular archaeology magazine Current Archaeology during 2005 and early 2006 on what constituted ‘community archaeology’ and by whom this kind of activity could be undertaken.\(^1\) This debate focused upon how far the project was initiated by, and controlled through, professional archaeologists rather than local individuals or voluntary groups, with a central issue being whose archaeology it was; amateur groups, the middle-class professionals, disadvantaged groups, children, or all of the above and more. Intriguingly, most of the criticism of the project came from people who had never visited the sites, had not participated in the digs, and did not live within Manchester; thus “they [Dig Manchester] prefer simply to take in whoever happens to be living locally and to avoid having any amateur archaeologists who may actually know something about the subject”;\(^2\) yet these critics still felt they had a right to comment upon the project because “…it will be very important as this is re-defining the meaning of ‘public archaeology’ and re-defining the reasons as to why archaeology is done, or should be done”.\(^3\) These arguments are familiar to anyone who has followed the development of social participation in heritage and public archaeology since the 1980s,\(^4\) and go to the heart of who should have access to heritage and whether this is a common inheritance.

A review of the first year of the Dig Manchester project, undertaken in early 2006, noted the origins of these core aims at Dig Moston: ‘The [Dig Moston] project started as a result of demand from community archaeological groups, and in particular MADASH (Moston and District Archaeology and Social History group) who wished to have more professional guidance and access to digs and from the university who were anxious to encourage more people to apply to higher education.’\(^5\) This was supported by the final impact study on the project in 2008, which also noted the ‘shared central objectives’ of the two projects and how both had ‘developed organically from the grassroots’.\(^6\) Thus, these aims were not arbitrary but rather emerged from the Dig

The Sites

The first year of the project, 2005, continued the work begun by Dig Moston in northern Manchester and completed the excavation of Moston Hall.\(^7\) In 2005 and 2006 excavations were carried out in southern-central Manchester which revealed the remains of Northenden Mill on the banks of the

Fig 4.1: A community art installation at the Moston Hall dig in 2005. Moston Hall was where the Dig Manchester methodology was first tested.

Moston pilot project and were applied as the core aims of Dig Manchester; they were rooted in and derived from the expectations of the north Manchester community who initiated the pilot project and can be seen to fall under Arnstein’s upper heading of public involvement ‘Citizen Power’ (Figure 4.2).

Fig 4.2: A volunteer discovers a coin at Dig Moston.

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Salford Applied Archaeology Series, Volume 2: Archaeology for All
River Mersey. Moving to Wythenshawe in southern Manchester, a set of 18th- and 19th-century agricultural buildings was excavated at Wythenshawe Hall in 2007, and finally in 2008 the landscape around Peel Hall Moat was investigated. Like the original Moston Hall dig, the excavation of the Peel Hall Moat site was instigated by a local group who also jointly ran the excavation: the South Manchester Archaeological Research Team (SMART) formed in May 2007 as a direct consequence of the project.

Moston

The site of Moston Hall (Figure 4.3) lies at the southern end of Broadhurst Park, on a distinctly raised area within a grassy expanse bordered by trees. On the west the site is flanked by Dean Clough, a steep-sided valley through which flows the Dean Brook. A gully joins this clough from the east, and the hall site lies on the spur of land between these two features.

The only work carried out on the site prior to Dig Manchester was undertaken by students of the University of Manchester. This included a geophysical survey and the excavation of four small trial trenches in the general area of Moston Hall. The results of the geophysical survey were inconclusive, but one of the trial trenches uncovered a ground surface of stone setts, although no structural remains of the hall were found. In 2003 archaeologists from the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU) carried out a magnetometry survey to locate areas of disturbance which could indicate the presence of foundations and walls, and a desk-based assessment.

In that first year a large open-area trench was excavated using a tracked mechanical digger to remove the topsoil and subsoil. Below these layers, the *in situ* archaeological remains were cleaned by hand to expose the buried structures. The remains were then given individual numbers, known as contexts, to identify them. In 2003 the first structures to be positively identified were the barn, a cellar of the hall and a shippon, or cowhouse. After exposing the general outline of the walls, the volunteers proceeded to excavate particular features under the supervision of archaeologists from UMAU. Any artefacts which were found in the archaeological deposits were collected, bagged and their contexts noted. The final process involved the detailed recording of the archaeological remains through a combination of drawing scaled plans and sections, and photography.

The archaeological remains were dated and placed within a generalised chronological scheme. This was based on a number of factors which included the architectural characteristics of the buildings and the materials used in their construction, the relative stratigraphic position of certain structures, and the finds recovered from particular archaeological features. Scientific methods were also employed in the form of radiocarbon dating.

Fig 4.3: Moston Hall from the north-east (Manchester Central Library).
Using these different techniques it became clear that the archaeological remains could be grouped into three broad chronological phases which indicated a prolonged use of the site. They include a prehistoric phase of activity, late medieval and early post-medieval activity, and structural remains dating between the 16th and 19th centuries.

Excavations in the following year, 2004, set out to reinvestigate several areas of the site and also target new ones. The trench was peeled back and extended, concentrating more on the eastern area of the site, Area G. This season of excavation uncovered the full extent of the outbuildings, originally exposed in 2003, and also a cobbled yard and stone sett surface.

In 2005 the entire area was reopened and extended to the north and south (Areas D, E and F; Figure 4.4). The southern end of the trench revealed a basement of the hall and the remains of a stable block, while the northern portion exposed a further outbuilding.

The final phase of excavation, in 2005 (Figure 4.5), revealed that extensive landscaping activity had occurred in the 19th century, which included the insertion of a deeply buried drainage system.

The excavations were led by community archaeologist Simon Askew and brought children and adults together in an environment which was both enjoyable and educational. Volunteers were able...
Some people interpreted the site in an artistic way and others made the finds processing work their speciality. The community volunteers had the opportunity to learn how archaeologists begin to unravel the past by looking at remains surviving below ground. Over the three seasons more than 5000 people visited the site to see the archaeological remains and to hear how they related to the known history of Moston Hall.

One of the great successes of the Moston Hall project was the involvement of children from a wide range of local schools. The aims were to provide first-hand experience of doing archaeology, excite the children about learning and introduce them to aspects of local history, whilst encouraging wider participation and developing positive attitudes towards the local community. Pupils were from Years 5 and 6, studying Key Stage 2. In 2005 alone, 347 pupils accompanied by 38 adults came from local schools to take part in the dig.

Northenden Mill

The work towards the excavations of 2005 and 2006 began in June 2004 with a desk-based assessment by the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU). This phase of work was commissioned and funded by the Northenden Civic Society. Historical evidence indicates that there has been a mill at this site since at least the 16\textsuperscript{th} century and probably from the 13\textsuperscript{th} century. Mapping evidence begins as early as 1641 but the maps of the 19\textsuperscript{th} century and particularly the Ordnance Survey (OS) maps of the 1870s onwards are the first to provide an accurate indication of the location and the dimensions of the mill. The accuracy of the OS maps and contemporary photographs (Figure 4.6) can allow a demolished building to be plotted using surviving features, such as roads and houses.

Although the location of the mill and house could be adequately measured in from Mill Lane, demolition work can be very thorough. As the site was being assessed for potential community excavation a high degree of survival was hoped for. Therefore, an extensive evaluation was conducted by UMAU in February 2005.

The evaluation stripped an area of tarmac and gravel in the car park which now occupies the mill site. To the west, next to a row of young trees bordering Mill Lane, a smaller trench was excavated to assess the condition of the mill house.

The initial excavation in the car park revealed extensive remains, with handmade brick walls and various types of demolition rubble exposed. The brick walls were interpreted as part of the centre and eastern wing of the mill when compared with the layout of the mill on the OS maps. The depth of the archaeology was also tested, and was found to be generally 1m deep and over 2m in the wheelpit.

The eastern wall of the mill house and part of the yard were also found intact, although the trees on...
Mill Lane would limit excavation in that area. Despite the demolition of the building in the 1960s, the use of the site as a car park probably saved the basement level of the mill. Many sites within urban areas are destroyed by later development through the digging of foundations or basements.

The initial trenches excavated in 2005 were designed to open up as much of the site as possible. Trench 1 exposed most of the mill's basement level (Figure 4.7) and Trench 2 the eastern wall of the mill house and the yard area.

In 2006 Trench 1 was extended to the west and south in order to expose more of the mill (Figure 4.8), and Trench 2 was enlarged to the north to follow the wall of the mill house and open up an area of the interior. Two new trenches were also added. Trench 3 was opened to examine the culvert under the yard and Trench 4 to explore the area to the south-east of the mill house.

The excavation at Northenden actively sought to include people of all ages and backgrounds in the archaeological work, with parallel activities involving dig-inspired art for the more artistically inclined, or those unable to dig. On an average week 70-100 adult volunteers and 200-300 schoolchildren would work at the site. Over the six-week excavation two of the weekends were open for anyone to participate in the excavation. These weekends were primarily aimed at family groups and people who could not take time off during the week to dig. Whole families would spend the day or a half-day on site, with numbers of up to 40 people during the busiest days. During the first year of excavation it soon became evident that many of the volunteers and students wished to learn more about archaeological recording. Although excavation is a fundamental part of the work, every feature, wall, floor and deposit has to be recorded. Those volunteers who expressed an interest in learning the different aspects of site work were taught how to complete context forms describing the archaeology, how to make accurate field drawings and coordinate this with overall planning. Other aspects included site photography and survey using a levelling device.

The open weekends proved a great success, attracting over a thousand visitors in 2005 and again in 2006. The popularity of the dig and enthusiasm for archaeological work and research among the volunteers was reflected in the formation of SMART (South Manchester Archaeological Research Team).

Fig 4.7: The excavated plan of Northenden Mill, 2005 to 2006.
Wythenshawe Hall

The research ahead of the excavations at Wythenshawe Hall began in early 2007 with a desk-based assessment, following the same methodology as the earlier sites. Wythenshawe Hall is a 16th-century timber-framed hall set within its own park in the southern part of the city. The eastern side of the park, which contained a Grade II registered historic park and garden, comprised open parkland with areas of woodland, and also included the hall and former stables, a walled garden, a community farm and a play area. The western side of the park included football pitches, a running track, a miniature golf course, tennis courts, bowling greens, pavilions and the horticultural centre, as well as further areas of woodland.

Historically, the greater part of Wythenshawe Park lay within the Cheshire township of Northenden. Along with the neighbouring township of Norther Etchells to the south this township made up the parish of Northenden, centred on the Church of St Wilfrid. The south-western part of the park, south of Baguley Brook, lay within the township of Baguley in the parish of Bowdon and was a later addition. The name Wythenshawe is now applied to the 20th-century housing estate laid out within the old Northenden, Norther Etchells and Baguley townships, but it was originally associated just with part of Northenden.10

The present park developed from the Wythenshawe demesne, land directly associated with Wythenshawe Hall. A hay or enclosed and hedged field is referred to as early as the late 13th century and this was probably the origin of the park. However, direct reference to the hall does not occur until the early 16th century when it was rebuilt after a fire in 1530 by Robert Tatton. Thereafter, the hall remained in the hands of the Tatton family as the centre of their estates in northern Cheshire, until it was sold to Manchester City Council in 1926.

In May 2007 UMAU and the newly formed SMART carried out a geophysical survey and an evaluation within the Rose Garden and on the site of the Ice House in order to assess the archaeological potential of the site. The nine trenches dug helped to position the community trenches opened in September 2007.

The excavation work exposed the structural remains of two buildings dating to the late 18th to early 19th century in Area 1 (Figure 4.9). These were identified as part of a range of farm buildings to the west of the stables, visible on the 19th-century Ordnance Survey mapping. Area 2 focused on the Ice House. Over the three weeks the walls of both buildings in Area 1 were exposed. From its design, it would appear that the larger building (Building 1) was used as a barn. Although this is shown as one building on the 1839 tithe map, the results of the excavation suggest that it was actually built in three phases. A large range of domestic pottery was also recovered from this building, dating from the late 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, but there was no earlier material.
During the final week on site, groups from across Manchester worked on the excavation. Volunteers from Richmond Park and The Buzz Pupil Referral Units, Manchester Learning Disabilities Partnership, Entry to Education, Benchill Children’s Centre, the National Autism Society, Business in the Community and Age Concern all took part. The newly formed Manchester Young Archaeologists’ Club also visited the site. A total of 342 adult volunteers took part in this stage of the project. Furthermore, twelve primary schools and 429 schoolchildren took part in the Wythenshawe dig. A family weekend attracted 66 children and 52 parents and guardians, whilst the open weekend saw a further 650 people visit the dig.

**Peel Hall Moat**

The last fieldwork to be undertaken as part of the Dig Manchester project was also in the southern part of the city in Wythenshawe. This was the investigation in February 2008 of Peel Hall Moat. A desk-based assessment had been undertaken in 2007 of the medieval moated site, which still retained its water-filled ditch and a fine stone bridge with cutwaters. This documentary survey indicated that a hall stood on the site in 1360 and may have had its own oratory or private chapel. This may have been the structure which in 1578 was being rebuilt by Robert Tatton. In the 1660s it had 26 rooms. Further
rebuilding work is recorded in the 1750s. By 1830 it was tenanted and in use as a farm, with just ten rooms, probably as the result of further rebuilding and demolition. After it was sold to Manchester City Council in the early 1930s it fell vacant and became ruinous, and it was demolished in 1976. As this was an additional site for the project a small amount of extra funding was supplied by Manchester City Council.

UMAU took a supportive role, but the archaeology was explored by SMART and the South Trafford Archaeological Group as part of the training aspect of Dig Manchester. Eight evaluation trenches were dug (Figure 4.10) in order to investigate the site of outbuildings associated with the farm buildings to the south of the moat. The hall itself had been investigated in 1981-2 by GMAU, when mostly remains relating to the 19th-century rebuilding of the structure were uncovered.

The evaluation was extremely successful in that it uncovered for the first time the remains of several outbuildings, including the remains of a barn and possible shippings/stables. These remains included handmade brick walls and stone foundations and brick or stone cobbled yard surfaces. The majority of the archaeology uncovered was thought to be pre-1830 in date, and given its character and depth constitutes an eminently suitable archaeological resource which could be explored through a further phase of community-based archaeology.

This site marked the culmination of the community archaeology training over the previous five years, and was the first time that SMART had run their own site.

Evaluating the Project

A key part of the project was an assessment of the impact and success of the aims of Dig Manchester. A review of the first year of the project was undertaken in early 2006 and a final impact study was published towards the end of the project in 2008 which noted the ‘shared central objectives’ of Dig Moston and Dig Manchester, and how both had ‘developed organically from the grassroots’.13

The concept of measuring the impact of community archaeology has in the last decade developed beyond the traditional process-analysis approach (number of people attending, number of sites excavated etc.) although the experience of the archaeological process itself remains central to many participants’ views of what such schemes should encompass. This change in approach to measuring impact is also an important aspect of Isherwood’s rebuilding work is recorded in the 1750s. By 1830 it was tenanted and in use as a farm, with just ten rooms, probably as the result of further rebuilding and demolition. After it was sold to Manchester City Council in the early 1930s it fell vacant and became ruinous, and it was demolished in 1976. As this was an additional site for the project a small amount of extra funding was supplied by Manchester City Council.

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A key part of the project was an assessment of the impact and success of the aims of Dig Manchester. A review of the first year of the project was undertaken in early 2006 and a final impact study was published towards the end of the project in 2008 which noted the ‘shared central objectives’ of Dig Moston and Dig Manchester, and how both had ‘developed organically from the grassroots’.13

The concept of measuring the impact of community archaeology has in the last decade developed beyond the traditional process-analysis approach (number of people attending, number of sites excavated etc.) although the experience of the archaeological process itself remains central to many participants’ views of what such schemes should encompass. This change in approach to measuring impact is also an important aspect of Isherwood’s
argument about the value of networks and relationships in such projects. A variety of different approaches for measuring the impact of community archaeology projects have been suggested from the self-reflexive and the use of longitudinal data-collection and external comparison, to multiple-perspective and anthropological models. There remains, however, a need to quantify on a regular basis the number of participants within community archaeology across Britain in order to provide a wider context for these studies. This was one of the reasons behind the assessment undertaken of the Dig Manchester project.

Whilst archaeology has been very good at borrowing field and material analysis techniques from other disciplines in the sciences and social sciences, within the broader field of public engagement it has been slower to adopt methodologies used by charitable and public bodies. One such scheme in wide use is the Inspiring Learning community engagement impact assessment framework developed by the Museum, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA) in the mid-2000s. This framework was developed so that evidence of the impact of heritage-related activities could be provided through Generic Learning Outcomes (GLO) and Generic Social Outcomes (GSO). The Generic Learning Outcomes developed by the MLA encompassed five areas: attitudes and values; activity, behaviour and progression; knowledge and understanding; enjoyment, inspiration and creativity; and skills. These provide the foundation blocks for the generic social outcomes framework, which was designed to help museums, libraries and archives assess three areas of outcomes: stronger and safer communities; health and well-being; and strengthening public life.

The Inspiring Learning framework was used by Manchester City Council’s Cultural Team to develop the evaluation criteria for Dig Manchester, making it one of the first community archaeology projects to adopt this particular approach to assessing the impact and significance of the project. The impact study involved primary research in the form of in-depth interviews with twenty-four stakeholders and key participants, group discussions in schools, particularly with teachers and project workers, and participants’ questionnaires, with 43 replies returned out of 120 forms sent out (36% return). There was also secondary research that involved reviewing the project reports and the statistics compiled throughout the life of Dig Manchester by the key stakeholders, who included the HLF, Regeneration Partnerships and the University of Manchester.

The analysis of this data used the Inspiring Learning framework to look at the cultural outcomes of the project in six areas covering ten topics (Figures 4.11 to 4.14):

- perceptions of the project;
- how the project engendered a sense of place and neighbourhood pride;
- how it improved perceptions of health and well-being;
- how it assisted children and young people to make a positive contribution;
- how it provided children with creative and cultural opportunities;
- the legacy of Dig Manchester.

In terms of the perceptions of the project this data revealed that interactions between groups and individuals on the project were very important. Many participants found ‘digging together was more important than who they are’. Dig Manchester also challenged some of the perceptions discovered in the 2006 audit such as the view that university and archaeology were only for the upper classes, through a greater degree of diversity in the economic and social backgrounds of those taking part. The dig changed positively the perceptions of those living in the three deprived wards where Dig Manchester was involved, with positive feedback on the way in which the project boosted the confidence and sense of well-being of the participants and the way it promoted an interest in exploring the local history of the area. In particular the project made a major contribution to raising the profile of Wythenshawe as a cultural centre with its own heritage (Figure 4.15). It was also successful in breaking down barriers, since the multi-faceted nature of the dig meant that many voluntary
sector agencies from various disciplines were able to work together within the city, some for the first time. This included co-operation and liaison between educational institutions, work and job centre agencies, regeneration agencies, mental health charities, agencies working with the visually and hearing impaired, the Sure Start programme and Greater Manchester Police. Equally important were the social barriers. Access and participation was a crucial part of the project and the involvement of organisations like Studio One helped make Dig Manchester accessible to people of all abilities, as did the open weekends and family days. A testament to the legacy of the project was that, as well as the continuation of the new local archaeology groups (MADASH and SMART), the production of booklets and information boards about the sites and other activities, such as the Northenden Farmers’ market (which the organisers said had been inspired by the community feeling engendered by the Northenden Dig), were sustained through the working partnerships developed on this project.21

The adoption of the Inspiring Learning framework enabled the gathering of a large amount of targeted data which was used to assess the outcomes of the project, demonstrating the applicability of this method in such circumstances. However, there were several problems in the implementation of the framework. Firstly, it was only used systematically at the end of the project, in 2008, rather than at the beginning of the main project in 2005 (although some point-data is provided by the interim audit report from early 2006). This meant that it was only possible to recover general long-term or longitudinal data about the impact of the project, a deficiency that the Dig Greater Manchester successor project, launched in September 2011, seeks to address (see Thompson, this volume). Secondly, the assessment criteria were mostly designed by non-archaeologists and, whilst the Inspiring Learning framework is highly flexible, the implementation of the cultural outcomes process tended to focus upon the two core aims of the City’s Culture Strategy. These were: increasing participation in culture by the people of Manchester; and using culture as a means to improve the profile of the city and to attract people to live, work, learn, and play in it. Moreover, this approach...
occasionally focused too much upon the benefits for the organisations involved in the project rather than the benefits for the community participants or the benefits in terms of the project’s archaeological aims. This meant that the outcomes were more generic than would have been the case if an archaeologist had been added to the assessment team. Whilst this bias does not devalue the results, it does mean that there are potentially holes in the data from a heritage/archaeological impact perspective.

Conclusion: an Inclusive, Structured, Approach

As archaeologists, how do we embrace community engagement? How do we ensure that there is heritage access for all? And what are the challenges and opportunities for community archaeology in the future? These three questions are at the heart of the Dig Manchester methodology, for when we undertake ‘community engagement’ we need to consider the often unspoken issues about who this archaeology is being done for, what its purpose is, and what it means. Yet these are not just questions for those organising archaeological engagement projects such as Dig Manchester; they are also questions for those participating in them. Volunteers and participants usually have more personal reasons for engaging with community projects: to gain confidence, for the enjoyment of working with others, and for the empowerment that comes from giving the present more meaning. Simply by taking part in the process and engaging in these activities, individuals can acquire new life-skills at the same time that some of our larger academic questions are being addressed (as with Dig Greater Manchester - see Thompson Chapter 22, in this volume). Even so, there is a dichotomy between the way we understand and the way we visualise engagement projects: a ‘community archaeology’ that is voluntary and run by the networks of participants themselves, versus a ‘public archaeology’ that is more top-down, structured, and organisational. Naturally, these two visions overlap hugely, but one benefit of identifying this dichotomy is that the economic crisis of 2008-12 and its long-term cuts can be seen to only threaten the latter: a real grassroots, popular, community archaeology might escape the current economic problems largely unscathed. Professional archaeologists should be encouraging this kind of community archaeology, as a way of enabling people to engage in the past on their own terms, allowing it to remain alive and a living part of the present, a tool to help better understand ourselves and our communities.

Acknowledgements

Dig Moston and Dig Manchester would not have happened had it not been for the vision and drive of two key people: Councillor Paul Murphy, representative for the Moston Ward of the city, and the late Robina McNeil, the county archaeologist for Greater Manchester from 1994 until her death in 2007. Norman Redhead of GMAU ably took over her role for the final phase of the project. Such a large project relied on the dedication and enthusiasm of a team of archaeologists to successfully deliver the many varied elements. I would like to thank those professionals who made Dig Manchester possible: the two Dig Manchester archaeologists, Simon Askew and John Roberts; the staff of the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit who proved to be such an inspiration to the many adult volunteers and schoolchildren who participated in the project: Peter Arrowsmith, Debbie Beale, Steve Bell, Phil Cooke, Maria Duggan, Chris Hayes, Ruth Garratt, Richard Gregory, Brian Grimsditch, Mike Higgins, Carolanne King, Sue Mitchell, Sarah and Graham Mottershead, David Power, Kieran Power, Hayley Richardson and Adam Thompson; and the education archaeologist based at Manchester Museum, Clare Pye.

Notes

2) Current Archaeology 2005a.
3) Current Archaeology 2005b.
5) Briggs 2006, 3.
8) Bell 2009.
12) Ibid.
13) Russell & Williams, 2008.
14) Collins & Ison 2006; Nevell 2013a.
15) Isherwood 2009 and this volume, Chapter 20; Dhanjl & Moshenska 2011.
18) Nevell 2013a.
20) Briggs 2006.
Chapter 5

The Mellor Archaeological Project

John and Ann Hearle

Finding the Archaeology

Mellor is on the edge of the Metropolitan Borough of Stockport, close to the Peak District National Park. In the past, sites had been excavated in this area on the northern and southern hilltops, but there was nothing on the central ridge near the church and the Old Vicarage, which is where we live. The drought of 1995 showed a cropmark in the field below the house: a green line that curved across the field to the far wall. We took some photographs, thinking that it might relate to medieval occupation.

In 1997 Dr Peter Arrowsmith from the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU) came to discuss the history of Stockport with Ann, who was Chairman of Marple Local History Society at that time. He looked round and said “This is old!”. So, directed by Graham Eyre-Morgan of UMAU, three students came at Easter 1998 and carried out a resistivity survey. In the summer, they excavated and

Fig 5.1: A public tour during excavations at the Mellor Hillfort site.
found a ditch in the field. Another deeper ditch at the west end of the garden contained Iron Age and Roman pottery. This started annual excavations for six weeks each August and September. By 2006, we were up to Trench 50 (see postscript for later update; Figure 5.1). Another section of the deep defensive ditch had been found at the eastern end of the garden and an entrance at the western end. In the middle of the site there was the drip gully of an Iron Age roundhouse about 13 metres across. Other roundhouse gullies and associated areas of pits and post-holes were found between the inner and outer ditches (Figure 5.2). The smaller outer ditch had been followed for hundreds of metres through the fields on the north and south sides. Field boundaries indicate that it may extend to the top of the hill. The post-pits of a medieval ailed hall had been found in the garden.

Among the many finds, the following are the most spectacular: a collection of Mesolithic flints; a Neolithic flint chisel; a Bronze Age flint dagger; 120 pieces of Iron Age pottery, reconstructed as the Mellor pot; Roman brooches; medieval arrowheads; medieval and post-medieval pottery, and clay pipes. The site has been used for 10,000 years (Figure 5.3) and has been described by an eminent archaeologist as the most important recent discovery in the North West of England.

Increasing Activity

How did we go from three students in 1998 to 80 volunteers excavating in 2006 plus 50 from the community helping in other ways, and then on to a £455,500 Heritage Lottery Fund Grant (HLF) for the Mellor Heritage Project, which ran from 2006 to 2009?

Local interest was important. Our first hastily arranged open day in 1999 attracted several hundred visitors. From 2000, open days have been held on the first Saturday and Sunday in September. Serendipity has played a large part in our success. Mellor Primary School had moved and the old building was converted into a parish centre. This provides a base for the workers on the site each summer and a place to display finds and information and serve refreshments at the open days, which include activities for children. In 2005, 1410 visitors came through the garden, the fields and the centre. There were fewer in 2006 in a weekend of wind and rain.

There was more serendipity. Students from a local sixth-form college had joined the European Community Mnemosyne Project, which promoted local cultural heritage. They built a half-size Iron Age roundhouse, which is a great attraction for visitors. The local council were establishing the Stockport Story Museum, which was fully opened in 2007. The Origins gallery, which opened in 2005, is where our best finds are displayed to public view and others archived.

As the years went by, more students came and volunteers of all ages and many backgrounds joined in. Many are from the local community, but others are from the neighbouring borough of Tameside or are linked to Dig Manchester. Some come from Derbyshire, Cheshire or Staffordshire and one or two from further away have stayed in a nearby Scout campsite. Knowledge has spread through our website, www.mellorarchaeology.org.uk, and in 2007 we had enquiries from overseas.

The excavations were directed by professionals from UMAU, led first by Graham Eyre-Morgan, then by John Roberts, and latterly by Peter Noble with additional support from Adam Thompson, Brian Grimsditch and Ruth Leary of UMAU and from Donald Reid, an experienced amateur archaeologist. Valuable advice came from Norman Redhead, Assistant County Archaeologist, who is a Trustee. Other volunteers, some of whom have studied archaeology as mature students, became increasingly skilled in field techniques.

Financing the Archaeology

And so to the serious problems of finance. How have we funded the project? Supervising archaeologists have to be paid and there are many
other costs. 1998 was privately funded. In 1999 we approached Stockport MBC and they contributed £6000 each year until 2009. A local resident wrote a cheque for £1000.

In 1999 the Mellor Archaeological Trust was formed and in 2000 the Friends of the Trust. There is income from open days, sales of booklets, talks and from the Friends, plus some generous gifts and a few grants of up to £1000 from charitable trusts. But with 20 to 30 volunteers on the site each day, we need three supervising archaeologists, and other costs include hiring machinery to remove topsoil (which saves much time and labour in reaching the archaeology), conserving and evaluating finds, getting radiocarbon dates, setting up a website, producing booklets and, later on, producing a video and then a DVD. Our income was about £7000 per year. The cost of a season’s work was about £25,000.

The Heritage Lottery Fund came to our aid.³ The Local Heritage Initiative was opening up and Susannah England of the Countryside Agency was very helpful. Our first grant of £25,000 took us to the end of 2001. At a meeting for local societies, Susannah encouraged people to move up to the next stage: a Your Heritage Grant. When our application was ready, the Manchester Office of HLF was just opening. Rebecca Mason, the office manager, was the only person there so she became our grants officer. Rebecca, who also contributes to this publication, was extremely helpful. When she ceased to be grants officer, she came and joined the dig for three days. The Your Heritage grant of £50,000 carried us forward for another three years until the end of 2005.

The Next Stage

For most of 2006, we were on our own. The grant had terminated, but the Trust had been cautious and saved enough to finance the dig in August and September of that year. But what was the future? There was more to do on the Old Vicarage site. There were also other areas we wanted to investigate, including Shaw Cairn on Cobden Edge to the south, which had been partly excavated by amateurs in the 1970s/80s. We had also talked to Susannah England about covering the important industrial history of the two valleys. From Norman times until 1785, Mellor was a community of scattered farms. Then came prosperity with a dozen textile mills and millworkers’ housing. In the second half of the 19th century almost all the mills closed; the rural valleys could not compete with the industrial towns of Lancashire and Cheshire. This was one of the first examples of industrial depression. There was depopulation until the railway led to the growth of the present commuter community. In order to record this heritage, Rebecca Mason encouraged us to apply for a top-level HLF grant to cover the whole history of the entire parish, which encompasses two ancient townships.

As we completed the final report on the 2002-5 grant (something of a record getting archaeologists to complete a detailed report three months after finishing digging!), we worked on another application to HLF. At each level, the amount of information and forward planning that HLF requires increases. There was an inch of paperwork in the application, which was submitted in March 2006. Georgina Finn was appointed our HLF grants officer and came back with more questions in June, which ultimately added another inch of paper. Although at times HLF seems unduly demanding, their input has been extremely helpful. Their advice strengthened the application, made the project more worthwhile and contributed to the proposed cost being about four times greater than our first guess. Advice from UMAU showed that it was necessary to have a full-time project officer to cover the archaeology and history.

HLF places a major emphasis on inclusivity, bringing heritage to the whole community, including people of varied backgrounds and from deprived areas. We knew that the pool of volunteers could be increased, as building surveys and research into archives attracted people who did not want to spend time on their knees trowelling. Our approach to the wider community had been unstructured, however. We welcomed school parties and community groups when they showed interest. The open days attracted large numbers. In a minor way, we helped the disabled. In particular a visit by a party from Henshaws School for the Blind was a success. But these events were almost entirely attracting the white middle-class community. In order to have more activities and reach out to a wider community in a proactive way, we needed expert input and a full-time education and community involvement officer. This part of the project was sub-contracted to the Museums Service of Stockport MBC.

There was then the nail-biting wait for the September meeting of the regional committee of HLF. A phone call came and told us that the committee had awarded a grant of £455,500 for the Mellor Heritage Project to run from October 2006 to the end of 2009.⁴ There was an additional cash input of £10,000 from the Trust and £12,000 from Stockport MBC. In order to meet HLF rules, there is another important factor: in-kind contributions. These were budgeted at £240,000, of which £5000 was for free use of equipment. The rest was in volunteer time, rated at £50 per day unskilled, £150 per day skilled and £350 per day professional. We based these figures on our previous experience but were careful to make a low estimate, because HLF will only pay the agreed percentage (63.46%) of the
total cost of the project, which was £717,752. We needed to avoid failure to meet the target for in-kind contributions, which would reduce the HLF payment and leave the Trust unable to meet the out-of-pocket costs. All the indications are that the amount of volunteer labour and free use of machinery and geophysical equipment will take us far above the amount in the application. Careful record-keeping is needed for the quarterly reports and claims, but offers of help have come from volunteers.

The project officer, Peter Noble from UMAU, started work in December 2006 and the education officer, Marie Widger, started in March 2007. Thus the Mellor Heritage Project got under way early in 2007 with people clearing heather from Shaw Cairn, carrying out geophysics, recording buildings, studying archives and getting ready for the summer digs.

The Role of the Trust

What else has the Trust done? There are update evenings, a training day open to the public and an evening before the open days for Friends. Ann and Donald give many talks to groups. There are visits from school parties and other groups. A study day, later published as Living on the Edge, was held in 2003 to put Mellor in the regional context. The developments in Mellor are recorded in newspapers, magazines, radio and TV. A 24-page booklet was produced in 2003 and has been updated each year.

There has been more serendipity. Chris Mann, who is active in Mellor Church, made archaeology programmes when he worked for the BBC. He is now an independent producer. At one of our open days, he was helping with car parking and we asked him if he would video John Roberts explaining a large open-area excavation. The result was much more: a video in 2003 and a DVD in 2006.

What can come from enthusiastic amateurs has been demonstrated by Pam Bates. She taught herself how to produce a wonderful website, which became a finalist in the British Archaeology Awards for 2006. The site has a dual function. Firstly, the detailed annual reports of the excavations and finds by UMAU can be accessed by archaeologists and historians. Secondly, for the interested public, there is a wealth of general information, including video-clips of a dig diary and a children’s section.

What are the special features of our activities? Mellor community archaeology sets a new pattern. It is site driven and has moved from being opportunistic to being more planned. The only formal control is by the Trustees, who consist of four site residents, four representatives of local organisations and three co-opted specialists. Most actions have been arranged informally. The new project is more structured, with a management group and steering groups for different activities. The Trust works closely with UMAU and the Greater

Fig 5.3: Excavation plan of the Mellor Hillfort.
Manchester Archaeological Unit (GMAU), and is supported by HLF and Stockport MBC. We are flexible in the way we work. There is no charge for joining the dig. People can come for a few days or eight weeks. They are A-level students, undergraduates, people who have studied archaeology as mature students, several from the Tameside Archaeological Society, and newcomers to archaeology who fancy digging and learning more. We do not need to do any active recruiting - the volunteers hear about the dig and contact us. The finds are sent to experts and the UMAU supervisors write full reports, which are put on the website. As the years go by, many of the volunteers are becoming increasingly skilled.

Conclusion

In conclusion, let us comment on the effect on archaeology. Traditionally, there are academics, expert amateurs and independent societies. In the 1980s organisations like GMAU were able to carry out extensive excavations with a workforce funded by the Manpower Services Commission; then that source of funding dried up. Commercial and semi-commercial archaeology units, whether they were attached to universities, charities, or private companies, had to rely on developer-funded archaeology with all its problems for their operations. The new community archaeology with HLF support provides continuity of investigation and is more rewarding for the professional archaeologists, as well as providing opportunities for independent amateurs and newcomers to archaeology. In Mellor, the areas to be excavated each year are carefully planned to add to our understanding of the site. The paperwork in applying for an HLF grant is formidable, but it is worth making the effort, though it would help voluntary groups if it could be simplified. The outreach programmes reach all sections of the community.

A successful community archaeology project like ours requires a great variety of inputs, but we are continually surprised at the way in which help comes from so many people as it is needed. Mellor Archaeology is an example of the benefits of cooperation between local people, professionals in UMAU and GMAU, the local authority and HLF as a funding organisation. The same could not have been achieved by a society working independently.

Let us finish with a quotation from Francis Pryor, written in the context of the battle to prevent quarrying at Navan, the ancient capital of the

Fig 5.4: The public viewing area, beside the excavated inner ditch, at the Mellor Hillfort.
Postscript

Much has happened since this article was written over five years ago. The Mellor Heritage Project 2007-9 was a great success. In 2009 the last accessible part of the Old Vicarage garden, the south drive, was excavated and more was done in the fields. The route of the inner ditch became clear, passing under our sitting and dining rooms; more roundhouse gullies were found; finds included Mesolithic flints, Iron Age and Romano-British artefacts and later pottery; one radiocarbon date indicated Anglo-Saxon activity. The educational programme received a Sandford Award for Heritage Education and a final conference in Stockport Town Hall in January 2010 attracted over 100 people. Three publications are one legacy of the project: a heritage map of Mellor with a booklet of heritage walks; a 200-page book, Mellor Through the Ages; and a DVD, Life on the Edge. A professional report, Excavations at the Old Vicarage, Mellor, 1998-2009, which consisted of An Archaeological Overview and two volumes of specialist reports, was prepared by John Roberts. The Trust is now financing production of a full BAR academic report.

Although the project was due to finish at the end of 2009, extensions were needed to complete the record of the project and it was July 30th, 2011 before we submitted the final report to HLF and received the last payment. And that was not quite all. Another legacy of the project is a viewing area with a bridge over the Iron Age ditch leading to an area with interpretation boards (Figure 5.4). It was not until June 2012, after SMBC engineers were satisfied with the safety of the bridge, that the legal gift of the land to the people of Stockport was completed. The project had gone over budget, but the Trust had sufficient reserves to cover the overspend. HLF grants are a great help but also a great challenge to community archaeology groups!

More work could be done in the fields next to the Old Vicarage but, although there might be surprises, this would probably dot ‘i’s and cross ‘t’s. Unfortunately, the owners of land to the east, where there could be valuable discoveries at the top of the hill, will not allow either geophysics or excavation. Consequently, the Trust has now turned its attention to other parts of Mellor.

Shaw Cairn on Mellor Moor (Figure 5.5) was revisited in 2008-9. The 1970s/80s excavations, which had not been backfilled, were cleared and...
extended with the striking discovery of nearly 100 amber beads in a cist. These were conserved by Sonia O’Connor at Bradford University and then examined and reported on by Alison Sheridan of the National Museums of Scotland. Alison also arranged for the pottery and cremated bones from the 1970s/80s dig to be professionally examined. After several attempts to interest academic archaeologists in Shaw Cairn, we made a fruitful contact with Dr Bob Johnston of Sheffield University. In July 2011 and 2012, he brought students to join local volunteers for two weeks of excavations. Their trial pits showed evidence of prehistoric activity in the neighbouring fields. The dig at Shaw Cairn is a low-cost operation, since it is not necessary to pay a supervising archaeologist. Bob obtained grants from the Prehistoric Society for travel and accommodation and the Trust paid for some miscellaneous costs. The big question, common to much archaeology, is where did the people live in the Bronze Age? It is hoped that continued digs over many seasons may answer this question.

Meanwhile the main effort of the Trust has moved on by 4000 years. In 1790-2, alongside the River Goyt on the south-western edge of Mellor, Samuel Oldknow built the largest cotton spinning mill of its time, the template for the later architecturally impressive mills of the region and the final flowering of water power. The mill was burnt out in 1892, the buildings were later cleared and the area reverted to woodland. Nothing remains above ground but there are holes where there were wheelpits and cellars. A trial dig in 2009 found the bases of mill walls, a small cellar and pieces of a cotton-yarn singeing machine. Two submissions to HLF for a major opening-up of Oldknow’s industrial complex and mansion were unsuccessful, but a grant of £15,000 from the Association for Industrial Archaeology8 has enabled us to remove 120 tons of debris from the Wellington wheelpit, which was under the centre of the mill, install a viewing platform and carry out other work (Figure 5.6). Early in 2013, we learnt that a new HLF application jointly with the Canal and River Trust for Revealing Oldknow’s Legacy: Mellor Mill and the Peak Forest Canal in Marple has been successful at the development stage. This will hopefully lead to a Stage 2 grant of £1,280,000 for work in 2014-6 to enable the public to view these great achievements of the Industrial Revolution.

The community archaeology at Mellor has benefited greatly from the interaction with the archaeologists at UMAU and after its closure with the Centre for Applied Archaeology at the University of Salford. We have also been able to pay for specialist reports and conservation of finds. This would not have been possible without grants. In 2009, one of us (JH) gave a talk at the Congress (sic) of the Council for

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Fig 5.6: The public viewing area within the wheelpit of Mellor Mill.
Chapter 5: The Mellor Archaeological Project

Independent Archaeology (CIA) in Buxton with the title Cooperation not Independence in Community Archaeology. The CIA recently held a conference on Archaeology without a Grant. It would be a grave mistake if the many archaeological societies and community archaeology groups were led to think that it is more virtuous to work without grants. It is possible for a voluntary group to dig a site and they may be able to obtain some free professional advice, but it is well-nigh impossible to do a proper job without financial support.

In the past, support often came from wealthy benefactors. More recently there has been developer funding and it is encouraging to see that some contractors provide opportunities for volunteers. Dig Greater Manchester may be the last big grant from local authorities for many years to come, but HLF is thriving as a funder and places a strong emphasis on the involvement of the community. Unfortunately, the procedures for their major grants are unduly complicated and even the smaller grants require skill in preparing applications. However, community archaeologists should not be deterred from trying; the HLF staff at regional offices are extremely helpful in giving advice. Apart from HLF, there are other sources of grants. Even small amounts can enable community archaeology to pay for some professional advice, especially when special scientific and other skills are needed.

Notes

1) Noble & Thompson 2005.
2) Hearle 2011a.
4) Hearle 2011a.
7) Hearle 2011a.
8) Industrial Archaeology News 2013, 19.
Chapter 6

Partnership and ‘Squaring the Circle’

Michael Farrelly

Introduction

Let me get one thing straight. I don’t know anything about archaeology (Figure 6.1). However, I do know a thing or two about regeneration. For those of you who are as mystified about regeneration as I am about archaeology here’s a broad definition:

Regeneration describes the huge range of actions taking place to turn around areas in which neglect and decline have left communities blighted by unemployment, poverty, poor housing, ill health and crime, and lacking access to shops, transport, skills, education, leisure and other services. The creation of secure and appropriate employment for local people often forms the core of such projects, alongside improvements to provision of health, housing, education, community safety, leisure services, business support, transport and the physical environment.

I live and work in Wythenshawe, established as Manchester’s Garden City in the 1930s to rehouse industrial workers’ families from the terraced slums of inner city Gorton and Hulme. The ‘homes fit for heroes’ housed up to 100,000 in their heyday, but as Manchester’s traditional industries declined in the 1970s and ’80s the population spiralled downwards.

Wythenshawe has come a very long way since the bad old days of the 1990s when the population of

Fig 6.1: Excavations on one of the farm outbuildings at Moston Hall, 2003.
Chapter 6: Partnership and ‘Squaring the Circle’

‘the largest council estate in Europe’ bottomed at 66,000, and the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2000 ranked one neighbourhood as the No. 1 poorest ward in England.

Ten years of regeneration and £200m of private and public sector investment later, we see improved services across the board, a growing economy, 4% unemployment, a booming housing market, three new community centres, a new top-end business park, speed humps, and a five-year waiting list for social housing. Another £230m is in the pipeline for a complete town centre makeover and more housing improvements. We still have a long way to go.

Schools are improving but we still lose two-thirds of our young people from education at sixteen as they miss the GCSE grades needed to go on to further study and better jobs. Major investments in new health facilities have yet to show through in the headline statistics with life expectancy still four years lower than the national average, and 7000 residents on Incapacity Benefit. But perhaps the toughest regeneration challenge is to turn round Wythenshawe’s reputation – still widely seen as run down, linked to crime, grime and anti-social behaviour, making it difficult for local people to feel proud of Wythenshawe despite the changes. In that respect Dig Manchester did something that broke the mould.

Shortlisted as a model of regeneration excellence by RENEW Northwest, Dig Manchester “showed that ownership is not the preserve of a select few. Nearly 1,200 people took part in the excavation of Northenden Mill over four weeks in the summer of 2006, and the excitement and involvement was shared among children, older people, schools, university staff, artists and regeneration professionals. The sense that ‘this is about us’ was heightened by the contrast between the participants’ enthusiasm about discovering their heritage and the poor reputation of Wythenshawe among the wider public. Dig Manchester challenged that reputation and fostered local pride.”

The Dig

Dig Manchester was one of Manchester City Council’s flagship cultural and social regeneration projects during the 2000s, inspiring thousands of people to get involved with archaeology in their own neighbourhoods. Through Dig Manchester, residents, schoolchildren and community groups worked alongside professional archaeologists on a programme of archaeological activities and community excavations at sites of historical interest across the city. Northenden Mill, demolished in 1966 after half a millennium turning grain into flour, provided a great accessible venue for community archaeology, with adults on the main mill site up to 4m deep, and children on the shallower miller’s house site. The 2006 summer four-week dig involved 2000 people, almost 1200 actively involved in the excavation. Twelve local schools (Figure 6.2), primary and secondary, including special schools, brought along a total of 475 schoolchildren, each of whom spent usually a full day on the site. 310 adult volunteers saw the publicity or heard it on the radio and booked themselves in to dig, some for a day or two, some for the duration. A bunch of local community and voluntary groups enabled 394 people from harder-to-reach groups to get involved (Figure 6.3). A further 800 visitors turned up at the final open weekend to see the finished product.
Northenden Mill, wide open. 180 people took part in Dig Art, a key feature of the dig led by Manchester Mental Health Trust’s Studio One, involving adults and children in creating art inspired by the emerging archaeology and the atmosphere of the site. We expanded and built upon the methodology of traditional archaeology to provide a wide range of ways of getting people involved: digging, sorting and sieving finds, recording, taking photographs, sharing memories and stories, painting, drawing, modelling clay, and writing poetry. This variety of ‘things to do’ enriched the experience for all participants and created the opportunity for a diverse range of people to get involved in hands-on archaeology for the first time. The project addressed needs around social inclusion, self-esteem and community pride, and provided rich opportunities for mainstream and informal education (Figure 6.4). It aimed to promote the understanding, appreciation and protection of the rich historical and archaeological heritage of significant sites in Manchester through a unique partnership between professionals and the community.

**Partnership**

The two essential delivery partners were Manchester City Council and the University of Manchester. We could not have done this on our own, and nor could the university. As a City Council area regeneration team, one thing we are good at is connecting people together. We do not work in isolation. We work with and through our partners, large and small, from the public, private, community and voluntary sectors. Over the years we have built up strong partnerships, some formalised in agreements and joint plans, some through membership of steering groups and networks, or more loosely based on individual relationships between colleagues in different organisations.

We used our links to target harder-to-reach groups, focusing on schools and community groups in deprived neighbourhoods and encouraging those groups who would not traditionally be drawn to these opportunities, including autistic adults, learning disabled people, nursery children, excluded young people, older people, and culturally diverse schools. The list of Dig Manchester’s active project partners in 2006 was inspiring:

- Age Concern – older people’s day centre;
- Alternative Curriculum – for excluded young people;
- Beech Park Housing employees;
- Benchill Community Centre – daycare centre users group;
- Cauldstones;

Fig 6.4: Volunteers and community archaeologists at Dig Manchester.
Chapter 6: Partnership and ‘Squaring the Circle’

- Education to Employment (E2E) – young people NEET;
- Forum Futures - Adult Education;
- Greenheys Adult Learning Centre;
- Heritage Lottery Fund;
- KIWI Club – involving children in positive activities out of school, and raising self-esteem;
- Loreto College – Catholic sixth form college students;
- MADASH – Moston & District Archaeology and Social History group;
- Manchester Adult Education Service;
- Manchester City Council – Cultural Strategy Team/Regeneration Teams;
- Manchester Mental Health and Social Care Trust;
- Manchester Museum;
- Melland School - pupils with severe learning difficulties;
- National Autistic Society – autistic adults;
- Northenden Civic Society – local residents;
- Oakwood Resource Centre – learning disability partnership;
- Poundswick Children’s Centre toddlers;
- Royal Green Children’s Centre – toddlers;
- SMART - South Manchester Archaeological Research Team;
- STAG - South Trafford Archaeological Group;
- The Buzz – youth group;
- The Co-op employees;
- The Pupil Referral Unit – excluded teenagers;
- UMAU;
- Wythenshawe Regeneration Team;
- YMCA Training – young trainees.

And let’s not forget our funding partners: the Heritage Lottery Fund’s 70% project funding was matched by sponsors including Manchester Airport, English Heritage, Paul Hamlyn Foundation, Robert Kiln Charitable Trust, Sale Mayoral Fund and the Zochonis Charitable Trust, to all of whom we are extremely grateful.

What Difference did Partnership Make?

- Learning from others: the university brought a wealth of archaeological expertise and enthusiasm; the museum brought their ability to engage and enthuse schoolchildren; the local authority Education Partnership made the links into the schools; and the project benefited from previous community digs at Moston Hall, North Manchester.
- Community engagement: the knowledge, partnership working connections, respect and trust of the Regeneration Team led to a host of groups getting involved who would not otherwise have done so.
- More resources, money, people: each partner brought connections that opened up new opportunities and unlocked new resources.
- New ideas: Studio One – the Manchester Mental Health Trust arts project opened the project’s eyes to art, allowing a new constituency to get involved in archaeology, adding a fun, creative element to the project.
- Risk sharing: generally as partners collectively shouldered the responsibility of such a large and complex project, and more practically as different partners performed risk assessments on different components of the project.
- Critical mass/enthusiasm: as partners got excited about this fascinating new opportunity.

Sustainability

The enthusiasm of two of the Northenden volunteers (Figure 6.5) led to them setting up SMART – South Manchester Archaeological Research Team – a community legacy of Dig Manchester, mirroring the work of MADASH – Moston and District Archaeology and Social History group, which grew out of the Moston Hall digs. SMART are keenly involved in the next phase, raising awareness and skills in the community, and taking community archaeology to Wythenshawe Hall and Park. The project has injected new life into local heritage groups, and led to the development of an online heritage trail, www.wythit-heritage.btik.com. Dig Greater Manchester – a vision of ten local authorities collaborating on community archaeology – is beginning to take shape across the region.

Inspiration

NewStart magazine, ‘the independent voice of regeneration’, led with this editorial: “A note to all enthusiasts: make sure you don’t let dullards grind you down. Andy is a confident cheeky Mancunian kid in his last year at primary school. He’s the sort of lad that you’ll find organising playground games or playing practical jokes in class. Archaeology, I’d guess, might be the last thing you’d expect to find on his list of interests. Yet Andy was a leading light in a community archaeology project in Wythenshawe, south Manchester, last year. His school took part in Dig Manchester, an excavation of a former mill organized by the City Council, local regeneration agencies and Manchester University. ‘I went back at the weekend with my family to do more research’, Andy said. ‘I exposed a millstone. It was brilliant.’ Dig Manchester wasn’t a typical regeneration project. Funding agencies struggled to see its relevance at first.
Yet it’s helped to bring a sense of pride and connectedness to a community that has a reputation for all the wrong reasons. Dig Manchester tapped into local people’s creativity and sense of place, and helped them feel good about themselves and their home. If you’re looking for output boxes to tick – jobs created, investment generated, qualifications achieved – projects like this aren’t terribly helpful. But if you want change, they can all make a difference. Projects like Dig Manchester generate a buzz and a belief that’s impossible to impose through target-driven programmes. Of course, buzz and belief can easily evaporate. But without them it’s hard to see how regeneration can rise above the daily grind.

The lifeblood of regeneration is hope. Not the wishful thinking and worn-out rhetoric of political manifestos, but hope of real changes in people’s everyday lives. Over the years I’ve noticed that the further up the professional scale you travel, the less excitement there appears to be about our common purpose. There’s skill, an abundance of contacts, a razor-sharp awareness of policy: but energy, enthusiasm, buzz, and belief don’t always sit comfortably in a tailored suit and are difficult to communicate through your Blackberry.

It doesn’t have to be that way. So for the enthusiasts, our message for the future is don’t let the dullards grind you down. And if you’re afraid you’re turning into a dullard, make it your mission this year to meet an enthusiast or two."

The project was shortlisted for Manchester City
Learning points

Community archaeology can:
- strengthen social inclusion, and a sense of place, whilst getting art and artists on board;
- help through a dedicated work-stream focused on community involvement to make social inclusion a reality;
- link in to existing networks and so help identify more participant groups;
- avoid through close liaison between partners duplication of effort;
- maximise educational benefits by early engagement of schools;
- provide a single dynamic strategic lead role that will help to drive the process and maximise take-up of arising opportunities

Conclusion

Dig Manchester taps into a rich vein of community feelings (Figure 6.6), stirring up memories, connecting people with their histories and their roots, strengthening their sense of place and pride in their neighbourhood, moving people in unforeseen ways. If approached with flexibility, the arcane science of archaeology can be made accessible to everyone and be a delight to them all.

Notes

2) Nevell 2013.
Community Archaeology in Alexandria, Virginia, USA

Pamela J Cressey & Kathleen Pepper

Introduction

Alexandrians started their collective interest in archaeology in the 1960s when they organised to save a Civil War bastion from destruction.1 There have been different archaeological priorities over the years—each focused on satisfying the next community need as it presented itself. By 1975, four general goals were articulated: to study, preserve and share while promoting Alexandria’s heritage. Public advocates, not professional archaeologists, were the leaders of this use of archaeology as a preservation strategy and community value, which engaged an ever-increasing number of partners. While most public input into archaeology is individual (volunteers digging or cataloguing artefacts) a stronger ‘archaeological community’ has been formed in Alexandria which benefits our city, its residents and visitors.

The City of Alexandria with a variety of partners has continued for more than forty years to create archaeological priorities that fit current needs and opportunities while building a professional foundation for research, preservation and public interaction. The evolution of the programme has resulted in a toolkit of strategies to save, study, share, manage, curate, protect and partner in a variety of community projects. The daily dialogue between city staff trained to do archaeology and the broader community composed of the Alexandria Archaeological Commission as well as volunteers, students and event participants produces the experiences and planning strategies for the City of Alexandria’s community archaeology programme.

Structure of Alexandria’s Community Archaeology

There are several components to community archaeology in this nearly 16-square-mile town of 135,000 people in the metro region of the nation’s capital, Washington D.C. Surprisingly, Alexandria is the eleventh densest city in America and very diverse, extending from its colonial Old Town on the Potomac River to the West End’s highways, high-rises and subdivisions. Alexandria is recognised as a national leader in preservation with the third-oldest historic district, and its historic character is a source of pride while its neighbourhoods are destinations for those seeking charm, authenticity and good food and drink.

The six Alexandria Archaeology staff are employees of the municipal government and work in a World War I-era Torpedo Factory, a popular art centre and central gathering spot. While the changing priorities over the years have created an expanded toolkit of archaeological strategies, the key component has been public participation.

The Alexandria Archaeological Commission, a 14-member citizen board, is appointed by the City Council to advise them on policy and direction for archaeological matters. The professional staff do not work for the Commission, but in tandem with its members. To our knowledge, this 35-year-old commission is the oldest city archaeology board in the United States. The Commission is the focus of community input, interests and viewpoints from which come specific recommendations to City Council. The voices of the community are stronger and have more impact when they are expressed or supported by such a public group.

The Friends of Alexandria Archaeology, a non-profit membership group formed in 1985, encourages public activity, knowledge and support for archaeology. In addition, about 100 volunteers and students annually conduct excavations, historical research, oral history interviews, artefact processing, assist with public programming, educate visitors to the Museum and a variety of other activities. Volunteers come for many reasons - to learn, to contribute to the community, and to enjoy the past. Their interests and curiosity shape the character and
Chapter 7: Community Archaeology in Alexandria, Virginia, USA

products of the programme. There are many other participants in community archaeology - citizens at planning meetings and public hearings, visitors to the Museum, teens in summer camp, college students, riders and walkers along the Alexandria Heritage Trail, children doing hands-on activities, and families at Dig Days. These people are more than recipients of information; their questions and ideas continue to affect plans for the future. Each new strategy has met a need and welcomed new partners into the archaeology community.

Development of Alexandria’s Archaeology

Since 1961, the development of archaeology in Alexandria has moved through several phases which have met the needs of the time and also continued to expand the number of functions into a holistic approach and use of contemporary methods.

Rescue and Reconstruct

The need for public action originally arose over the urgent issue of preserving the last bastion of Fort Ward, a Civil War (1861-5) fortification. One woman led the charge for the City of Alexandria to purchase the property for a park, conduct an excavation, reconstruct the bastion and build a museum. This rescue strategy was used again from 1965 to 1975 in the urban renewal King Street blocks of Old Town. Citizens actively sought support from the Smithsonian Institution to rescue artefacts from deep privy-wells while bulldozers cut the earth around them. In 1972, a group called the Committee of 100 collected $10 from each member to continue the work after the Smithsonian stopped its funding. Thousands of artefacts were saved from these efforts and provided a great deal of public interest in the early city’s taverns, merchants, artisans and an apothecary.

While this last-minute rescue strategy rarely has to be used today, the model of saving a site and turning it into a park and interacting with the public continues as a powerful part of the archaeological preservation toolkit. Preservationists of architecture joined in this mission to save archaeological heritage and formed the core of the movement to lobby for city professional staff.

Research

The last King Street Urban Renewal block was investigated when trained City archaeologists were hired in 1977. This was the turning point toward a research strategy. By envisioning this block as one part of a larger city-site, a wider research design brought more power to the finds. A massive outpouring of public support developed into a formal volunteer programme with hundreds of individuals contributing 5000 to 9000 combined hours annually. Research has been done on many topics, including identification of Alexandria’s potters’ wares by form, design and chemical analysis. University professors, students, museum curators, collectors and the general public enlarged the archaeology community partnership during this phase.

Discovery and Context

By the 1980s, there was a clear need to expand archaeology beyond Old Town across the city to identify sites for preservation and research. A broader context was also needed to predict, study and interpret sites for the full continuum of human occupation, which eventually extended back 13,000 years. For the historic periods, we collected every map, aerial photo and key locational source to plot potential sites. Using the topographic information from historic maps and information from the archaeology of the region, we developed prehistoric models for predicting where Native American sites might still survive.

Securing a grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities, we undertook an urban archival survey of residents from 1780 to 1910 to see the geographical patterns of class and race, such as earliest clusters of free blacks living within a city entrenched in slavery. This work led to African American research in two free neighbourhoods and opened the door to identifying elements of the interface between free and slave blacks and whites of different ethnic and religious groups. Oral history of long-time residents provided another perspective for visualising early 20th-century life and work and extended our time continuum toward the present.

We also mapped the changing Potomac River shoreline resulting from filling and wharf construction. At the same time, the Archaeological Commission pushed for discovery of the Alexandria Canal (1843-88) Tide Lock, archaeological investigation and reconstruction as part of the redeveloping waterfront, providing an amenity for the public at private expense (Figure 7.1). The Canal project was tied to building development and led to an improved site plan which had public value and won awards. It was the catalyst for the rebirth of the waterfront’s historic character. The canal was protected, and archaeology was instrumental in creating another historic park. Planners, developers, neighbourhoods across the city, churches and Black leaders further increased the community partnership.
through the use of the Discovery and Context strategies.

Museum and Collections

However, discovery had its challenges. Work at many sites with high artefact volumes brought the pressing need for proper curation and public access. The Alexandria Museum opened in 1984 in the newly renovated Torpedo Factory Art Centre where we interpreted archaeologists at work through a living laboratory, changing exhibits and hands-on activities. Just as more than 150 artists practised their craft within full public view, so did the City archaeologists and volunteers.

The 2,000,000 artefacts and ecofacts, found within the city limits and housed in the Alexandria Archaeology Collection, constitute the materials excavated from almost every site, extremely rare for any American city.

Their original storage did not meet newly developed federal curation standards, so a collections facility was developed and the entire collection reboxed and placed into a temperature and humidity controlled environment with the assistance of a grant from the National Science Foundation. Artefacts in need of conservation were also treated. Over the years, the collection’s database has been upgraded and expanded. The artists, conservators and 30,000 Museum visitors a year expanded the public partnership.

Archaeology Code and Master Plan

By the late 1980s, development in Alexandria was proceeding at rapid speed. Purely voluntary efforts by developers were insufficient to identify and preserve all the threatened resources across the city. The Archaeological Commission became convinced that a local protection code was needed so that the private sector would pay to preserve resources before construction, and hopefully so some significant sites would be preserved in situ. The Alexandria Archaeological Protection Code was adopted by City Council in 1989 and established an overlay zone of Archaeological Resource Areas with high and moderate potential for containing resources. A process was also adopted in which development plans were reviewed by the City archaeologists and determinations made regarding what level of work should be done by private archaeologists in cultural resource management firms. The Code has worked well for twenty years and is responsible for the preservation of resources and protection of many sites spanning thousands of years. The enactment of the Code would not have occurred without the vision and commitment of the Archaeological Commission.
Speaking for a broad constituency including the business community, the Commission produced one of the first local ordinances in America. The emphasis then moved in the early 1990s to organising survey data and writing a preservation chapter of the City’s Master Plan with fourteen small area plans. Since archaeologists took the initiative, the chapter included more than 4000 potential locations of sites, as well as historic districts and standing structures. The use of this mapped information (now in GIS format) for reviewing all developments and building permits in the city has led to startling discoveries. At two Civil War camp sites, Crimean ovens were found that provided heat for winter encampments and tent hospitals (Figure 7.2). The brewery vault and glass factory at the Carlyle Project gave previously unknown information about two major industries, and ultimately has led to another park with historic elements for public enjoyment. The Code has brought thousands of residents and developers into contact with archaeology, broadened the ideas and opportunities for archaeology in Alexandria and made our information valuable to planners seeking new street names, as well as architects, artists and landscape designers creating public art and open spaces.

Education, Recreation, Tourism

Concurrent to the preservation strategies, numerous public programmes were developed in the 1980s and 1990s as important tools to benefit the community. Each activity was generated to meet different audience needs as they became apparent and encourage good stewardship of heritage resources. Archaeology Adventure Lessons attract schools to visit the Museum and meet state standards of learning. Each lesson is based upon a part of the archaeological process and is aimed at different age groups. Working in groups, students use critical thinking skills and examine artefacts, archives and oral history to discover archaeological findings and draw their own conclusions. A variety of programmes target families and use hands-on methods to learn, have fun and encourage parent-child dialogue. Family Dig Days permit people to come on site, see the excavations and hear the history while screening artefacts under intensive supervision. The Archaeology Summer Camp for teens was developed after we realised that many parents were looking for programmes for middle school students who were too old for traditional camps. Using a high ratio of supervisors to students and working in relatively simple excavation levels, students have successful excavation and laboratory experiences without diminishing the value of the work. Several have stayed involved over the years and help to train new campers. In 2002, the Alexandria Heritage Trail was opened after more than fifteen years of the Commission’s efforts, one volunteer’s passion and major efforts by the Friends of Alexandria Archaeology. The 23-mile trail has 10 segments, with 58 stops at more than 100 sites across the entire city dating back 9000 years and into the mid-20th century. A marker programme is now underway to provide interpretive signage at the Heritage Trail stops, as well as at parks and new developments where archaeological investigations have been conducted. These archaeological strategies have brought visitors, recreational professionals, bikers, walkers, families, teachers and students into many partnerships so that archaeology becomes a part of life in Alexandria and more people take pride in preserving the past.

Promotion

These programmes and the very artefacts themselves require promotion for public awareness. The Alexandria Heritage Trail has regular bike and walking tours conducted by staff and volunteers that draw many people. Events hosted by the Commission and attended by officials promote new endeavours. The artefacts, displayed as logos on letterhead and the website, increase access to our findings and peak citizen interest in the programme which then spurs people to volunteer and send us inquiries. The Friends group solicits membership, produces a newsletter and sponsors events. Press releases and media tours generate newspaper, radio and television coverage so that more people are included in the discoveries and hear about good stewardship. There is an expansive sense that archaeology extends across Alexandria and might be in anyone’s backyard. A local magazine even highlighted the City programme as one of the key elements that distinguishes Alexandria from another well-known historic community.
Fig 7.3: Community excavations at Shuter's Hill.
Community Projects

As archaeology becomes more integrated with City government departments and partners with various constituencies, the greater the opportunities for community benefit. Joining in larger projects with long-term impacts is the most recent strategy. The Alexandria waterfront is the subject of two planning efforts to control flooding and to enhance the design and public access to the river. Sustainability - economic, environmental and historical - is a key concept for these planning efforts. Archival, photographic and oral information has been brought into the planning process. A recent study of historic buildings by Commission members highlights the importance of preservation and knowledge of history in the new waterfront design and activities. Participation in open space studies and acquisitions has offered more hope for the preservation of sites within the public's expressed need to save space, trees and link waterways. And, the identification of archaeological places has led to community decisions to preserve sites, create more parks with historic meaning and integrate art, such as Alexandria African American Heritage Park (Figure 7.3) and the planned linear park in Potomac Yard that draws its inspiration from historical maps of the canal and rails located through the archaeological study. Public concern for the post-Civil War African American settlers at Fort Ward Park - the scene of the first archaeological effort in Alexandria - has brought the City archaeologists and volunteers back to continue research, develop a cultural resource inventory using GIS overlays of historic maps and aerial photographs, and work with neighbours and descendent family members to locate graves and other evidence of black life at this seminal time of emancipation after slavery.

Alexandria Freedmen’s Cemetery is one of the best examples of these types of community archaeology project. The resting place of up to 1800 African American refugees, who fled to Alexandria from slavery during the Civil War, was abandoned by the federal government and eventually was covered by a gas station, office building, asphalt parking lot, sidewalk and a street. While the site has not appeared as a historic place to the eye for 100 years, it is the most tangible remnant of the strength and suffering of more than 20,000 people who passed through Alexandria seeking freedom, yet are not remembered by books, plaques or museums. Through the efforts of two inspiring women and a small group of citizens, Freedmen’s Cemetery was recognised as a significant historic place more than a decade after its first historical study. After years of public dialogue, archaeological identification and protection of the graves, international web-based design competition, public art competition, and discovery of many descendent families of those buried there, the City of Alexandria has preserved the one-and-half-acre cemetery and the three-acre Contrabands and Freedmen’s Cemetery Memorial is due to be completed in 2013. The Alexandria community partnership is fully seen in this project. The public leaders of this effort would not have known about the cemetery without archival research and archaeology, and few archaeologists would envision a multi-million dollar project to commemorate these forgotten people.

The Future of Archaeology in Alexandria

The wider archaeological community in Alexandria continues to look beyond the ground and open gates to the past for all. Challenges continue: staying current with changing priorities in town; identifying and communicating with descendent families associated with lost graves and history known only through unstudied records and oral history; expanding input to include recent immigrants and newer neighbourhoods; providing written materials in Spanish; entering into civil discourse with many constituencies in which archaeology may not be a priority - a proposed ball field may compete with an archaeological site; maintaining services during austere revenue periods; creating trained volunteers who provide paraprofessional services while feeling rewarded and appreciated; producing strategic plans that dovetail with the city’s stated goals and lead archaeology into valued contributions; sponsoring activities and meetings throughout the city to encourage broad perspectives; keeping a consistent professional staff and establishing a succession plan as baby boomers retire.

Archaeology brings the past alive in Alexandria through the artefacts and places of past lives. It can serve as a method for generating multiple perspectives - a conduit for the present community to connect with historic peoples and continuing issues that transcend time. Archaeology is one of the daily activities that create an identity for Alexandrians which embraces the past while moving forward. Archaeology reaffirms ties between many times and peoples while creating new networks among today’s citizens as they engage in finding, preserving and appreciating their heritage.

Notes

2) Pulliam 2011.
Chapter 8

Community Archaeology in Norway

Lise Brekmoe

Introduction

An interest in the past is a widespread phenomenon and public involvement in archaeology is growing steadily, but how members of the public can take part in exploring the past is dependent on many factors, such as the structure of archaeological institutions, laws and regulations as well as social and demographic structure. This article is based on personal experiences from working with communities in marginal areas of Northern Norway, and explores the possibilities and challenges for community archaeology in a Norwegian context and how local communities and archaeologists can learn from each other.

The Archaeological Background

There are several differences between Norwegian and British archaeology that affect the opportunities for people to participate. The main difference is the legislation involving sites, monuments and portable antiquities as stated in the Cultural Heritage Act of 1979. In Norway, standing structures predating 1650...
Chapter 8: Community Archaeology in Norway

and all traces of human activity in the physical environment, including places associated with historical events, beliefs and traditions prior to 1537, are automatically protected by law. In addition to the monument or site itself, a security zone of at least five metres from the visible perimeter of the structure is automatically protected. Any alterations that destroy, damage or conceal the site are illegal, including undertaking excavations unless you are representing any of the institutions defined by the law.

Another important difference is that there is no commercial archaeology in Norway; instead five archaeological museums are licensed to carry out excavations and investigations of archaeological monuments and sites in their own areas. Compared to Britain, the number of archaeological excavations is low. One obvious reason for this is climate conditions, where snow and frozen ground during four months of the year bring most outdoor archaeological investigations to a standstill. Another reason is a general notion that cultural heritage should be preserved rather than excavated, encouraging other solutions such as changes to plans and relocation of development. Another part of field archaeology is, however, much more frequent than excavations. In addition to the museums, each county has a duty to employ officers who are responsible for cultural heritage conservation in connection with the administration of cultural affairs generally.

The officers advise the county administration on questions of cultural conservation and ensure that protected monuments, sites and cultural environments are taken into account in planning processes at county and municipality levels. An important part of the job is to prepare ‘Protection Orders’ for the Directorate for Cultural Heritage. Before planning permissions are given, each case will be evaluated by an officer, which involves searching archives for known information about protected sites and monuments as well as field visits to evaluate the possibility for unknown archaeology in the area. These archaeological evaluations or registrations normally involve walking through the area of planned development, using GPS and GIS-based systems to plot traces of human activity thought to date prior to 1537 (Figure 8.1).

Challenges and Possibilities

The laws and the structure of Norwegian archaeology present certain challenges for community archaeology and public participation. First of all, the nature of the archaeological activities means that they are often not accessible to members of the public.

As in Britain, Norwegian archaeology is to a certain
extent driven by development, which means that in areas with a lack of development, there will not be a high degree of archaeological activity either. But even in areas where there is development, there are difficulties. Excavations are few and offer limited chances for volunteering, and the strict regulations make it difficult for historical societies and similar groups to run excavations.

Archaeological registrations are under enormous pressure as most evaluations have to be carried out during the snow-free months of the year and budgets are limited. Participation by members of the public is difficult as the registration will often take place with short notice and a tight schedule. Furthermore, developments are often planned for privately owned areas, which restrict access for all. Another problem is that more and more development is happening outside previously settled areas, where the terrain may sometimes present health and safety issues.

The challenges for community archaeology in Norway include a lack of will for public involvement and over the past 20 years, a growing recognition that, while protecting the cultural heritage, the organisation of archaeology also alienates members of the public. Several surveys have started to map a picture of the public’s perception of heritage management and cultural heritage, revealing both positive and negative results. The good news is that the public as a whole are very positive towards historical societies and monuments increases the quality of their local areas and gives them a sense of belonging. The bad news is that archaeological institutions seemingly do very little to add to this. In a survey undertaken among marginal fishing communities in Northern Norway, 76% were told about local archaeology by family and friends, with only 1% giving museums or other archaeological institutions as their source of information. Interestingly, half of the respondents in the village of Ness in Hamarøy had heard about excavations taking place in 1893, while none of the respondents remembered excavations taking place in 1987 or more recent archaeological activities. The reason for this was that archaeologists in the 19th century involved people from the village in the excavations, and the stories of older generations’ memories of taking part had been carried down to the present inhabitants. The excavations in 1987 did not involve members of the public and left no trace in the public memory.

Local Initiatives

The recognition that the relationship between members of the public and the archaeological institutions needed to be improved has resulted in several government initiatives. One of the most positive developments for community archaeology is a scheme that was initiated by the Norwegian government in 1997, and today is known as ‘Local Initiatives’. The scheme offers advice and financial support for initiatives based on qualities in the past and present cultural landscapes. The types of projects that can receive funding vary from ensuring maintenance of the landscape through grazing livestock to restoration of buildings of historical value.

The criteria for funding are that the projects are run by members of the local communities and that the local communities are involved in the planning and decision-making. Local knowledge and resources are emphasised and the initiative should include long-term prospects and plans for a viable use of the landscape which can be incorporated into plans at municipality and county levels as well as short-term initiatives. Archaeology and cultural heritage has been an important part of several Local Initiative projects. Any work involving automatically protected sites or monuments is planned and carried out in close consultation with county officers, ensuring that the planned activities do not cause any danger to the site.

Ness, a coastal village in Hamarøy municipality in Nordland County, was awarded a Local Initiatives grant in 2001. The village is situated on a peninsula and a combination of fishing and farming was until recently the main occupation. Historically, Ness was an important port of trade, but with the development of the road network, other villages gained more importance and the port was eventually closed down, and today the majority of the inhabitants commute to the regional centre to work. The village is a well-known destination for tourists seeking outdoor activities such as kayaking, fishing and hiking and sees a doubling of the population during the summer months. As well as two nature reserves, several grave mounds dating to the Viking Age are situated on the peninsula, which is surrounded by one of the strongest sea currents in Europe.

The Local Initiatives Projects decided to focus on these values, not only for visitors during the summer months, but also as a resource for the local community. To increase accessibility, a footpath around the peninsula was cleared and signposts were put up to inform about monuments and sites along the path. Some of the grave mounds were cleared of vegetation, whereas others were left as they are to encourage people to discover the past and present cultural landscape and as far as possible to leave the landscape untouched. Overlooking the currents, a stone cabin was built by members of the community using local raw materials, providing a popular resting place for families, hikers and tourists alike (Figure 8.2). The cabin also serves as a place for people to
learn more about the history of the village through booklets. The information was gathered and written by members of the local community, which provided another opportunity for them to be involved in exploring the history of the landscape. The grave mounds and the history of the village dating to the Viking Age was known prior to the project, but as one of the volunteers working on the project expressed it, he had never thought about the past as something that mattered to him, “But then I started to read about the past, what Ness was like more than 1000 years ago, about the people who used the same landscape as we use today. Ness was once more important than it is today and that means something to me.” Several other people, both those who were directly involved in the project and other members of the community, expressed similar feelings, that the knowledge they gained through the project gave them a sense of belonging and made them aware of, and wonder about, the past.

A similar type of project was granted funding on Fleinvær in Gildeskål municipality in 2003. An important part of the project was to map possibilities for future businesses based on local resources, in which cultural heritage tourism was incorporated as part of the project. But where Ness is an example of how the presence of archaeological sites and monuments can create positive experiences within the local community, the local involvement in Fleinvær is also an example of how local communities can provide a learning experience for the archaeological institutions.

Fleinvær consists of a group of 220 islands situated fourteen nautical miles west of the mainland of Nordland County (Figure 8.3). As part of archaeological registrations, Povl Simonsen, also known as the father of Northern Norwegian archaeology, briefly visited Fleinvær in 1963. Based on assumptions about land level rise since the Viking Age and the low altitudes of the islands in Fleinvær, Simonsen concluded in his report that there were no sites of archaeological interest on the islands and for 40 years this remained an undisputed truth among archaeologists. Members of the local community, however, were not convinced. Knowing the complex landscape of the archipelago better than anyone else, they recognised features and sites in the landscape which were difficult to explain as other than automatically protected sites. But without archaeological recognition, these sites remained without legal protection and the cultural history of Fleinvær prior to the Reformation was non-existent. In 2001, members of the community managed to establish contact with Professor Reidar Bertelsen from Tromsø University and Trine Johnson, one of the heritage officers at Nordland County. They arranged a visit to the islands, later followed up by a week of archaeological registrations which uncovered more than fifteen burial cairns most likely dating to the Iron Age, three Arctic Farm mounds and a settlement consisting of an Iron Age longhouse, boathouse and landing place, still visible on the ground. The discoveries meant that the history of Fleinvær had to be rewritten and that the archaeological assumptions for a number of similar areas had to be rethought. As a result of the initial registrations on Fleinvær, an interdisciplinary research project, The management of cultural heritage in marginalised coastal societies’ was started in 2005. The project focuses amongst other things on local involvement in the management of cultural heritage and the relationship between the archaeological institutions and the local communities. Fleinvær is one of five study areas and members of the community have remained important resources for the project.

Conclusion

The Local Initiatives have proved a successful way to engage local communities in their past and to ensure a viable use of the landscape. Through being involved with these projects, local communities gain insight into both heritage management and the cultural history of the area. Working together towards a shared goal helps build relationships within the community and increases the sense of belonging as well as creating links between local communities and archaeological institutions, which can help archaeological institutions improve their practice as well as the future for community archaeology in Norway.

Notes

The Royton Lives Through the Ages Project

Frances Stott & Pearl Malcolmson

Introduction

This paper presents an outline of the above project, which was carried out under the auspices of Royton Local History Society, and specifically the Royton Hall excavations which took place in the summers of 2005 and 2006. It will describe how the Society was galvanised into setting up the project, how we organised not only the project but also ourselves, how we attracted and liaised with partners, attracted funding, the support we received, the dig itself and how it was organised culminating in an open weekend, the monitoring which was undertaken, including the compilation of statistics, and will finally look at the pitfalls encountered, how we overcame them, and tips for groups who wish to set up a similar project.

Historical Background

Royton Hall was one of several properties owned by twelve generations of the Byron family from the mid-13th century until 1622, when they sold it to the Standish family. The Byrons were a prominent family in Lancashire and Yorkshire and were involved in affairs of state, and over the centuries took part in wars in Wales, France, Flanders, Scotland and Spain. They were Sheriffs of Yorkshire, Nottinghamshire and Derbyshire, and High Sheriffs of Lancashire. Lord Byron, the poet, was a direct descendant of the family. The Byrons purchased Newstead Abbey in 1540, which they then regarded as their principal residence, although Royton Hall continued to be occupied by them from time to time, notably in 1585 when Sir John Byron was Deputy Lieutenant of Lancashire.

The Standish family owned Royton Hall for the relatively short period of 40 years. In 1662 they sold the Hall to Richard Percival and his brother Thomas Percival, a wealthy linen manufacturer, for £2530.

The Hall eventually, through marriage, passed to the Pickford family (who later changed their name to Radcliffe). In 1795 the family moved to Milnsbridge, near Huddersfield, and over the next 125 years the Hall was let for a variety of purposes. As well as being divided into several lodgings, during this period parts were also used as a school, estate office, presbytery for SS Aidan & Oswald's Church, and a Church Institute for St Paul's.1

During the First World War the Hall was home to Belgian refugees, after which it was rented and later purchased by Dr J T Godfrey as a home and surgery. Dr Godfrey tried to sell the Hall in 1926 but without success, and the Hall was divided into five lodgings until it was eventually demolished in 1939 after the local medical officer of health declared it unfit for habitation.

The history of the Hall had already been researched and there was good photographic evidence of the exterior. However, relatively little is known about the date of Royton Hall's construction. As the land was in the possession of the Byron family from the mid-13th century it is possible that a house of some description, dating from that time, was built on the site. The east wing was thought to have been rebuilt in Elizabethan times, certainly prior to 1585 when Sir John Byron made it into the family residence at the beginning of that year. The Hall was recorded as having twelve hearths in 1666, making it palatial in comparison to the rest of the village where 30 houses shared 42 hearths between them.2
mattocking to measuring, the tasks were actively entered into. Schoolchildren (Figure 9.1), homemakers, retirees, workers on leave, learned how to trowel, survey, record the site and log finds.

It is, however, one thing to be inspired by an idea and another to be galvanised into action. At the inaugural meeting of Royton Local History Society, Father David Booth, St Paul’s Parish Priest, in whose building the meetings were to be held, asked; “why don’t you dig up the Hall?” The society Chairman and founder member Doug Ashmore paled and requested a show of hands. With 100% in support he was tasked with getting on with the job.

**Organisation**

The first thing to do was organise. A sub-committee was formed to spearhead the project, and the title ‘Royton Lives through the Ages’ gave it an identity. For a while the group floundered, unsure of where to begin, and there were several setbacks and disappointments. Eventually, an informal SWOT analysis was carried out and suddenly there was no looking back.

The greatest strength of the sub-committee was the enthusiasm and commitment of its members, who were from all walks of life. Its weakness was a tendency to ‘go round in circles’ discussing the issues but not get anything done. There was a huge opportunity to secure funding for this imaginative, community-led project but this was threatened by impending deadlines and dependence on other bodies to provide timely information and support.

It was decided therefore to secure a regular meeting place, date and time. The second Tuesday of the month was arranged, through Councillor Harrison, in Royton Town Hall at 7pm. This instantly gave some structure, timeliness and a well-known community venue where local councillors could be approached for support when they held their surgeries. It put our meetings into the public arena and demonstrated that we were serious about the project.

In order to keep the committee on task a standard agenda and action minutes were designed. Critical Path Analysis helped to keep the group to deadlines and it could be seen at a glance who had responsibility for which task, what had been achieved and what remained outstanding. This was important in maintaining priorities and preventing drift.

Bearing in mind that we are describing a group of volunteers from all walks of life, it was impossible to fill every perceived skills gap in-house. Everyone worked to their strengths, co-operated and sought outside help as appropriate. The group soon gelled and gained confidence. Performance became more assured and the meetings could relax and have some fun! It had become clear to us that we couldn’t undertake this project without the assistance of partners. Our first partner was Oldham Parks and Countryside, which was responsible for maintaining the council land which we had been given permission to dig up. They provided us with an excavator for the one-day trial dig in 2004 and in the following two years with an excavator, dumper truck and the two men necessary to operate them. This, along with reseeding the site afterwards, was provided free of charge.

An important partner was obviously the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit (UMAU), which ran the dig site in both years. Kier North West, who built the new Oldham Library and Life Long Learning Centre and the new Radcliffe Secondary School, provided and erected fencing and cabins for the site on both occasions; Adam Thompson, our professional archaeologist, was heard to say he had never had such luxurious accommodation. Royton and Crompton Secondary School provided A1 posters and most of our printing. They also provided administration by contacting other local schools.

Despite all the support in-kind that we received, it was also necessary to raise funds. This is crucial and was probably the hardest part of the whole project. Smaller bids were made and received from Royton and Crompton Area Committee (£2517) and Voluntary Action Oldham’s ‘Community Chest’ (£5000). However, big money was vital to the project’s success, but this meant the project had to expand to include publishing a heritage trail, running workshops, giving talks, leading walks and launching a website. We were then successful in obtaining a grant for £25,000 from the Local Heritage Initiative along with an additional £5000 from Nationwide. The Society was also committed to fundraising itself, raising money through raffles, a wine and cheese event and a musical evening. Other funding came through a local businessman and from the Police Property Fund.

While partners and funding are important so too is local support, especially that of local residents,
including those living adjacent to the site. Jean who lived opposite the site provided cups of tea, water, rubbish bags and anything we ran out of while other residents allowed us to fill up their wheelie bins with our rubbish on collection day. The local police provided assistance, Oldham’s Health and Safety Officer gave advice regarding site safety, the library provided photographs, put on displays and hosted the launch of the heritage trail, and the Local Studies Library attended open weekends with a display on the area. The then Oldham Mayor visited the site several times both years, as did our local MP Michael Meacher and Mike Godfrey, the grandson of the last owner of the Hall. The local press – Oldham Evening Chronicle and Oldham Advertiser – provided publicity for all our events and the BBC in 2005 and Channel M in 2006 provided valuable coverage on TV, which made a big difference. However, the lynchpin was the local schools that were only too willing to spend half a day on site.

With children on the site its spatial organisation was important for health and safety reasons. Another consideration was the huge media campaign that was embarked upon; taking every opportunity to promote the site, it needed to be visually stimulating.

The Archaeology

Fortunately the archaeology did not fail to deliver. The site (Figure 9.2) was cordoned off with security fencing and the Portakabin headquarters and toilets were strategically placed. The archaeologists managed the volunteer diggers, who had been recruited by the sub-committee and rota’d into manageable numbers. While the adults concentrated on the deeper excavations, the schoolchildren could work the shallow parts of the site and rotate between digging, washing and recording finds and a guided history detective trail. Gazebos were provided for shelter whatever the weather as were drinks, sun cream and other facilities for volunteers.

There was an Open Door policy during the dig and all visitors were met at an entrance table where they were signed in by a ‘Welcomer’ and then handed over to a designated guide. Groups were invited to book tours, and these included older people with memory problems from High Barn Day Centre.

The main flood of visitors came during the Open Weekends. There was a footfall in excess of 2500 over the two dig seasons which included four Open Days. The relevant mayor provided a sense of occasion by attending in full regalia. Stalls were erected for finds, family history, reminiscences, children’s activities, a stonemason practising his craft, and Oldham Amateur Radio Club, who broadcast news of the event worldwide. One of their members produced two DVDs, which boosted funds by retailing at £5 each. Throughout weekends, guided
tours were conducted by volunteers briefed by the lead archaeologist. These were extremely popular and generated much interest and enthusiasm.

Efforts were made to monitor the success of the project and a visitor’s book soon filled with very positive comments. A visitor survey was undertaken and revealed that 97% of visitors wanted to see the site preserved and maintained (Figure 9.3). This was backed up by the professional opinion of the late Robina McNeil, the County Archaeologist for Greater Manchester, who reported that this exceptional site should be Scheduled and/or taken forward on a new English Heritage Register of Historic Assets.

The success of the dig is further reflected in these statistics:

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<thead>
<tr>
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<th>2005</th>
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<tr>
<td>Pupils</td>
<td>331</td>
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<td>Helpers</td>
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<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diggers</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visitors</td>
<td>1627</td>
<td>949</td>
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Lessons for the Future

This paper would not be complete without a summary of pitfalls and tips on how to avoid them:

- you need to make sure you have the permission of the landowner;
- the task of obtaining funding is not easy. You need to have firm plans for what you want to achieve and then cost everything;
- don’t underestimate the time and effort needed and that in the meantime life goes on. Mutual support from the group is important. You need to bid for funding well in advance of your proposed start date as some funding bodies take time to sanction bids and you may jeopardise funding if you start your project before approval is granted;
- after the first bid it does become easier to complete application forms as a lot of the work has already been done. However, every funding body has its own criteria so establish early on what is required in return for funding, for example copies of bills, regular reports, involvement of young people. Keep all publicity;
- jobs need to be planned and allocated to named people during the dig. Appoint a ‘duty officer’ to take overall responsibility each day. Remember that everyone can contribute; we had 70- and 80-year-olds acting as welcomers on the entrance gate;
- and use all your contacts. In many cases it’s not what you know but who you know.

In conclusion then, our key message of inspiration is “We did it. You can too.” There is a need to be persistent, flexible, adaptable and realistic. Above all, maintain a sense of humour. On behalf of the Royton Lives Through the Ages Committee we would like to express thanks for the opportunity to describe the project, which was a team effort.

Notes

1) Farrer & Brownbill 1911, 112; Stott 2001.
2) Farrer & Brownbill 1911, 114.
3) Strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats matrix.
Chapter 10

The Chester Amphitheatre Project

Dan Garner & Tony Wilmott

Introduction

The Chester Amphitheatre Project was a high-profile and well resourced research project centred on one of Chester’s most famous Scheduled Monuments. The project was entirely resourced, both in terms of capital and in-house expertise, as a partnership between Chester City Council and English Heritage. It generated a huge amount of new information about the development of the south-eastern part of Chester’s city centre and has allowed a complete reinterpretation of the Roman amphitheatre’s story (Figure 10.1). A key aim of the project was to engage and educate the local community in order to facilitate an involved stage of public consultation about the future of the site.

The overarching aim of the project was to provide a dataset that could be used to inform decisions on future development proposals for the site, its presentation and interpretation. The data were

Fig 10.1: Aerial view of the excavations in areas C and B, looking east, showing the specially constructed walkway and viewing area. Note the Roman soldier tour being conducted in the arena to the left.
acquired using an exhaustive range of invasive and non-invasive techniques, each of which had its own list of aims. The programme of non-invasive survey was designed to contribute to the understanding of the amphitheatre within its topographic setting, and in particular to explore its relationship with the post-Roman ecclesiastical landscape. It was also hoped that the non-invasive work would help to target future areas for excavation, and identify conservation and preservation issues related to the Grade II listed building known as Dee House.

**Aims of the Project**

The excavation programme was designed to enhance data recovered from previous excavations of the amphitheatre. It was hoped that this would provide enough knowledge and understanding to enable informed judgements to be made on the future treatment of the amphitheatre and Dee House. All aspects of the work would serve to engage and interest the general public both in and around Chester and further afield in the processes of archaeology, and to provide training in archaeological techniques for archaeology students and amateur volunteers.

A photograph of the Chester amphitheatre excavations taken during the 1960s compared with pictures of the 2004-6 work (Figure 10.2) shows just how far archaeology has progressed in its current emphasis on public engagement, education and outreach. The picture shows the excavation surrounded by a high, close-set wooden fence, hiding the work from prying eyes, and only visible from the top of the adjacent Newgate arch.

By contrast, during the recent work every effort was made to encourage public involvement. The demolition of the high wall which separated the excavated northern half of the amphitheatre from the grounds of Dee House opened up the whole site to a remarkable extent, but the best place to view the totality of the site was from the concrete retaining wall on which the brick wall had stood (Figure 10.1). This provided the opportunity to create a walkthrough viewing gallery along the top of the retaining wall, which was designed and constructed by Chester City Council engineers in conjunction with Messrs Parsons. The gallery was a hugely successful feature of the project, attracting more than 250,000 people during the first two seasons of excavation. Information panels along the gallery were updated on a regular basis with new text and annotated digital panels.
photographs emphasising visible features. It was decided at the inception of the project that aspects of the work which are not usually on display would be located so that visitors could view them. The environmental sieving facility was placed next to the viewing gallery and was a great draw. The finds processing room was located in the upper floor of the nearby Chester Visitor Centre, which was specially fitted out with sinks for finds washing, and racking for drying and temporary storage (Figure 10.3). A small display of typical finds was also maintained. In the same space was a small exhibition which included children’s interactive activities, whilst a large window at one end of the room afforded a raised view of the adjacent excavation.

Community Access

During the 2004 excavation season site staff, particularly the Project Directors and the supervisors, were committed to undertaking several guided tours of the excavation per day. This was very time-consuming, and took key staff away from site work, so a professional archaeologist was appointed as an outreach assistant during the 2005 season. This enabled the virtually constant presence on the viewing gallery of someone who could engage with visitors and answer their questions, taking the pressure away from site staff, who at the same time were encouraged to talk to members of the public who asked questions across the fence. The outreach assistant also co-ordinated and hosted the many school groups and special interest groups who booked more formal visits. This included practical training sessions with the Merseyside Young Archaeologists Club and Grosvenor Museum Young Explorers Club (Figure 10.4) as well as tactile finds handling sessions with members from the local branch of the Royal Institution for the Blind.

The viewing gallery and finds processing room were the distribution points for the project Newsletters. Written by the project staff, these were produced at irregular intervals as new developments in the archaeology of the site demanded, and were designed and produced by in-house staff. The dispensing boxes often had to be restocked several times a day.

The whole visitor experience was greatly enhanced by regular patrols around the outskirts of the excavation by school groups under the guidance of a Roman soldier provided by one of the local city centre tour companies (Roman Soldier Tours and the Dewa [sic] Roman Experience). These daily tours

Fig 10.3: Julie Edwards (Post-Roman Finds specialist, Chester Archaeology) conducting a finds handling session with the Merseyside and Dee YAC group.
culminated in a larger event involving both Roman military drill and mock gladiatorial displays within the amphitheatre arena during National Archaeology Week.

The project was made available to the wider world through an award-winning and dedicated website (www.chesteramphitheatre.co.uk). This was updated constantly with the latest discoveries and information, and featured a blog for one-to-one communication with interested people. Perhaps the most popular element of the site was the 24/7 webcam, which enabled viewers to watch work in progress via a camera housed in the Chester Visitor Centre.

One of the more unusual departures for the project was the presence on site of two artists in residence. Julia Midgley is a specialist in documentary drawing, and was commissioned to make a record of the 2004 excavation season. Julia's drawings were a unique reflection of the experience and spirit of the excavation. Her drawings and written diary were published as a booklet entitled 'Amphitheatre', and an exhibition of her work was held at the Grosvenor Museum in 2005. The second artist was Chester-based photographer David Heke, who also had an exhibition of his work at the Chester Visitor Centre. Both artists brought their own vision to the project, and their records are a very different way of looking at the excavation process.4

Two further exhibitions were held in association with the project. The first of these at the Grosvenor Museum, entitled 'To be killed with Iron' concerned the world of the Roman gladiator. The second was given in association with the non-invasive survey work. It was held in collaboration with Chester History and Heritage as an exhibition and fact-finding event whose aim was to record memories of the study area from a 20th-century perspective. Information from this event helped positively identify the function of a mystery building which was visible on the site of the amphitheatre on a 1947 aerial photograph but was subsequently demolished, and which had never appeared on any maps before or after that date: it turned out to have been a NAAFI canteen!

**Academic Access**

Another important project link was between the excavation and both Liverpool and Chester universities. Students from both these institutions came to the amphitheatre to receive the practical training which is an essential part of their degree...
courses in archaeology. The staff of Chester Archaeology had engaged in the teaching of Chester University students, and this was continued on site. The University of Liverpool contributed the services of an additional site supervisor who acted as student liaison and, together with the Project Directors, compiled training reports. A proper training programme was devised, involving practical tuition and classes in finds work and environmental archaeology amongst other areas. Local volunteers from the Chester Archaeological Society and the wider community also benefited from this training programme and from the experience of working on site and in finds processing, whether experienced or new to site work.

Members of the local metal-detecting community were also encouraged to become involved in the excavation work. This was primarily using members of the Crewe and Nantwich metal-detecting club, one or two of whom became regular members of the project team. This enabled the project to develop partnership working with a section of the wider community that often feels excluded from the archaeological process; it also increased the success of the project in very real terms as their involvement led to the recovery of a rare gold ‘Sergeant-of-law’ ring from the excavation spoil heap.

Public Access

The project enjoyed considerable media exposure. On television (Figure 10.5) the main event was the documentary made in the first season for the BBC’s *Timewatch*, entitled *Britain’s Lost Colosseum*. The producer, Deborah Perkins, and her team became familiar figures on site, allowing an engaging ‘fly-on-the-wall’ presentation which was very well received. The project also featured in the North-West ITV series *Lost Treasures* and on Channel 4 *Time Team’s Big Roman Dig*. Each excavation season the Project Directors wrote a weekly diary column in the local newspaper *The Chester Chronicle*.

During every season of excavation National Archaeology Week was celebrated in the amphitheatre, with show and tell areas and children’s activities. Beyond a doubt the most popular element of this was the re-enactment of gladiatorial combat portrayed by the Britannia re-enactment group, and the Roman interpretation specialists of Roman Tours.

A great many lectures on the project were given to a diverse range of audiences. This included a huge list of local historical and archaeological groups as well as more august bodies such as the Chester Archaeological Society and the Grosvenor Museum.
Society; national bodies such as the Society of Antiquaries in London; and international conferences such as the 20th International Congress of Roman Frontier Studies. The pinnacle of this was reached when an international conference on Roman Amphitheatres was hosted at the Grosvenor Museum in Chester during February 2007.5

Public consultation was undertaken during the winter of 2005/06 and several briefing events were held on a number of evenings for both local Chester City councillors and members of the general public alike. These events were undertaken in conjunction with the production of an accessible consultation report document designed to inform people about the preliminary results of the research work. The whole process culminated in a number of well-attended workshops where people were invited to put forward their views about the future of the amphitheatre site. The feedback was then used by City Council officers to formulate a strategy for the future. This led to Chester City Council submitting a bid to secure funding from the Big Lottery Fund ‘Living Landmarks’ scheme for the renovation of Dee House and the construction of an amphitheatre visitor/interpretation centre. This unfortunately was not successful and the future of the site is now being explored by the Council’s Chester Renaissance team with the support of seed funding from the NWDA.

Conclusion

The main strength of the project was that it was blessed with substantial resources that were focused on a monument of international importance within the centre of a city that holds great store in its Roman heritage. Visitor numbers to the site steadily increased as the media machine shifted into top gear, and the wider archaeological community was engaged at all levels (Figure 10.7). However, the main dynamic was the annual excavation season which brought a team of professionals onto an otherwise unmanned historical site; this provided a mechanism for bringing the site to life with the promise of new discoveries, revelations, and training for budding archaeologists. The cessation of fieldwork in 2006 removed this dynamic and left behind a void; the challenge for the future will be to find a means to recapture the energy of the project in a sustainable and long-term way.

Notes

2) Thompson 1976.
Chapter 11

Living in the Past: The Meaning of Community Archaeology to Participants with Learning Disabilities

Barry Fortune, Roy King & Gemma Lacey

Introduction

Throughout 2012, occupational therapists from Manchester Learning Disability Partnership (MLDP) and archaeologists from Dig Greater Manchester (Centre for Applied Archaeology at the University of Salford) have worked together to provide various opportunities for people with learning disabilities to get involved in community archaeology (Figure 11.1).

Dig Greater Manchester (DGM) is a project that creates opportunities for local communities in Greater Manchester to get involved in their own history and heritage. Over a four-year period, the University of Salford and the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities are offering the chance for

Fig 11.1: A range of adult volunteers excavating at the Dig Greater Manchester site of Radcliffe Tower in 2012.
Chapter 11: Living in the Past: The Meaning of Community Archaeology to Participants with Learning Disabilities

DGM. expressed views of the participants involved in occupational therapy staff. Here we focus on the professional observations of the archaeologists and describe some of the practicalities involved and for themselves, the dig team and the wider public.

Processes and finds to create a visual interpretation artist-led art and skills project to view the dig site, its dig. Secondly, small group visits from members of an the tasks necessary to run a community archaeology alongside trained archaeologists and volunteers on individuals to develop access-to-work skills, working with trained archaeologists and volunteers on tasks necessary to run a community archaeology dig. Secondly, small group visits from members of an artist-led art and skills project to view the dig site, its processes and finds to create a visual interpretation for themselves, the dig team and the wider public.

Elsewhere in this volume, Grimsditch and Hawes describe some of the practicalities involved and professional observations of the archaeologists and occupational therapy staff. Here we focus on the expressed views of the participants involved in DGM.

The Site Volunteers

Here, we capture the perspectives of Barry and Roy, who both have learning disabilities, to understand how they feel community archaeology has benefited them and whether they feel that Dig Greater Manchester is a project which benefits people with learning disabilities.

Barry and Roy have attended four of the archaeological digs so far. They are also involved in other activity groups designed for people with learning disabilities. These groups, by their very nature, are disability centred. The consequence of this is that Barry and Roy have few opportunities to meet people without learning disabilities and the groups they attend are often pitched at a level suitable for the most disabled.

This barrier to community participation is widely recognised, with many accounts of the difficulties faced by people with learning disabilities participating in more ordinary community life. These can range from unwelcoming, hostile or unhelpful attitudes to a lack of accessible information or difficulties in accessing transport or other local facilities. Barry feels that people often see his disability first: “I can work on my own more here [at DGM], they see me for who I am, they go past the disability - it’s good.” Barry reflects on other groups he is involved in, saying: “People normally have a go at me and say I’m not doing enough, but they don’t at the dig. I get away from it and can be my own self [sic] for who I am.”

On further probing on why Barry prefers archaeology to his other groups he said: “I find it easier, we work closer together so I know what I am doing.” Roy agrees: “You meet nice people [at DGM], if you start stuttering they understand you have speech problems, they, like Brian understand. We don’t get shown up or talked about behind our backs.”

Barry and Roy have been supported by the MLDP Occupational Therapy Team. A central tenet of occupational therapy is to promote a balanced and satisfactory lifestyle. View the role of occupational therapy as essential to “make it easier for us, to help us find things, so we know what to do. Danny and Doug [occupational therapists] help make it easier for us to be more confident.” On how occupational therapists help break down the activity, Barry says: “They give us a better understanding on how to do stuff, because of health and safety, we don’t fall in, we don’t stand on the site, they have shown us how to protect the cobbles.” Roy added: “They work hard, they help supervise; Doug tells us not to walk on bits that have been scraped and be careful for health and safety.”

Barry and Roy have been involved in different aspects of archaeology. Barry has developed a clear passion for finding items and trying to work out what they were used for: “I really enjoy it – we dig a small patch for the kids, we get the layer off and we made a perfect discovery of finding cobbles…Brian is a nice guy he helps by, if I find something he comes over and tells me what it is I have found. I speak to Vicky [archaeologist] – she knows what’s what. I get her attention and say I found something with a logo on it, she tells Brian to come over and he tells me what it is”. He was very enthusiastic about his recent find, “a little broken saucer with the letters AMS and Made in England – Vicky says it may have been ADAMS or WILLIAMS” Barry continues, “I told Brian, the boss and he was dead chuffed.”

Barry and Roy have been involved in excavation, including removing topsoil, using trowels and small tools. It involves physical labour in a demanding environment, the ability to work in difficult conditions and real endurance to complete the tasks. Barry observed, “It’s a bit slippery and muddy at times but
now I have my steelies [steel toe capped boots] it's better,
– Danny helps me, I grab his arm.” Roy also sees the
benefit of the exercise, saying: “It’s exercise, hard
grafting, wheelbarrowing and shovelling.”

The wide array of different activities involved in
archaeology allows occupational therapists to grade
the work and adapt the tasks to allow accessibility to
make the site more inclusive. Roy explained how he
was shown to “Use the scraper [trowel] to make squares
around the bricks and used brushes to move soil…it looks a
lot tidier – it makes you feel good.” Barry feels he has
developed a role too, saying “I am in charge of tightening
bolts [whilst erecting fencing] so they don’t move and
people don’t walk on the stuff we discover.”

The archaeology revealed by the excavation ranges
from brick and stone walls and floors to
archaeological features such as ditches and pits.
During excavations, pieces of material culture
(broken pottery and other everyday materials) were
discovered. Barry says, “I see it as you get to discover
things first; it’s good to see how you make a difference.” Roy
reflected on how it makes him feel good “when you
find things you think you might have something that’s worth
money or the public would like to see.”

Both Barry and Roy have enjoyed the discovery
and problem-solving aspects of archaeology. Roy
likes “trying to work out how it was in the olden days and
how people used to live.” Barry explained further on
finding a part of a plate: “I think it was posh people
because it was like my mum’s china-ware she uses at
Christmas – next time I am going to ask Mam if she has a
similar plate to the one I found – if she has I can show Brian
what it would have looked like if it was all together.”

On commenting on an excavation, Barry stated: “I
felt it had a shower drain, we either thought it was either a
kitchen or shower room.” The archaeologists involved
were keen to help Barry and Roy look for clues to
how things may have been used. Barry reflects “I have
learnt a lot about how people used to live; it was a bit like
Downton Abbey.”

Both Roy and Barry feel they have improved in the
skills involved in archaeology and have a better
understanding of the process. The sense of
achievement is captured by both. Barry is particularly
proud of how his skills have improved: “I feel I have
the knack of how to find items, I clean them with my fingers to
see what they are…it’s like being on Time Team.”

Perhaps the most striking observation made by
both Barry and Roy is how they feel treated with
respect and dignity at DGM and how attending the
digs helps with other aspects of their lives. Barry
says, “We [Roy and I] always talk about it when we are not
there because we want to do more because it’s good fun to hunt
for stuff. In other groups people don’t have time for me, but
Chapter 11: Living in the Past: The Meaning of Community Archaeology to Participants with Learning Disabilities

they do there.” Roy also remarked, “When I am at the dig I forget about other problems I have got, I take my coat off and I am ready to go.”

Another point made by Barry is how his dad is proud of him and wishes he could be there too. His dad said “Good on you son, you have a knack for it.” This is in contrast to many experiences of family members of adults with learning disabilities, who feel that services provide very few opportunities and have concerns about the quality of life of their adult-child.5

The archaeological digs have given Roy and Barry a unique opportunity to be involved in their own community with people that share their passion for archaeology. The skills learnt, sense of community, friendships formed and achievements made have provided positive life experiences for both men. This has also been without further costs to a continually scrutinised public purse.6 Both men are keen to be even more involved in the future. Barry wants to develop his role: “I would like to do more, clean the stuff when they find it.” Roy wants to go to the next dig and volunteer to help prepare the site the week before the dig officially starts.

As occupational therapists we have continually assessed to see whether community archaeology is suitable for people with learning disabilities as an opportunity to develop skills, get involved in the community and allow people to be engaged in meaningful and purposeful activity. Roy views this from another angle: “I go to a lot of groups for people with learning disabilities – but archaeology isn’t just for people with difficulties, it’s for anybody interested in the olden days and you never know what you may find.”

‘Art to Life’ Members

‘Art to Life’ has been running art and life skills groups (under different names) since 1993, led by an artist and occupational therapy technicians from the Community Learning Disability Teams in MLDP. Adults living in Manchester can be referred into the group, where the Model of Human Occupation Screening Tool (MOHOST) assessments are made and individual therapeutic goals set working across the six MOHOST domains of:

- motivation for occupation, patterns of occupation;
- communication and interaction skills;
- process skills, motor skills and environment.7

The creative projects are then planned with these goals in mind.

Members are encouraged to develop skills through both the creative and the social aspects of the group. For example, increased motivation through exploration and competence in art media is seen across all types of art projects. Regular attendance and routines, including tasks such as taking photos and making drinks for the group, develop meaningful patterns of occupation. Social and communication skills are improved through greeting, sharing materials, and collaborative tasks or creative activities such as music making. Functional motor and process skills are developed in all projects through activities such as painting, drawing and weaving, making tea or using a camera. The group also offers opportunities to try out and explore wider environments and the senses. Projects have taken place in parks, churches, galleries, on a canal boat and at allotments.

“We believe that active participation and engagement in the arts can lead to improvements in health and wellbeing for everyone. In addition, evidence shows that participation in the arts can provide a non-threatening and alternative way to engage in a healthier lifestyle.”

The visits we have made to the archeological digs organised by Brian Grimsditch and his team have offered art group members rare opportunities. We have been afforded time and space to explore the site out of normal ‘open day’ times. This has allowed us to bring members who may otherwise be put off by crowds and to work and explore the sites at our own pace. As with Roy and Barry, the inherent interest

Fig 11.3: Finds recording by an adult volunteer at the Dig Greater Manchester Chadderton Hall dig, 2012.
and the sense of actively uncovering history during archaeological digs have proved to be a great motivator: members who are often resistant to change have been quick to embrace the visits, moving about the unfamiliar sites quite comfortably. “There were two secret rooms we could see into them through small holes. It was dark inside but we could see across to where there was a door. We don’t know where it led.” Those with poor mobility have been spurred on to move around sites, over uneven ground and some steep paths to explore more thoroughly. In this way the visits have provided us with opportunities to develop motor skills, strength, endurance, posture and mobility in a supportive but challenging environment.

The site director or foreperson introduces us to each dig in an engaging and accessible manner and we are welcomed warmly by the team who will stop work to answer questions and explain what they are doing. Reflecting the experiences of Roy and Barry, the relationships developing between members and dig regulars are also proving a source of pride and motivation. During the most recent visits the art group members have been allowed to handle finds, to feel textures and help to make personal associations (this is especially useful to enable members with more profound sensory needs to access the meaning of the dig and the material culture unearthed). Confidences are growing and so too are the questions and ability to speculate. Members’ curiosity has been piqued. Subjects that have been explained and discussed prompted by members’ questions are: site and find interpretations, archaeological themes (for instance the evolution of container styles as seen in 20th-century milk bottles and the production of marbles), how geophysical equipment is used.

Significantly, as art students, we have had the opportunity to witness drawing employed in a proper working environment. At the digs, drawing is used to document, to note-take and to problem-solve. As the project develops it is hoped that this will help to broaden the members’ understanding of the practice of drawing, its practical applications and its worth. In this way members of the art group can identify with the archaeologists - “what are you drawing? I draw too” - and perhaps it goes some way to justify the drawing that they do themselves. During our visits we have made drawings of parts of the sites. We have found it a challenge to draw the site as there is always so much to see, we have to look at it really carefully. These drawings help us to understand what is happening and as we draw we reflect on the building that might have been and the lives that may have been lived there. The digs give people an opportunity to look outside their world and see the similarities and differences of other lives in other times. The opportunity to exercise imagination and empathy is also useful in developing social skills and has led to self-initiated conversations between participants. “[We got to see] where the servants lived, where they did the cleaning – imagine what it was like with all those servants there?” For some, the unfamiliar concept of an archaeological dig is something to work at understanding: “What are they building? It looks like a building site and they look like they’re building.” As with the 1:1 work with Barry and Roy, we aim to increase the ability of art group members to explore dig sites, search, record and interpret data for themselves, communicating their finds to others through the presentation of their artwork.

To be invited into the often unseen world of the archaeologist is seen as an honour by the art group members and staff. “It's amazing...to think that Queen Victoria came here.” “That man [Brian] was very kind.” It also gives us the opportunity to develop skills we work on at the art group in another, sometimes challenging environment. Adults with learning disabilities often have little chance to exercise choice in their lives and it is regularly assumed by others that ‘you wouldn’t want to be outside in a muddy field getting cold’ (support worker). Given the choice, on a cold, wet and windy afternoon the members who have been offered the opportunity are still opting to visit the dig.

Looking Forward

“I think the secret is to not look at arts as something delivered by an artist or by an arts organisation. It happens best when it comes out of a dialogue between different sectors, and we need this hybrid way of working to develop. I think that the crucial connections are between the art, health, education and local government sectors, and it is entirely through the partnerships of those sectors that we are going to get a form of practice articulated that is supportive of this work, helping it develop and also identifying what the best venues and situations are for the public as a whole to engage with the arts.”

Mike White talking about partnership working being the way to develop arts in healthcare seems just as relevant to arts and health in archaeology. Combining the professional skills of both the archaeology team at the University of Salford and the Occupational Therapy Team at MLDP has ensured a rigorous and meaningful approach to the project. The dig team has been very open to adapting their routines and working spaces to accommodate both occupational therapy approaches, and each project has undoubtedly given DGM and the Occupational Therapy Team the opportunity to reflect upon best practice and development potential within this fruitful working partnership.
"As is often the case, practical discussion and early upfront agreement on various issues have been central to successful partnership working. Thus, by working together to identify people’s realistic support needs and to ensure co-operation between MLDP and DGM staff in identifying potential barriers to participation and addressing them, realistic likelihood of including people was greatly increased."

Conclusion

The project so far has resulted in great personal benefits to the individuals as well as contributing to the success of the community archaeological digs. It has given people with learning disabilities the opportunity to be included, valued and gain satisfaction through occupation. The experiences discussed here highlight why community archaeology is both fascinating and inclusive. Dig Greater Manchester gives opportunities for anyone interested to delve into the past and discover how archaeology can be so rewarding. With credit to Brian Grimsditch and his team, this has proved to be an ideal opportunity that focuses on ability and enthusiasm. It is clear that not only did Roy, Barry and the Art to Life members gain so much from this opportunity, but also Brian’s team and the wider community have benefited from their involvement and will continue to do so.

From the personal experiences shared within this chapter, community archaeology can be promoted as a model of inclusivity. However, in doing so this highlights how there are still barriers to community participation for people with learning disabilities. Important lessons can be learnt from both archaeologists and volunteers on how to create an inclusive environment in which participants with learning disabilities feel both respected and valued. Perhaps the greater challenge now is how the experiences at DGM can be replicated to enable participation in everyday community life.

Notes

3) Foundation for People with Learning Disabilities 2012.
4) Creek 2003.
10) Grimsditch and Hawes, Chapter 21, this volume.
Introduction by Nick Merriman

In this section we can clearly see the outcomes of a shift over the last twenty years or so from a top-down, state-led model of archaeology animated by a predominantly conservation-focused practice in which the public were seen as a threat to be managed, to one based much more on partnership, co-ownership and involvement with the public. This in turn is a manifestation of a shift in the understanding of archaeology as a future-focused, objective and scientific activity, where the views and interests of the public were of little import, to one which sees archaeology as a process which shapes different pasts for present needs, reflecting the times and circumstances in which it takes place. Whilst not abandoning notions of progress of enquiry and the development of rational knowledge, such an approach to archaeology sees it as much in the service of present-day society as oriented towards notions of disinterested knowledge.

We see this shift expressed particularly well in some of the contributions. Stewart Ainsworth shows how English Heritage, as the body responsible to the government for the historic environment, has now begun to write explicit objectives around public training and involvement into its archaeological survey work. An example of this is the Rock Art Pilot Project, which trains local people to record sites using a standardised method, ensuring far wider coverage over a longer period than a conventional project could achieve. Peter Liddle’s review of thirty years of community archaeology in Leicestershire is an example of probably the most sustained and comprehensive scheme of this nature in the UK. As with Ainsworth’s paper, the key feature in Leicestershire has been the recruitment of local people to be the stewards of local heritage, through historic investigation, fieldwalking and excavation, which has added hugely to knowledge of the regional historic resource, and resulted in long-term support through the formation of local societies, even if, as he concludes towards the end, changes in politics and funding mean that they are ‘over-reliant on past capital’.

One of the major features of this shift in our understanding of the purpose of archaeology is that, as Ainsworth notes, “our objective is not just discovery of the past but is also a journey of self-discovery for all those involved.” This means that it becomes possible to undertake archaeological work not only (even not primarily) for archaeological ends, but also (or even principally) for means of self-discovery, education, community development, or (dare I say it) pleasure. Whilst, as Clare Pye says in her piece on Dig Manchester, it is essential that all community archaeology is ‘genuine archaeology’ and not a second-best exercise compared with ‘the real thing’, it is nevertheless appropriate now to undertake work for reasons which are not solely dictated by the scientific objectives of top-down state-led archaeology.

The two articles covering the various Dig Manchester projects are excellent examples of this approach. Councillor Paul Murphy, a passionate supporter of the social benefits of archaeology, shows clearly how his suggestion of an excavation in his ward of Moston was made because he believed that local young people needed something constructive to do in the summer, to try to avoid the usual August ‘spike’ of petty crime caused by too little to do. He writes movingly of how young people who would be written off as disaffected ‘hoodies’ are in fact hugely familiar with, and interested in, their local place and responded enthusiastically to the opportunity of involvement in the excavation of Moston Old Hall, and brought in friends and relatives in huge numbers. The crime figures were indeed lower than would normally be expected, a drop attributed directly to the excavation. Murphy concludes that, despite his years as a local politician, it was not until he experienced the Moston dig and its impact that he truly understood what was meant by community cohesion and citizenship.
Both Murphy and Clare Pye, the educational archaeologist attached to Dig Manchester, believe that the key to the effectiveness of community archaeology may be in doing something ‘different’, and show how, through its concreteness, archaeology can offer something to all, particularly to those who favour the more kinaesthetic approaches to learning which are less well served by more conventional schooling. Pye provides an example of how Dig Manchester has gone beyond the usual remit of community archaeology (with the support of Heritage Lottery funding) through the employment of a dedicated educator, who worked on preparatory classroom sessions with schools, facilitated focused site visits, and undertook post-visit follow-up, all of which received very favourable feedback from teachers.

There seems little doubt that the influence of a passionate and dedicated teacher will have a lasting influence on those pupils, and that their involvement in archaeology will have played a not insignificant role in their personal journeys of discovery. It is sobering, though, to realise that despite the appeal of archaeology to a wide variety of learning styles, and its interdisciplinary and integrated nature, it takes a supreme effort from determined teachers to be able to insert it into the curriculum in the face of little or no official support. Here, the role of the CBA as effectively the only independent voice championing archaeology in education needs to be applauded and supported.

The challenges of community archaeology, as demonstrated in this set of contributions, remain the securing of continuity in a project-focused climate, and the recruitment of new enthusiasts as the initial constituency ages or moves on. The opportunities, however, far outweigh the challenges, because they relate to support for key aspects of a healthy society, which include respect for and valuation of the past, the development of a sense of local pride and identity, the appreciation of different styles of learning, and support for self-realisation.
Introduction

I have a personal passion for archaeology as it provides me with both academic stimulation and a sense of personal history. I am a ward councillor in Moston and in discussion with my colleagues about how to tackle a crime and disorder spike which normally happens in August during the school holidays, I suggested that a community archaeological dig might help to divert bored and frustrated children into a positive activity. Little did I know it would become much more than this.

The choice of the Moston Hall site arose from a book entitled ‘The Moston Story’ by Father Brian Seale, Parish Priest of St John Vianney. His conviction that the hall went back to at least the very early 13th century inspired me to the concept of a community archaeological excavation, whereby the current residents of Moston investigate the history and lives of their ancestors. The fact that the hall site lay in council-owned parkland, being part of Broadhurst Park, and that many people remembered its demolition in 1961 helped the cause.

My submission to excavate Moston Hall (Figure 12.1) made to my ward colleagues, Councillors Risby

Fig 12.1: The ‘I Dig Moston’ advertising banner.
and Cooper, and members of North Manchester Regeneration Team, was met initially with some scepticism and many challenges. How much would it cost? Would it fail? Who would participate? Would the community care? Eventually, all of them became as enthusiastic as myself as the project unfurled. We started with no money but I have always held the view that no money is no match for a good idea. If you believe, you can do.\(^2\)

A small number of people took a risk on me, and that was all it needed to start to build momentum. These included Robina McNeil and Norman Redhead at the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit, who supported the excavation idea and explained the archaeological processes required to do justice to the site. Dave Power, Simon Askew and their colleagues at the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit delivered the archaeology and training and never faltered in their enthusiasm, professionalism and patience.

Their faith in both the idea and me allowed me to build up a head of steam around delivering a successful project. It meant that I could go to local companies and get free equipment; I obtained a digger from Pat McGuinness and shovels from our Direct Works department. Once I could demonstrate growing support, other people and funding streams came forward. I speculated to accumulate and the community dig demonstrated that the financial challenges were no match for a good idea. MANCAT, a local academic institution, came on board to underwrite the project. I took on the challenges and the barriers but the idea of delivering a local dig, in an attempt to redirect activity and promote learning, remained fundamental.

The Community Response

Once the site had been established, i.e. first trenches cut and the area perimeters secured by fencing lent to us by Jones Homes, a housing development company working close by, I decided to visit the site on my way home from work. As I walked down Old Hall Road I saw a group of young men some eight in number who some may describe as ‘hoodies’ gathered at the fence perimeter. I approached the young men and asked them if they were aware what was going on. “Are they going to build new homes?” was the first question, understandable, in view of the logos on display. I told them no and began to explain that our community was to undertake an archaeological dig in an attempt to establish whether the Hall, shown on early maps, was in fact built...
Community Cohesion

As a politician, I frequently use phrases such as ‘community cohesion’ without comprehending truly their full meaning. When our first Open Weekend took place, we conservatively estimate 1000 people visited the site. We were blessed with warm sunny weather and a constant flow of people meant that the guided tours were heavily oversubscribed as Cookie, Simon, Steve and others led wave after wave of people of all ages on a tour of their past. The “Ohhs” and gasps of surprise as Simon showed the audience a fingerprint of a child in a handmade brick were exhilarating. But perhaps my most contented moment was when at a Community conference Chief Superintendent Simon Garvey, the then North GMP Divisional Commander, explained to an audience of civil servants and senior politicians how the infamous August spike (nuisance calls and anti-social behaviour) had been significantly reduced and he could only conclude “that most of the Moston youngsters had been at the Dig and when they returned home they were too exhausted after the day’s activity to go back out and play.”

Another interesting point is that we suffered no vandalism in an inner city area which had a significant amount generally. I am certain that this is because of a growing sense of local identity. As one person wrote on our community comments board in answer to the question “What does this site and Dig mean to you?” - “ours”. I know exactly what they mean. Community cohesion? Now I understand it (Figure 12.3).

Personal Thoughts on the Experience of Community Archaeology

I was later given to examine a phenomenon that tested me both philosophically and intellectually. I began to examine what the term ‘citizenship’ actually meant. I knew roughly that it meant that all should be engaged, be united, working together, but it was always difficult to articulate in a community whose numbers contained many for whom the relevance of education and culture was almost meaningless. Our take-up rates for further education and higher education in some parts of North Manchester are still appalling. Yet here, given an initiative which has its very base in academic excellence, the humanities still appalling. Yet here, given an initiative which has its very base in academic excellence, the humanities was meaningful. Our now am acutely aware that every human being has a sense of place, history and heredity and that, for citizenship to be meaningful, all should find ways of engaging constructively with others. I also know that through this exercise and the courage of the

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early participation of the archaeology units at the University of Manchester, MANCAT and Manchester City Council, a pathway has been established that brings together mums and dads, grandmas and grandads, aunts and uncles in a united form. This dynamic challenges the now received wisdom that the extended family is a thing of yesteryear. To know and accept what I have just outlined is to know we have perhaps identified the very cornerstone that builds a true sense of citizenship. We become, through common interest, one family.

I knew in the very early days of the project that something different was occurring. It was inspirational to see families working together; parents taking time off work to spend time with their children and lose themselves in the past and their heritage. I truly believe that archaeology can provide a genuine building block for community cohesion, from a child’s first touch of trowel to soil, which can then spark a parent’s desire to do something different. And this is a key message. Many of those children were doing something different, which their parents had never done, whether through lack of opportunity or inspiration. Well I now challenge all of you to do something different because if you do what you’ve always done you’ll get what you’ve always had. Let me ask all of you these questions. How many historians, social scientists and other academics have you worked with to truly engage excluded communities? How many of you have meaningfully discussed the ‘inclusiveness’ agenda?

If you simply accept that culture and academia aren’t a feature in the lives of disengaged communities then nothing will change. I ask you – why simply focus on the best grades of middle-class children when you could miss out on giving an access to someone whose passion for archaeology and other humanities studies is worth far more both to themselves and their community? Please take a risk. Use the universities during holidays and weekends. Open your doors and your minds to those less fortunate and gifted.

The Moston Hall dig in 2003 reversed the crime trends and brought extended families and communities together. Its greatest challenge remains inclusiveness. I will at this point pay tribute to an individual who always gave me support and believed in what I wanted to achieve when many were cynical and thought things too hard to do. That person is the late Robina McNeil, Director of the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit. Robina and I wrote the first draft of the Dig Manchester HLF bid.

I personally believe that archaeology offers a sense
of place and belonging to people through a personal connection with history. This personal connection with history can lead to community bonding and ultimately helps to build a pathway to academia, and as the community walk towards you then you need to walk towards them. I want to challenge you to be courageous and change your access pathways to education. Many of these communities may be labelled as hard to reach but they are not, they may be difficult to engage and certainly hard to teach, but the potential rewards cannot be ignored. They may be hard to reach and hard to teach but they are reachable and teachable.

The dig impacted many areas of government policy, such as crime and disorder by reversing crime trends, sustainable communities by building cohesion within the community around shared activities, and capacity building as the academic institutions aligned courses to the digs and reached out to community groups. The courses may have been adapted to allow for wider access but if one person entered further education and changed the view of themselves and their relationship with education, it was worth it. The dig created a thirst for knowledge and demonstrated that archaeology can provide the link between the active and the academic, the practical and the theoretical.

MADASH

Once the euphoria of the dig subsided, those who had embraced and become evangelical about the concept of community archaeology felt a void had appeared in their lives. It quickly became clear that there was a desire to talk about archaeology, to examine in more depth the academic perspective of the ‘art’.

As a result of this thirst for knowledge, the people who had been contributors to the dig resolved to form a society. MADASH (Moston and District Archaeology and Social History group) was born. A constitution was adopted and the society has moved on significantly since its formation in 2004/5. In addition to four general meetings a year to which speakers are invited, an executive committee meets regularly to examine ideas as to how we are able to maintain interest and develop our skills as a society. Perhaps our best achievement thus far is the excavation of Easton Grange in Boggart Hole Clough in the north-east of Manchester. The excavation was undertaken in its entirety by MADASH members under the watchful eye of community archaeologist John Roberts. The Grange, or perhaps one of its outbuildings, threw up many questions but most of all it made MADASH members realise how much more needed to be understood about the practice and theory of archaeology. This has now led to a series of classes, mainly held at weekends at the University of Manchester, which has demonstrably enhanced our skills. We are indebted to the members of staff at the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit for their dedication and patience (Figure 12.4).

The establishment of MADASH has for me been one of the most satisfying aspects of the Moston dig. The initial interest was significant, but after the first two years it settled down and now has a core membership of around 40. We learnt to ride the waves of participation as interest waxed and waned. We have learned that there are many levels of interest and participation and we are particularly grateful to long-established and highly respected organisations such as STAG (South Trafford Archaeological Group) whose support and advice has inspired many of our members.

Building a Head of Steam

So, to conclude, the seed of an idea germinated into a successful community dig at Moston Hall in July and August 2003 because people initially took a risk and a momentum grew which overcame any barriers and challenges in its way. The head of steam is still building - we have had community archaeology projects each year since 2003 and have secured further funding. I am now liaising with partners at a county-wide level to try to get community digs in as many areas of Greater Manchester as possible. I worked to bring together eleven local authority leaders to invest in community archaeology throughout Greater Manchester and beyond, using Dig Manchester as an exemplar of what can be achieved if you are prepared to be bold. Dig Greater Manchester was the result.

I would like to lay down a gauntlet to academics to take risks in order to do things differently and to ultimately have faith in people, particularly people...
Chapter 12: Building a Head of Steam: Digging Moston

from working class and deprived communities. I’ve told you what community archaeology can do for communities, but what can it do for academics and institutions? I want to challenge academics to get involved and take a risk. When I first suggested a community dig in Moston, I was often told that people wouldn’t be interested. This was wrong, but if we had stopped there how would we have known? Find champions for archaeology in communities and institutions and challenge accepted thinking and assumptions. There is an untapped reservoir of support for archaeology out there. Archaeology can inspire that sense of belonging and connection to history by getting your hands dirty and feeling the past fall through your fingers. This can then change aspirations and behaviour and make education relevant and meaningful to excluded communities.

I want the head of steam which is community archaeology to build even further, and I need your help. Please walk towards us and find a new academic pride in reaching out to communities with archaeology as a means to engender a sense of belonging and an opportunity to access education. Take the risk.

Notes

1) Scale 1983.
2) Garratt 2009, 4
3) Garratt 2009, 6-8.
4) Briggs 2006.
5) Russell & Williams 2008.
Chapter 13

Anyone Can Do It! Landscape Investigation in the North of England

Stewart Ainsworth

Introduction

Much of the nation’s heritage still survives above ground in the form of standing buildings, ruins, or humps, bumps and hollows on the surface (termed ‘earthworks’). Understanding the form, location and layout of earthworks in relation to other elements of both the built and natural landscape can unlock rich archaeological landscapes and lead to a much better understanding of the historic environment. Many earthwork sites in England are well known, such as the well-preserved medieval village of Wharram Percy in Yorkshire and the hillfort at Maiden Castle in Dorset. However, many other individual sites, and even extensive landscapes still visible as earthworks, remain either unrecognised, poorly understood or unrecorded.

Analysis of such evidence of past activity still to be seen above ground is known as ‘landscape investigation’. Results of landscape investigation make a major contribution to the understanding, management and conservation of the historic environment. The English Heritage Research Department contributes to this analysis of the historic environment through its team of landscape investigators (the Archaeological Survey and Investigation team). This team undertakes projects throughout England, with staff based in York, Cambridge, Exeter and Swindon, with the team in York concentrating on the North. The team is composed of ‘expert generalists’ who possess extensive knowledge of monuments and landscapes of all periods, as well as the ability to recognise and assess the implications of change through time on the evolution of the English landscape as it can be seen today. As well as interpreting sites and landscapes, the team also sets standards for others engaged in similar research. The team works closely with English Heritage’s other specialist teams, as well as many partners outside English Heritage, ranging in scale from organisations such as local authorities, National Parks, the National Trust, the Ministry of Defence, and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, to local amateur groups and individuals.

Landscape Detection and Community Archaeology

Undertaking landscape investigation (unlike excavation) does not destroy what we are trying to understand. It can be applied to large or small areas; it is fast and efficient. It is therefore of great value in making rapid walk-round assessments of sites, whether newly discovered or known about for centuries. More detailed ‘field survey’ - the careful analysis and mapping of surface remains - is at its best when combined with the study of historic maps, documents, aerial photographs and many other sources of evidence, including any previous archaeological research. Carried out in this way, detailed investigations can transform the understanding of historic sites, monuments and landscapes. The team employ a range of survey methodologies to record and present our findings rapidly and efficiently, including the use of GPS (Global Positioning System) satellite mapping equipment.

But landscape investigation is about much more than using the latest technology and equipment: experience and analytical expertise are the keys to interpreting what we identify and providing new understanding. So much of what we do can be achieved by anybody with good powers of observation and an inquisitive mind. Also, employing simple ‘low tech’ approaches and methods can often be more appropriate than using the latest technology for some sites and landscapes. To increase the ability of individuals and groups to undertake such work themselves without being reliant on ‘high tech’ equipment or input of resources from professional bodies, the English Heritage Archaeological Survey and Investigation team from York has actively
Chapter 13: Anyone Can Do It! Landscape Investigation in the North of England

engaged non-professionals in its work around the North of England. Such activities are replicated by the other teams elsewhere in the country. As well as providing training days for groups on local interest sites, the team have encouraged non-professionals to work alongside them on English Heritage investigation projects so that a wide range of skills can be imparted. As well as practical involvement, staff routinely give talks to local interest groups and societies about the investigations and surveys in their area, and guided tours of sites are very popular. The value of such activities in raising the awareness of the general public to the historic environment is enormous. Often for the first time, individuals and communities learn that they have important archaeological sites on their own doorstep which they can discover, look at, interpret and enjoy instead of having to load up the car and drive miles on a hot day to go to a site flying an English Heritage flag.

Because earthworks can be seen, and tape measures, drawing boards, pencils, notebooks and cameras can be easily acquired, the discovery and recording of earthwork sites and landscapes is something that anyone can be involved in. If a measure of ‘expert’ guidance is thrown into the equation in the form of training from the professionals in this field, experience has shown that individuals, local interest and community groups can become highly skilled and able to develop well-constructed landscape projects. More importantly, once observation and simple recording skills have been acquired, experience again has shown that landscape investigation is something that can then be easily undertaken on a local basis by these groups as and when time permits, namely whenever they can and whenever they fancy it. Instead of the perception of ‘archaeology’ as being confined by the restrictive time and resource logistics of excavation, access to complex and expensive ‘high tech’ technical equipment, or lack of detailed specialist knowledge, simply walking out of the door can become an archaeological journey of discovery.

The identification of some earthworks on a walk through a wood, field or village or finding some strange carvings on a rock has much more value if the discovery or archaeological significance can be deduced from work that individuals and local groups have undertaken themselves. Even analysis of village and town plans can be enlightening for many people who have never been shown how to decode the wealth of information about the historical development of a place contained on historic maps. Equally important is that such activity can be undertaken on dark winter nights by a warm fire or in a schoolroom. Discoveries from these ‘non-invasive’ processes can generate much local interest for schools and communities and often lead to larger studies, such as that of a common or parish. The more people discover their landscape heritage for themselves, the more they will care about the environment within which it resides and help sustain it for the future. Facilitating others to understand landscapes on their own doorstep as part of our normal work programme remains as one of our firm objectives when undertaking survey throughout the North.

English Heritage and Community Archaeology

For a number of years, the English Heritage team based in York has been engaged in a wide range of landscape projects in the North of England where training, guidance and mentoring of non-professionals has been included as an objective. It is not intended to list here every site where training and guidance have been provided; however, a few recent examples will serve to illustrate the range of contributions the team has made in facilitating the public and partner organisations to participate in the process of landscape investigation. In 2006, investigations were completed at two sites within the Northumberland Coast AONB, at Dunstanburgh Castle1 (Figure 13.1) and a World War Two radar station at Craster. The two sites, along a two-kilometre stretch of coastline, are both managed by the National Trust, and the former is managed as a Guardianship site by English Heritage. Both surveys revealed significant new insights into the monuments through the surrounding earthwork remains. At Dunstanburgh, although the castle is a massive landscape feature and attracts many visitors (Figure 13.2), the identification of artificial medieval lakes and a medieval quay threw new light on the extent and pretensions of a designed landscape of the 14th century, as well as the possible remains of an earlier hillfort.2

At Craster two rather insignificant-looking concrete buildings had received little previous attention, although investigation of the earthworks and context revealed a large Chain Home Low radar station and Prisoner of War camp from World War Two. During the projects, National Trust volunteers and staff were actively given training in the survey and analysis process itself, and were also involved in tours to discuss and participate in the identification and management of certain areas which were of more archaeological interest than others. Guided tours were also undertaken for locals and English Heritage members, not only to talk about the results gained but also to actively encourage people to be part of the process. This included what could be deduced by looking at the earthworks, explaining how landscapes are analysed, and techniques of survey and recording. Whilst able to look at evidence
Fig 13.1: The historic landscape of Dunstanburgh Castle, Northumberland. Reproduced courtesy of English Heritage.
on the ground, explanations were given as to what sorts of evidence could be accessed and where. At all stages, the public were invited to contribute ideas and interpretations into the survey. As a result, much information came to light about the World War Two aspects of both sites, and helped explain earthworks which would otherwise have remained a mystery to the professional ‘landscape detectives’. As a result of their active participation, the landscape, history and management of this popular coastline has been significantly enhanced.

In contrast to the medieval and later landscapes of the Northumberland coast, the Rock Art Pilot Project was aimed at the landscape artefacts of a much earlier period. This project, launched in 2004, is a partnership between English Heritage and the County Councils for Northumberland and Durham. Its aim is to recruit and train volunteers who will then record all known prehistoric engravings in the landscapes of Northumberland and Durham using a standardised methodology. The information will be entered into a specially designed database and be made available via the internet and will provide a valuable resource for research, conservation and management. During the first year 80 volunteers were recruited and trained, many with little or no previous archaeological training. The volunteers, who are operating in small teams, are being encouraged to join amateur societies, so that their research takes place within a wider framework. They have been trained in a range of recording techniques, from field observation to simple survey and recording using plane tables. The series of training courses are themselves serving to broaden the interest of the volunteers in the historic environment. Groups often marginalised from fieldwork have also been included such as the visually impaired, who were able to contribute tactile understanding of the rock art shapes to the process. As well as simple recording techniques, volunteers have shown that they are capable of being trained to use complex equipment such as differential GPS (Figure 13.3) to survey the surrounding landscape and place rock-art panels in context, and use low-cost photogrammetry to record carvings in 3D.

Helping to increase the awareness and involvement of the local community in the care of their local heritage was at the heart of another project in 2006 at Cawood, near Selby in North Yorkshire. At Cawood are the remains of the former medieval rural palace of the Archbishops of York. All that now survives of the palace buildings is the great stone gatehouse. Surrounding the palace were magnificent medieval gardens, and these now survive as earthworks on an expanse of pasture in the heart of the village. English Heritage is supporting an initiative by the local community to play a more central role in looking after this important site. With a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the local community is implementing a programme of archaeological research and conservation measures designed to care better for the resources of the site, both historical
and archaeological. Measures will also be introduced to improve access to the site and explain it to both locals and visitors alike. During the course of a weekend, around 30 members of the local community turned out to be trained by the York team as archaeological ‘landscape detectives’, and investigated the earthworks and their relationship to the palace and its surroundings. The team also worked with them to further their understanding of the area as a green space within the context of the development of the village.

Conclusion

The above are but a small sample of the activities of the team in the North of England to help increase public participation in the process of understanding landscapes by working directly with the professional ‘landscape detectives’ from English Heritage. There has been much enthusiasm for this type of active involvement, and it is clear that a thirst for undertaking non-invasive research has been generated through the media, and particularly from Channel Four’s award-winning archaeology programme Time Team. This television programme was broadcast to an audience of around three million viewers on terrestrial television with constant repeats on satellite channels. Thus, a wide range of socio-economic groups are being exposed to the range of techniques that contribute to ‘archaeology’. As a result, communities are becoming more aware of looking at the landscape to help understand the origins and development of their own villages, towns and cities. Groups and individuals frequently ask to be guided on how they themselves can research their own areas without digging. The techniques used in investigation, such as observation, survey of earthworks and examination of aerial photographs, are now becoming more popular and better understood methodologies as a result of such exposure.

Feedback from working on projects such as those outlined above has shown us how much enthusiasm there is in communities to be involved in the real process of discovery and analysis, not just as passive recipients of outreach. Providing the training which allows people to investigate context first, using simple powers of observation and research which can be undertaken at their own pace, is a vital component in encouraging and helping them understand how a site or landscape has evolved into the form that can be seen today. In assessing whether our projects are suitable for volunteer involvement, we are conscious that there are differing levels of demand and capability – no one size fits all – and make concerted attempts to deliver training and involvement appropriate to those involved. In some cases, simple encouragement and the loan of some equipment may be the answer to active groups who are already embarking on their own; in other cases, inviting individuals to work alongside our staff can ensure that training can be passed on to others. We have to resist the temptation to be too ambitious in the level of training offered, particularly with regards to technology, despite the repeated requests from volunteers for ‘high tech’ approaches. By ensuring that volunteers receive good grounding in tried and tested ways, and practical demonstrations to show that ‘high tech’ is not always appropriate, survey and analysis can be resourced and sustained over the longer term at an individual and local group level. Additionally through the range of training we have applied, including ‘high tech’ alternatives, groups are likely to be better informed as to appropriate methodologies when bidding to funding agencies such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

The challenge for us all is to ensure we capitalise on the growth in interest in the historic environment and continue to include individuals, groups and communities in our projects, so that our objective is not just discovery of the past but also a journey of self-discovery for all those involved.

Notes

2) Goodall 2011.
Chapter 14

Keeping it Going: Education as an Agent for Continuity

Clare Pye

Introduction

This paper concentrates on active community archaeology and its relationship with education and learning, dealing with field archaeology in this country on a site local to the participants. It does not seek to address wider issues of archaeology within the education system. Consequently there will be no consideration of, for example, the role of museums in providing educational opportunities in non-British archaeology, such as Ancient Egypt and Greece.

Any successful application for public money to finance a dig, especially from the HLF, will now, amongst its other objectives, contain plans to provide education and/or training and to comprehend continuity/sustainability in community. Consideration will be given here as to how this can work and how the two objectives can be connected, with particular reference to the Dig Manchester project, especially the way this project dealt with these long-term issues, including the challenges involved and how the team is seeking to solve them.

There will also be a brief reference to an earlier project undertaken by the Manchester Museum, the Alderley Edge Landscape Project, where the museum worked with the National Trust, the people of Alderley and other partners. This was a ten-year research project that started in 1995 and although it officially finished in 2005 it has truly developed a life of its own.1 From this analysis it is possible to draw some general points that may affect practice in the future.

Education objectives on an archaeological excavation are often considered to have been met if there is a scheme for getting the children from the local schools onto the site, either for a site visit when they are shown round the trenches, or, if they are lucky, a spot of pot washing, or even to take part in the excavation in an area set aside for their use. One successful formula can involve a half- or whole-day visit when the children experience:

- a tour round the site and if possible the local area;
- a session digging;
- a session processing their finds.

This encapsulates the basics of the archaeological process:

- the site in its context;
- the excavation itself;
- post-excavation analysis.

It helps greatly if the children are doing genuine archaeology; proper training in the use of tools, a real trench, no salting of the area, no special consideration beyond the limitations of health and safety; real stuff that will truly contribute to the archaeological understanding of the site. The children’s efforts are thus fully integrated with everyone else’s and given a real value, especially when they are made aware of the genuine nature of their work. Such sessions are usually extremely successful, particularly with primary schools. Many children, especially those tending towards kinaesthetic learning patterns, benefit tremendously, and teachers are full of praise for the archaeologists and their efforts.

But does this ever become more than another worthwhile day out at the end of the summer term? The challenge is to turn what is a good event into an educational process that helps to embed the archaeological experience into the community’s understanding of its heritage, remembering always that children are part of the local community, not a discrete group on their own.

Archaeology and Primary Schools

Archaeology does not exist as a discrete subject within the schools’ National Curriculum; therefore it...
has to insert itself somewhere. The most obvious place, and one that teachers find easy to accept, is to place the investigation of a site within the local history strand of the Key Stage 2 Primary National Curriculum. It can also fit into the Primary Geography curriculum, which again involves a study of the local area. The children’s involvement in the dig provides a sure focus for their work, especially when the archaeologists provide the teachers with information and learning material to back up work in the classroom (Figure 14.1), material that teachers would otherwise have to spend valuable time researching for themselves. When this is combined, as it was in Dig Manchester, with preparatory lessons delivered before the day of the dig, and the offer of follow-up work afterwards, both sessions with the educational archaeologist with whom they are working when they come on the excavation, one is going a good way towards ensuring that the children fully understand what they are doing and their role within the total process. In the evaluation carried out by Dig Manchester, many teachers commented that the preparatory session in particular helped the children to make sense of the dig day.

When we first started Dig Manchester, we had planned that participating schools would come into the Manchester Museum for follow-up work. Relatively few schools took up this offer, their reluctance often related to the cost of transport to the Museum. Consequently we created ‘Dig Boxes’ that contained information about the site and artefacts, including some of the material the children had excavated. We thus returned these artefacts to the people who had found them. These boxes are a permanent resource for the schools that can be adapted in the future.

Archaeologists need to develop partnerships with the schools, treating these young volunteers equally with the adults, to truly value what the children are uncovering, and to tell the children this is so. We also need to listen to the teachers in the schools and make this process apparent as we adapt our work to suit their needs.

However, archaeology is not just history; it is one of the best ways to deliver cross-disciplinary thinking and working skills and to access different learning styles to suit different children’s needs. The little girl digging a 19th-century corn mill in Northenden who confided that they were ‘doing Victorians’ at the moment, up to now it had been all books and pictures, but this day was much better because she and her friend were finding real stuff, was one of the most rewarding evaluation comments from the dig in 2006, highlighting the girl’s own preferred learning style and the value of the day’s dig to inform work back in school. Similarly the sight of a small special needs boy precisely measuring his find elicited the comment from his teacher that this was the first time he had counted millimetres unaided.

So, education at primary level is not a problem, providing one has the right site. A group of partially trained ten-year-olds intent on ‘finding stuff’ are not the people to be let rip on a delicate Neolithic site full of negative archaeology and nice changes in soil colour and texture. Luckily in Britain there are plenty of sites with robust structures and clearly identifiable surfaces. There are other considerations, mostly to do with health and safety: children cannot go down too deep; their area has to be separate from the adult volunteers as all those in contact with the children need to be cleared by the Criminal Records Bureau; loos and lunches have to be sorted out; but these are all practicalities to be solved rather than insurmountable obstacles.

Archaeology and Secondary Schools

More problematical is the integration of archaeology within the crowded secondary curriculum, stuffed as it is with discrete subject areas all desperate for the time to deliver their own particular needs. Apart from those schools experimenting with the new History GCSE, such as OCR’s pilot course that includes an archaeology element, and the few schools and colleges who do Archaeology AS and A2 in Years 12 and 13, the most obvious way in is as part of the Citizenship syllabus, or as a contributor to enrichment programmes for the school’s Gifted and Talented pupils, or (at the other end of the educational spectrum) as a way of providing a new learning experience for students from special schools and the Pupil Referral Units. The changes in the National Curriculum in History and Geography in September 2008, with its greater emphasis on overarching themes to be explored, provided more opportunities to integrate archaeology into the
schemes of work, providing teachers realise the advantages of the approach. Experience on Dig Manchester has shown it is often more difficult to get secondary schools on board, although all those who have participated have found the experience valuable for their students and once they have been involved are enthusiastic to repeat it.

However, one has to remember that schools take up an archaeological programme not for its archaeological content, but for its perceived contribution to a greater educational objective. This may be to expand knowledge about the historical or geographical context of a particular area of the syllabus, especially when looking at local history or geography. However, more frequently it is because of archaeology’s contribution to the process of learning, either by accessing a number of educational skills, or by providing a different way of learning that may excite children who find it easier to use kinaesthetic styles of learning. The ability of archaeology to create emotion and empathy is also valued as a stimulus to learning. As Rob Isherwood has said (this volume), the community is rarely interested in archaeology per se but rather as a means to an end. Archaeologists need to remember to approach the whole topic of archaeology and schools from the schools’ rather than archaeology’s perspective and be aware of archaeology’s ability to serve wider educational objectives rather than concentrating on promoting the study of archaeology as a specific study area, valuable though it is.

There is no doubt that archaeology can contribute to the wider educational picture with its cross-curricular character and the way it accesses a wide range of skill sets, including: literacy in report writing, mathematics in measuring and surveying, science and technology in its analysis of finds, and observational drawing in the recording of finds and sites. Once children are excited by finding their own material or uncovering their own evidence, by taking ownership of the process, these skills become a means to the end of investigating their discoveries. These subject specific skills are combined with the use of many of the generic working and learning skills, especially those related to working as a team, making hypotheses, evidencing ideas and appraising conclusions. The consequent growth of self-confidence is one of the most important benefits for many individual pupils.

However, as we all know, education is not just for those within the traditional education system. It is life long. The elderly woman who said she was

Fig 14.2: Primary schoolchildren working on the Dig Manchester excavation at Northenden Mill, 2006.
grateful to Dig Manchester as she had always wanted to learn how to do archaeology, but had been told when she was a young girl that archaeology was not for the likes of her, so that her time as a volunteer had given her the chance at last to get to grips with it; the man who said that his experience as a volunteer had inspired him to investigate a distance learning degree in archaeology so that he could continue learning about it in his spare time are both evidences of the importance of the project in opening up personal opportunities for permanent change.

Here the MLA’s Inspiring Learning For All programme was a great help when understanding what we were trying to achieve. The generic learning outcomes identified were:

- increase in knowledge and understanding;
- increase in skills;
- change in attitudes or values;
- evidence of enjoyment, inspiration and creativity;
- evidence of activity, behaviour, progression.

Evaluation

Evaluation is always a tricky process, especially when looking at something as nebulous as permanently raising local people’s consciousness about their local heritage. Evaluation of the work in schools is slightly easier, if only because the teachers understand evaluation language and the need to do it since it is part of their work too. One advantage that a three-year project has is that it can demonstrate to the community that it is learning from them, that professionals will change their practice for the better thanks to what the community has told them. In other words, that we can provide evidence of a genuine partnership between archaeological professionals and the community. As far as schools were concerned, Dig Manchester was fortunate in that it received a wide and enthusiastic response to the work (Figure 14.2). Comments include:

“Very informative and opened the pupils’ eyes to a ‘new world’ of discovery, they never realised how much history was beneath their feet. Many pupils became really engaged in the topic who at times had been reluctant to join in “usual” school work. It enhanced our curriculum and both staff and pupils really enjoyed the experience.”

“Excellent! Has stimulated interest in archaeology.”

“Great experience for children to experience hands on and not just observe. Many children have tried a dig in their back gardens. Great to see this transferred over.”

“[Re Dig Boxes] Artefacts and pictures useful to compare having been on the dig. Teaching materials, useful to have structure and then vary this according to the ability of the children.”

One aspect that tended to continuity was the way children who had been on the dig brought their parents or other members of their families to the working weekends and the open weekends at the end of the dig. Seeing children instruct their parents in the basics of digging, “You hold the trowel like this…”, or parents telling us, “She came home and started digging up the back garden”, or “He’s started to listen to his gran about what the place was like when she was a girl” are all examples to show how the experience of coming on the site and actually getting one’s hands dirty on the dig can help to embed an ownership of the community’s local heritage.

However, to embed the archaeological enquiry process permanently in the community so that it fosters and inspires a sustained interest in local heritage demands a much longer commitment than is usual with the general run of projects funded for a limited period. The three years we had with Dig Manchester is probably the minimum necessary to make sure we have created something lasting that the community can call its own. One often needs time to build trusted relationships with key people in the community and for local people to develop the confidence to take on responsibility for their own heritage.

The ten years of the Alderley Edge Landscape Project (AELP) shows how rewarding a long-term relationship between a research institution, in this case the Manchester Museum, and a particular community can be. Starting in 1996 as a two-year Leverhulme funded research project into the landscape of Alderley Edge in partnership with the owner of the main area under investigation, the National Trust, and with the expectation that an exhibition at the Museum in the winter of 1998-9 would see the end of it, everyone was proved wrong. The project included archaeology, and indeed there were four separate digs under AELP’s aegis that actively recruited local volunteers and specialists from the Derbyshire Caving Club, digs that made some immensely important archaeological discoveries, especially relating to the early history of mining. But it was a landscape project, so it went further than the in-depth investigation of particular bits of ground. Landscape involves people and their interaction with the land they inhabit, so right from the start the Museum wanted to meet and interview as wide a cross section of the local community as we could about what their area meant for them. This oral archive has become one of the principal legacies of the project

AELP evolved into AELPHER, developing a website from 2000–3, making this research available
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worldwide, with a section dedicated to its use in the classroom. AELPHER has inspired other schools projects such as the Cheshire Learning Journey in 2004 and the My Manchester humanities project in 2005. When the Museum officially said goodbye to the project in 2005, it left behind a thriving Alderley History Society, a National Trust management fully apprised of the archaeology on the Edge and a strong relationship between the Trust and the University of Manchester’s Archaeology Department.

One area where the recollections of local inhabitants fed directly into archaeological research was in the 2003 Alderley Sandhills Project (ASP). The centrepiece of research was the careful excavation of the remains of two pairs of working-class houses known as the Hagg Cottages. Dr Eleanor Casella from the University of Manchester Archaeology Department excavated them to rigorous standards, and they proved to be a thorough-going training ground in historical archaeology for both undergraduates and the local volunteers who came on the dig. Schoolchildren visited the site and, while unable to take part in excavation, proved most enthusiastic and careful helpers in sieving the soil.

We were greatly helped by the memories of three eighty-year-olds who had been children in the cottages in the 1920s. They came from embedded Alderley working-class families, had a strong sense of their place in the local area and its society, and they were all tremendously pleased to help us and for their recollections to be valued by the professional archaeologists. The many visitors to the site all commented on the value of the excavation in illuminating part of the story of Alderley Edge. The experience of the Alderley Sandhills Project shows how, with expert guidance, it is possible for community volunteers to become involved in pioneering archaeological research without endangering the academic value of the excavation.

Conclusion

Three points stand out from these experiences:

- the need for a genuine partnership and respect between the professionals and local schools and communities;
- evaluate what we are doing, demonstrate progress to the participating community, including the schools;
- allow enough time to embed the project in the whole community and to work on a continuous basis with local people so that the project is truly self-sustaining.

All this means we have to get ourselves away from a project mentality and create a continuing programme. We need to cease thinking of archaeology as an event and to reconsider it as a process. This inevitably means funding needs to be there to pay the professionals concerned to be part of a long-term working partnership. However, with this long-term commitment communities and their schools are encouraged to embrace and own their heritage and its archaeology and we can hope for this involvement to sustain itself when eventually the archaeologists move on.

Notes

1) Timberlake & Prag 2005.
2) Russell & Williams 2008.
4) (www.alderleyedge.manchester.museum)
Community Archaeology: the Leicestershire Experience

Peter Liddle

Introduction

Leicestershire (with some honourable exceptions) has not had a great history of archaeological investigation, and by the 1970s amateur archaeological fieldwork was rare. In 1974, at local government reorganisation, the City of Leicester transferred its museums to the county council and Patrick Boylan was appointed to run the new service. He had a vision of the Eco Museum – a museum service not only curating its collections but curating the landscape as well. This entailed building up an ecological record centre and survey team, and a substantial geological section. In 1976 archaeology got its turn. Department of the Environment pumpprime funding allowed an Archaeological Survey Officer to be appointed.

The remit was pretty vast – developing a Sites and Monuments Record (SMR), building planning provision, writing a statement of present knowledge, building a fieldwork programme, developing amateur archaeology – but with the addition of two other posts to form the Archaeological Survey Team we started to tackle the list of jobs.

Museums and Volunteers

A meeting of all those known to have any interest in local archaeology was called. There was huge scepticism from many of those attending that the project to undertake active fieldwork around the county was worthwhile. Around six people were identified as potential activists and over the next winter we undertook a fieldwalking survey north of Leicester with amateurs and the Survey Team working together and trying to develop a methodology. Having assessed this work we decided to decentralise the effort by asking each of our volunteers to go away and start a local group in their own area. We soon had six new local groups, concentrating largely on fieldwalking, and sites started being added to the SMR – even in West Leicestershire where little had previously been known. In 1980 we reviewed techniques and adopted the traverse and stint method of fieldwalking using the Medbourne Survey as a pilot. This proved a new impetus for the group and we started to make a real impact in our understanding of periods we had previously hardly seen, especially the prehistoric and Anglo-Saxon periods. New groups sprung up around the county, many of which are still operating. We also settled into a regular sequence of meetings and newsletters (seven of each a year) and a New Members Training Course each September, outlining techniques and identification of finds. From this a handbook of organisation and techniques was published.

The success of Leicestershire in developing community archaeology can be ascribed to the county archaeology operation being based in a museum service rather than the more standard Planning Department. These generally do not have the same outward-looking culture as museums or a tradition of working with volunteers. It certainly helped the museum service in unpredictable ways. We were able to develop a series of large public archaeological events, attracting thousands of people. Bringing The Past To Life was the flagship and involved over a hundred volunteers (mostly fieldworkers) presenting aspects of the past to the public. It raised the profile of local archaeology in the public mind and acted as an effective recruitment tool for the scheme.

Maintaining Focus

In 1995 with another Local Government reorganisation on the cards, and no guarantee that the County Museum Service would survive, the countywide group became a properly constituted organisation, Leicestershire Museums Archaeological Fieldwork Group (LMAFG). In this year the
Chapter 15: Community Archaeology: the Leicestershire Experience

Leicestershire Archaeological Unit (LAU) – the digging arm of the museum – was disbanded as the new system of developer funding became established. They, happily, were reborn as University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) but much of the Museum’s in-house expertise had gone. Two former members of LAU staff were added to the Survey Team and this allowed another strand of Community Archaeology to be developed. This was the Leicestershire Archaeological Network. Parish Councils and Meetings were invited to join and appoint a warden. 192 parishes are currently in membership (about two-thirds of the total) (Figure 15.1). These wardens act as local eyes and ears of the County Archaeological Service and undertake a general watching brief on their area. Many are fieldworkers, although the scheme has also brought new people in, who have sometimes gone on to found new local groups.

In 1997 a reorganisation led to the Museum Service being split into three. The City and Rutland, as new unitary authorities, took back their museums. Rutland bought back into the County Archaeological Service but the City decided to go it alone. The Archaeology Section was split in half between City and County. Most of the Survey Team transferred to the County but now had new responsibilities such as managing archaeological collections and a museum site. Inevitably this has curtailed the support that the Service can give to community archaeology and it is impossible to maintain its own fieldwork programme. Newsletters and training are still supported but it is now more difficult to find the time to take initiatives such as setting up new groups or finding new wardens. We have had to be content to wait for people to come to us.

One new development, in 2003, has been the appointment of a Finds Liaison Officer as part of the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). The Service has worked with metal detectorists since they appeared on the scene and has tried to draw them into the community archaeology scheme. There are probably more detectorists in membership of LMAFG than any single detector group in the county and several are parish wardens. PAS has allowed us to move this aspect of our work onto a new level.

Promoting Fieldwork

In recent years the group has also become more involved with excavations. Several local groups have undertaken trial excavations on sites that have been found, while excavations with a training element have been organised by the county service and

Fig 15.1: Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeological Network. The map shows parishes that have signed up to the scheme.
Fig 15.2: The impact of the scheme: Roman sites known in 1907 (above) and 1972 (below).
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county-wide group at Medbourne and Donington le Heath, the former as part of *Time Team*'s Big Roman Dig.

The impact of nearly 30 years of community archaeology has been huge. It is, of course, difficult to separate the contributions of the Unit, Survey Team and Fieldwork Group that all developed through the late 1970s, but there is no doubt that community archaeology has given Leicestershire’s archaeology both breadth and depth. The publication *Leicestershire Landscapes*, the 25th anniversary conference papers, fully documents this, but as an example we can consider a set of distribution maps of Roman Leicestershire. These show relatively little change from 1907 to the 1970s (Figure 15.2) but then a remarkable increase in known sites from the 1970s to 2001 (Figure 15.3). Some of this is undoubtedly down to better information management, but most is the result of groups and individuals working across the county. For many areas we have very good multi-period data. As an example, one of the distribution maps of Stonton Wyville (Figure 15.4) shows the sort of information that is produced. This survey is the result of annual training weeks for the Fieldwork Group, led by museum staff and experienced fieldworkers. We have information on settlement and land use patterns from prehistory to the post-medieval period. This fits into a contiguous series of some twenty parishes between Leicester and the Northamptonshire border where there has been significant fieldwalking, making it one of the biggest areas looked at in the Midlands.

A second example is the bonus of serendipitous finds in unlikely areas when you have trained members of the community. This included the chance discovery of a nationally important site on the Bradgate Park Estate in Charnwood Forest by fieldworkers out for a family walk. They spotted flint on the surface of an eroding path and collected a group which they brought in to museum staff. It represents a rare open-air Upper Palaeolithic site which has now been studied by Lynden Cooper of ULAS. A third example is the South East Leicestershire Treasure. This site was found during the parish fieldwalking survey by the local fieldwork group. Ken Wallace, a member of the local group (and of LMAFG since the 1970s), went back to recover dating evidence with his detector and came up with a remarkable group of Iron Age and Roman coins. Excavations funded by English Heritage and the BBC were undertaken by ULAS, revealing a unique religious site of the 1st century AD and...
producing a remarkable group of finds, including over 5000 coins and a spectacular Roman silver gilt helmet. It has been an exemplary case of involvement where members of the group were on the excavation, involved in the processing and kept informed of the progress of conservation (Figure 15.5) and research. The finds have been acquired by the County Service through the Treasure process and will be displayed in Harborough Museum with substantial funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund (among a mosaic of funders). The local group and the county-wide group are both involved in the display project, which will be used to publicise and strengthen the scheme across the county.

Conclusion

In 2009 the Fieldwork Group had over 20 local fieldwork groups and 400 members, but there is no doubt that the scheme is over-reliant on past capital. The museum staff have struggled to keep the hands-on involvement that was previously possible. There are, however, encouraging developments. First, new groups have continued to be formed as local initiatives without active professional support. They have then used the training and support to develop themselves. Secondly, the County Council has indicated that, despite reduced funding, they see the support of community archaeology as an important continuing role. This consistent support is preferable to the boom and bust of lottery funding that can only normally last five years, although the extra resources from the South East Leicestershire Treasure Project, mentioned above, will be welcome. The working of the scheme is due for a thorough review after 30 years of existence, but we look to the future with renewed confidence.

Notes

1) Liddle 1994.
2) Liddle 1985.
4) Score 2006.
Part 4

The Future of Community Archaeology

Introduction by Norman Redhead

This final section of the monograph presents seven papers that look at the future prospects and trends for community archaeology in Britain. Was the decade before the recession, which began in 2008, a golden era for community archaeology, or can the discipline survive and prosper within the harsher financial environment post the banking crisis?

Mason has described the process of Heritage Lottery Fund applications and the types of funding schemes available. She looks at best practice for HLF grant aided community archaeology projects and the sorts of things looked for in applications that are likely to make a project successful. It is interesting to note that the HLF expect a community group to work in partnership with professional archaeologists. But the main emphasis is on demonstrating the need, providing widening participation, facilitating access, and education (formal and informal).

Redhead describes the early boom of community archaeology projects of the 1980s under the very different guise of Manpower Services Commission funding, the bleak period of the 1990s when relatively little public engagement took place, and the recent increase in community archaeology projects under the stimulus of Heritage Lottery grant aid. Issues of public access, both intellectual and physical, to development-led archaeology projects are examined. He sets out a methodology for undertaking larger-scale community archaeology schemes involving excavation and finishes on a positive note believing that much better times for professional engagement with the public have arrived.

Henson has succinctly charted the long tradition of community involvement through amateur archaeologists and societies, and the growth of professional archaeology. Government funding changes have created considerable challenges for the subject, particularly in the dramatic decline of adult education through courses for the public. Professional support for the voluntary sector has evolved through projects such as the Defence of Britain, Portable Antiquities Scheme and the Young Archaeologists Club. But many local archaeology projects have also been created in recent years through the Local Heritage Initiative.

Isherwood has looked at the origins of the concept of community archaeology and emerging trends in the subject. Liddle’s long-running scheme in Leicestershire is praised for empowering local communities to record, understand and protect their local heritage. He considers that Manpower Service Schemes were a ‘top-down’ process vulnerable to government funding changes.

Thompson describes the development of the Dig Manchester methodology for its successor project, Dig Greater Manchester, in the process demonstrating the continuing commitment of some local authorities to the idea of local empowerment and awareness-raising through heritage and archaeology.

One of the Labour Government’s key mantras in the period 1997 to 2010 was social inclusion, which has broadened the scope of community archaeology towards being a more shared activity helping to building better communities. This has been turned by the Coalition Government since 2010 towards an agenda focusing upon localism. In both cases funding was and can be more readily available but is dependent on demonstrating social value. There is an issue of when destructive archaeology is acceptable for community benefit. Thomas picks up these threads and develops them in her overview of community archaeology in the post-banking-crisis period.

The difference between ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ community archaeology is explained. The former occurs where the community have the necessary skills to control and take ownership of their project. Here, the professional archaeologist is brought in to provide specialist knowledge and training; good examples of this are the Mellor Heritage and Royton Lives Through The Ages...
projects. The latter is led by professionals or a partnership of professionals. Archaeological curators regard 'bottom-up' as a purer form of archaeology but have concerns about the quality of archaeological recording and investigation methodology. However, some would argue that it is wrong to impose community archaeology where local groups have not asked for it; but an important point here is that people living in these areas may have no knowledge of archaeology or heritage, never mind the skills to deliver, and the experience can be a very positive one for a lot of people.

Out of the conference has come a sense of an extraordinary range of community archaeology projects, in terms of scale, character and approach. It does seem to be a case of 'horses for courses' and why not? This reflects our diverse archaeology, landscape, population and culture. What has emerged is a feeling of how much can be achieved by dedicated and enthusiastic volunteers, in partnership with committed professionals. Yet whilst the Heritage Lottery Fund has opened up all kinds of doors for community archaeology and the outlook appears to be a rosy one for developing many new projects, there are constraints and obstacles to overcome.

HLF grant applications are complicated and require a considerable input of time and know-how for all but the smallest grants. Obtaining the grant is only the beginning of a challenging process of paperwork, accountability and evaluation. The current application procedure favours larger organisations with consultancy or specialist skills and can be off-putting to smaller community groups. It is not a level playing field and the concept of ‘archaeology for all’ is therefore compromised. Whilst there are a number of small grant awards available from other bodies, there is no doubt that the Heritage Lottery Fund delivers the size of grants necessary to make a difference and engage far more people. Yet this over-reliance on one grant-giving body will make community archaeology vulnerable to fluctuations in levels of public participation in gambling and to the whims of politics – witness the government’s decision to siphon off HLF money to the 2012 Olympic Games project.

Another concern with Heritage Lottery Funding can be a lack of sustainability within a project; volunteers get a short taste of archaeological fieldwork for a few days or weeks, for one or two seasons, then the project finishes. The Mellor project has shown how a scheme can be carried on through stages of funding, to maintain a rolling programme, sustain interest, develop skills capacity, and of course contribute meaningful archaeological results. Dig Manchester has also shown ways of tackling sustainability, through teaching packs and delivering workshops to develop the skills and confidence of a new archaeology group.

Attending the original 2006 conference were several professional archaeologists who worked for contracting archaeological organisations. They articulated their frustration at a commercial archaeological system in which it was difficult to build in community benefit. It is possible for a contracting unit to complete an excavation in an unfamiliar part of the country on behalf of a developer without the local community even knowing it has taken place. Yet, the new National Planning Policy Framework, published in March 2012, sets out a planning process within a Localism framework and calls for greater community participation at all stages of the planning process. Here is an opportunity for archaeologists, professional and voluntary, to push forward the community archaeology agenda.
The Future of Archaeology: A Teacher’s Perspective

Sarah Joynes

Introduction

This article outlines the attempts of a secondary school teacher to introduce aspects of archaeological studies into the curriculum. Despite the demise of the subject at GCSE level, the revised National Curriculum at Key Stage 3 offers some opportunities.

As a teacher of history at an all-boys comprehensive in Tameside, readers may be forgiven for wondering why I have been asked to write for a publication about archaeology. On first inspection there appears to be little place for archaeology in the school curriculum. However, over the last few years I have been able to find a path to combine my two passions, teaching and archaeology (Figure 16.1). At times it has been difficult, and the future of the subject is less than clear. Having studied for three years at the University of Manchester, reading Ancient History and Archaeology, I applied to undertake a PGCE and was advised that my degree was not really sufficient to qualify for a History PGCE course. History and archaeology have vast differences, many academics will agree. Yet so different that an Ancient History and Archaeology degree left me unqualified to teach in a secondary school? Despite this initial impasse, I successfully completed the PGCE and found myself working at my current school, Littlemoss High School in

Fig 16.1: A class researching (or resting?) at the West Kennet long barrow in Wiltshire.
Tameside.

If I think back to my first days as a teacher, coming to a school that was in special measures and had been for nearly four years, I feel proud to have been part of its revival and growing success. Despite the reticence of some pupils towards learning at the beginning of my career, I could see that there were a number of boys with a genuine thirst for knowledge, something that could take them beyond the restraints of the National Curriculum which dictated the history content. Within a few months, after setting up a successful history club at lunchtime, mainly attracting those in Key Stage 3 (KS3), talk turned to my degree and the subject of archaeology.

The ‘Embryonic’ Archaeology Club

Many of the pupils had seen the popular TV programmes *Time Team* and *Meet the Ancestors* and these formed the basis of interesting lunchtime talks, as did the subject of the Neolithic, one of my passions, and Egyptology, a huge passion of one of the students. The boys became interested in the vast range of processes involved and I saw an opportunity to introduce the huge array of ancillary skills that archaeology encompasses (such as geophysics, geology, scientific analysis and desktop research). The boys were surprised to realise that the excavation (‘digging’ as they saw it) associated with the subject is the final phase or ‘last resort’ due to its implicit destructiveness, and we began to explore some of the research techniques employed before excavation is even considered. Over my first year of teaching, what had been a history club (where people would drop in and out, depending upon if it was raining outside or not!) evolved into an extra-curricular archaeology club of devoted and inspired students. It was then that I began to seek out opportunities for the pupils to ‘get out into the field’. Providing the experience of excavation proved an obstacle due to their ages being under sixteen, so we began talking of trips to such popular sites as Stonehenge, Hadrian’s Wall and, closer to home, the remains of the Roman fort at Ribchester (Figure 16.2). It was at this point that I also began what has been a richly rewarding relationship with the University of Manchester’s Widening Participation Unit.

GCSE Archaeology

Evolving from the club, interest in the notion of taking archaeology at GCSE level soon arose and, following a number of enquiries, it was decided that we would enrol the seven students who were most interested onto the course, to be taken alongside their other GCSEs, though in their own time as an extra-curricular subject. However, it was within a short time of my enquiry that I was contacted by AQA to say that 2006 would be the last time that the exam would be held and as such I was left with the only option being to start the course immediately despite the fact that the students were in Year 9 and would have to sit the exam in Year 10. Despite the obvious pressure this added, the boys were extremely keen and eager to take up the opportunity.

I was enthusiastic about introducing a subject that I felt was so inherently diverse, its cross-curricular aspects giving the students the opportunity to study elements of history, geography, science and mathematics to name a few, whilst also reaching far beyond these fields and enabling the students to gain skills which now, with the introduction of the New Secondary Curriculum, are valued across its breadth. Having been invited previously to a QCA working party on the future of the history curriculum I was excited at the prospect of developing skills and enquiry-based schemes of work which could be applied equally to archaeological studies. Thus I felt that implementing archaeology into the school community as both a GCSE and a club allowed me to do this. Though not fully implemented in schools as yet, the New Secondary Curriculum has been widely publicised in schools (indeed the Government allocated to schools a full day’s training to facilitate its launch) and has been designed to ensure that

“young people should relish the opportunity for discovery and achievement that the curriculum offers.”

Fig 16.2: Coursework at Ribchester.
Chapter 16: The Future of Archaeology: A Teacher's Perspective

My understanding is that the New Secondary Curriculum is to provide more freedom and less prescription in its subject content. Yet apparently, in contrast, we are facing the obstacle of subjects being cancelled at Key Stage 4 and taken from the very curriculum which intends to

“fire pupils' curiosity and imagination, moving and inspiring them with the dilemmas, choices and beliefs of peoples in the past.”

Though there may be excitement about the implications for the history curriculum and the vast range of opportunities that are arising from it, one may be forgiven for wondering where archaeology fits in all this, if at all? And if it does, what material is available and how accessible is it? The lack of available material I found to support the teaching of archaeology as a subject at GCSE level surprised me as there was no suitable textbook nor resources catering to the Specification, as would be expected from any other subject taught to this level. Because of this paucity of material, the vast majority of resources were adapted from my own knowledge and degree notes and with the kind help of another teacher, David Goulden, who had been teaching the course at Southlands High School. He supplied invaluable help planning both the coursework aspects of the course and suggesting a focus for investigation, whilst forwarding some of his own resources and contacts. David Goulden was generous with other aspects of the course too. Has all this work been in vain as the GCSE has now been withdrawn by the examination board and such resources are no longer required within the formal learning environment?

Archaeology in Schools

The question may be posed, what is the future for archaeology beyond studying it at higher education level, how can it fit into the under-sixteen education system? In a world where community, diversity, citizenship and inclusion are coming to the forefront of education, surely a place should be found for the future development of a subject which seeks to explore these relationships throughout the past? Indeed, it is an aim of history as an academic subject to encourage pupils to

“develop their own identities…of their community, Britain, Europe and the world…whilst making connections within and across different periods and societies.”

Fig 16.3: A rare chance for the archaeology club to ‘get out into the field’ at Mellor.
Surely, this does not mean society only as far back as the Roman world? There has to be scope for understanding how communities first began to settle, exploration of hunter-gatherer societies and the development of sedentary communities in a period which may not be neatly labelled as historical. Archaeology is inherently subject to vast interpretation and would be a valuable asset in a curriculum which seeks to encourage students to

“evaluate evidence, identify and analyse different interpretations of the past.”

However, I believe there is hope! I understand that OCR have been trialling a new history GCSE with a unit that is archaeologically based. Also, contact with institutions such as local universities and museums has opened a range of avenues especially for those at Key Stage 3 (Figure 16.3).

**Widening Participation**

The University of Manchester and Manchester Museum have been invaluable in aiding my desire to give opportunities for pupils to gain an insight into archaeological concepts. It was through Janet Tatlock at the Widening Participation Unit that the school were eventually invited to speak at the ‘Archaeology for All’ conference in November 2006, a conference focusing on the theory and practice of community archaeology. Following a series of excellent workshops provided by the Widening Participation Unit a small group of pupils from across the age and ability range accompanied me to present a series of short presentations focusing on their own experiences of ‘community archaeology’.

Only one of these pupils had studied the GCSE course; the rest were all Key Stage 3 students who had attended my ‘club’ and taken part in the excursions and workshops that had been offered. The focus of the presentations was varied yet showed a level of questioning and depth of understanding of which I was proud. Whilst emphasising his interest in Biblical archaeology and borderline obsession with Egyptology, Anthony, a Year 10 student, was able to highlight what he felt the value of his study of archaeology at GCSE had been, explaining how it had led him to develop skills valuable in his science and media studies courses. In contrast, Andrew, only at the start of Year 8 at the time, delivered an entertaining presentation challenging the typical stereotypes of prehistoric man most commonly held by his peers. This evolved from his participation in a series of ‘experimental archaeology’ workshops at the University of Manchester (Figure 16.4) where he was encouraged.
to consider the diversity of hunter-gatherer societies, taking into account the shelters they used, the tools they developed and the skills needed to perform a variety of everyday tasks. In addition to learning about these societies and cultures in a fun and interactive way, Andrew gained valuable analytical skills, not to mention his realisation that cavemen didn’t drink Guinness! As well as the laughs that Andrew received there was also consideration of an interesting yet at times controversial issue with regards to the value and worth of objects and sites from around the world. Lewis in Year 9 demonstrated his maturity by posing the question ‘Who decides what an object is worth or what value it holds?’ He rightly pointed out that this can be examined from a wide range of perspectives, perhaps in relation to rarity, monetary value, religious worth, personal family ties and obviously the history and provenance of items. In the materialistic world that Western teenagers live in today I was proud to see the deep thinking which was undertaken and, interestingly, the path it paved for considering such issues back at school, relating to religion, culture, diversity and citizenship. The boys involved were able to gain and build upon a great number of skills which are seen as essential within education today. As well as the inestimable experience of being involved in a national conference which involved the confidence to present to an audience of academics, the personal research undertaken in their preparation was significant.

Archaeology: An Aspect of the Littlemoss Curriculum

Returning once more to the future of archaeology in secondary schools, it is worth mentioning that I have been able to incorporate aspects of archaeology into the KS3 curriculum thanks to a new Competence-based Curriculum which complements the aims of the New Secondary Curriculum in

“ensuring that more young people gain the knowledge and skills...they need for education, employment and life.”

The Competence Curriculum at Littlemoss was designed using the RSA ‘Opening Minds’ Competences. Having been invited to write a seven-week scheme of work based on the Competence ‘Managing Information’, I wondered how I could make this exciting. As I was given the freedom to interpret the topic, I devised a scheme of work which would capture the imagination of the pupils and allow me to introduce aspects of archaeological study.

The outcome of this unit of work was to produce a small exhibition and invite the outside community in to evaluate it, whilst also addressing the sub-competences of finding information from a variety of sources, choosing the most appropriate information, and reflecting on completed work with the aim of improving it.

For the pupils, the Competence Curriculum and its project-based approach is intended to focus on

“the development of common skills they will use throughout the curriculum and at the same time really enhance their ability to carry out larger more extended project based learning.”

Students study the Competence Curriculum for a whole day each week, and as such there is great scope to tackle projects normally too difficult for a standard timetabled lesson. The unit on Managing Information began with a visit along Hadrian’s Wall and a study of the information available at numerous sites en route, once again, as with the Archaeology Club, allowing valuable learning and social experiences beyond the school walls.

Over the remaining weeks the scheme of work combined archaeological research with art, media, presentational and personal learning skills as well as the inherent literacy and numeracy aspects that the New Secondary Curriculum allows (with its cross-curriculum thematic approach to learning). Along the way students gave constructive criticism, evaluating their individual performance and that as a team each week. As the exhibition was held they drew up questionnaires where the community could comment on their work.

Conclusion

I believe that the New Secondary Curriculum gives teachers the freedom to offer dynamic, interesting, participative units of study which go beyond the narrow confines of the past curriculum. By becoming more involved and engaging with their studies, student learning is enhanced. From my experience students respond well to studying aspects of archaeology and this sows the seeds for future involvement in this area, supported by the initiatives from the University of Manchester and local museums. The New Secondary Curriculum has provided a possible pathway to incorporate archaeology in the future, so perhaps after all archaeology is not resigned to the past.

Notes

1) www.curriculum.qca.org.uk.
3) QCA, 113; www.qca.org.uk/curriculum.
4) QCA, 113.
5) Ibid.
6) QCA/07/3172, 3.
7) Bayliss 1999; NCSI, 21.
Community Funding for Archaeology and the Empowerment of Communities

Rebecca Mason

Introduction: Who is the Heritage Lottery Fund?

Over the past 19 years, the Heritage Lottery Fund has awarded more than £135 million to 775 projects which have an obvious link to archaeology (Figure 17.1), whilst many more millions have been awarded to projects which have included a small element of archaeology. This paper will look at who the Heritage Lottery Fund is and what can be funded with regards to archaeological projects.

The National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) is a government organisation set up in 1980 which acts as a fund of last resort for the nation’s heritage, coming to the rescue by funding emergency acquisitions, thereby saving important heritage items for the nation. NHMF’s Trustees became responsible for the distribution of lottery proceeds allocated to heritage following the launch of the National Lottery in 1994. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) is administered by NHMF and distributes a share of the money raised by the National Lottery for good causes, along with Arts Council England, Big Lottery Fund and Sport England, amongst others.

Out of each £1 played on the National Lottery, 28p goes directly to good causes, split between the arts; charitable causes; health, education and the environment; sports; and heritage. The rest of the £1 goes to the Government as a gambling tax, retailers

Fig 17.1: Volunteers record a trench during the Digging at Dunham project (applicant: South Manchester Archaeological Research Team).
and Camelot (who currently run the National Lottery), with 50p going to the lottery winners. Out of that 28p which goes to good causes, approximately 5p goes to the Heritage Lottery Fund. HLF’s head office is in Holbein Place, London. There are three country offices, in Belfast, Edinburgh and Cardiff, and seven regional offices across England (established in 2002 to ensure HLF was more accessible to organisations from outside the London area). The HLF now employs around 250 staff and is the UK’s leading funder of our diverse heritage as well as being the only heritage organisation that operates across the whole of the UK and funds the entire spread of heritage including buildings, museums, natural heritage, the heritage of culture and memories as well as archaeology.

What Does the HLF do?

The aim of HLF is to make a lasting difference for both heritage and people by helping groups and organisations of all sizes with heritage projects. HLF looks for projects that will encourage as many people as possible from all backgrounds and walks of life to get involved in heritage. This includes getting people involved in running projects as well as benefiting from completed projects, allowing people to have many different hands-on experiences. This gives people a sense of ownership so they will want, in the future, to look after their heritage and encourage others to do the same.

Who can apply for an HLF project? Since 1994, the HLF has awarded £4.3 billion to more than 28,000 projects across the UK. Any not-for-profit organisation with a bank account and constitution or set of rules can apply for any of the HLF grant programmes. However, if private owners or for-profit organisations are involved in a project, public benefit must be greater than private gain. The HLF actively encourages applications from all kinds of community groups, not just from local authorities, large organisations or charities.

HLF Grant Programmes

The HLF has several different grant programmes, all of which could include some elements of archaeology. In 2012 these include:

- Heritage Grants (for grants of £100,000 or more);
- Townscape Heritage Initiative (for grants of £100,000–£2 million to enhance the quality of life and the environment in Conservation Areas in historic towns and cities);
- Parks for People (for grants of between £100,000 and £5 million for projects involving urban or rural green spaces, including public cemeteries, designed for informal recreation and enjoyment);
- Landscape Partnerships (programme to support schemes of between £100,000 and £3 million led by partnerships of local, regional and national interests which aim to conserve areas of distinctive landscape character).

What can be Applied for?

The following sets out a variety of things which could be funded within an archaeology project. If an applicant can demonstrate it is needed for a project, then it can be included in the grant request. This list is not exhaustive:

- the purchase price of items or property, e.g. acquisition of objects discovered during a dig;
- repair and conservation work to a site, building or object (Figure 17.2);
- building work, e.g. to improve access to a visitor centre or work on structures to make them safe for visitor access;
- professional fees, e.g. for professional archaeologists or an organisation to produce learning resources;
- the purchase of equipment – this could be any specific archaeological equipment that a project requires (trowels, buckets, kneeling mats or geophysical equipment) or more general equipment such as digital cameras, recording equipment and IT software and hardware;
- staff costs – for example, recruitment of a project manager (a new post to fulfil duties specifically for the project);
- recruitment costs;
- the cost of designing, writing and printing information, including educational and promotional materials; academic reports; leaflets/booklets; flyers advertising a dig; interpretation boards; educational resource packs; websites; smartphone apps etc;
- travel costs for staff and volunteers;
- the costs of running any project event.

Best Practice

There are many different things that HLF would
look for in a ‘good-quality’ community archaeology project and the expectation of what could be included would vary depending on the size of grant requested. The following are some of the factors that HLF might want to see:

• community involvement – allowing a wide range of people to be involved in a project and ensuring they have a good-quality experience. Applicants need to think about the different types of people who could be included in a project that may not have had any experience of archaeology in the past including harder-to-reach audiences;
• outreach work – this is very important for those who are unable to visit the site, for whatever reason. Outreach can include producing a website or taking finds and presentations out into the community;
• learning and educational elements – this could include both formal and informal learning. Informal learning could include holding workshops, presentations, talks, or hands-on experiences to allow people to gain new skills and have new experiences;
• need and opportunity – applicants must be able to prove that there is a need for the project to be undertaken and also that people from the community want to get involved in it. Consultation with local organisations, community groups and individuals should be carried out before the start of the project;
• well-managed project – who is going to run the project and what experience do they have? If necessary, new staff can be recruited which can be funded by HLF. Groups should call on the experience which group members have;
• provide a variety of activities – it is worth remembering that an archaeology project should not just be about digging!
• set up a partnership with a professional archaeological organisation – any archaeology project that would be run by a community group (Figure 17.3) must work in partnership with a professional archaeology organisation who would oversee all the archaeological aspects of a project as well as producing post-excavation reports. Applicants should also look at forming partnerships with other organisations who have relevant experience needed in order to run a project effectively;
• sound project costs – applicants need to provide HLF with a thorough breakdown of costs which
should include everything needed in order to run a high-quality project, from purchasing a trowel to running an event. Every last detail needs to be costed. Applicants must also be able to demonstrate that the project gives excellent value for money;

- management of finds – projects should include the initial cost of long-term storage with a local museum or another appropriate facility (for example, the purchase of display cases or storage boxes). Many museums are reluctant to accept finds that they do not deem important to their collections, which can be problematic. Applicants should discuss with their professional partners who may have ideas on what to do with finds. One innovative strategy is to use finds as part of loan boxes which can be used by schools as part of the educational aspect of a project.

### Applying for an HLF Grant

The HLF is always trying to make applying for a grant as easy as possible. However, as they deal with public money, there are strict guidelines in place which must be adhered to.

The first part of the process is to decide which grant programme to apply under and then to complete and submit an online Project Enquiry form, which can be found on the HLF website along with grant programme information and guidance materials. A member of HLF’s Development Team will then make contact to discuss the project and, if appropriate, to give advice on how to put together a good-quality application. Following this advice, a full application form should be completed and submitted and will be assessed by a member of the Grants Team.

### Notes

1) For example IT skills, writing skills, experience of working with young people etc.
2) www.hlf.org.uk.
Introduction

Has archaeology come full circle since the heady days of Community Programme schemes in the 1980s? Has HLF sponsorship created a new golden age for professional archaeologists to engage with the public? In attempting to answer these questions the author will provide a curatorial archaeologist’s view of the impact of community archaeology on the archaeological resource and practising archaeologists, using experiences and observations from a range of projects in Greater Manchester.

Issues of public participation in developer-funded archaeology will be examined. There will be a look at the variety of community archaeology schemes recently undertaken in Greater Manchester, providing an insight into the roles and skills of those archaeologists involved, the importance of partnerships with other stakeholders, and the relevance of the archaeological work undertaken. A methodology for carrying out community archaeology projects will be proposed, based on the Greater Manchester experience, which balances the needs of archaeology with those of public participation and expectation.

Accessing Archaeology 1980 to 2012

During the 27 years I have worked on Greater Manchester’s archaeology, there have been many changes in funding sources, the quality and volume of community archaeology projects.

Fig 18.1: Excavations at Roman Castleshaw in the late 1980s. An MSC-funded scheme.
of archaeological work, and political and public support for the subject; but community archaeology is flourishing in the county and there are reasons to look forward to greater public and political support for the archaeological profession.

In the early 1980s, it was possible to look at the Council for British Archaeology excavation calendar and pick from dozens of summer digs requiring volunteer excavators, both experienced and inexperienced, usually with accommodation and free food, and sometimes even a small remuneration. In contrast, in recent years volunteers have had to pay hundreds of pounds to have the pleasure of working and learning on an excavation site and most summer digs are undertaken by universities exclusively for their students. The 1980s also saw the rise of Manpower Services Commission-funded Community Programme projects which were ideally suited for archaeological investigations. In Greater Manchester at this time there was a project in each of the ten authorities, and a central education unit that brought archaeology to schools. It was possible to run research excavations for several years using paid trainees, who had time to gain a thorough understanding of on-site and post-excavation skills; local volunteers, archaeology society members and students were also involved. A number of these trainees went on to gain archaeology degrees and follow a career in the profession. However, in 1989 the Community Programme was ditched for Employment Training and the focus switched from being project-based to person-skill-based. The running of meaningful archaeological projects became untenable and so ended a decade of well-resourced community archaeology (Figure 18.1).

The 1990s saw the growth of development-funded archaeology, on the back of PPG16.1 This, as well as sizeable grants from English Heritage, allowed many archaeology units to survive the funding crisis brought on by the demise of the Community Programme. Archaeology was firmly established as a profession in this decade but, generally speaking, the profession lost not only its close links with local archaeology societies but also with the public and local politicians. This lack of political support was evident in the closing of several archaeology units attached to local or county authorities. In concentrating on commercial archaeology, which had become its lifeblood, the profession was beginning to lose sight of its roots.

Fig 18.2: Excavations investigating part of Roman Manchester on Deansgate, 2006, a site where there was no public engagement.
In recent times it has become increasingly difficult to gain public access to developer-funded excavations. On several occasions developers have refused to open a site to public viewing based on health and safety considerations or a fear that the public may want the archaeology preserved in situ. This is a shame, as opening a site to the public could provide a valuable public relations exercise (Figure 8.2). However, I think there is a solution in some cases and that is to engage local politicians with the archaeology of their area. It can be hard work but is well worth the effort. For example, in 2005 Oxford Archaeology North excavated a Roman baths complex at Wigan ahead of the Grand Arcade Shopping Centre development. As Wigan Council was a stakeholder in the development, it was possible to arrange a public open day (on a Saturday) with the wholehearted support of the developer and the council, despite the excavation delaying the development groundworks programme. The results were fantastic with around 1000 visitors to the site, and a commitment to present some of the remains in the new shopping centre. The developer was amazed at the public reaction and gained excellent PR from the event (Figure 18.3).

In Manchester city centre, intense development pressure has led to a number of significant Roman and industrial site excavations where it has not been possible to arrange public access. However, the heightened interest in archaeology generated by the successful Dig Manchester and Dig Greater Manchester community archaeology projects (described elsewhere) has motivated senior politicians, museum staff and planning officers to visit sites, and the archaeology is now being presented to the public in different ways, for example refurbishing the Roman Gardens in Castlefield, producing a new monograph on Roman Manchester and investigating ways of presenting Roman finds from the excavations to the public. Wherever possible, the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS) attempts to engage the interest of local councillors, planners, conservation officers and local heritage groups in development excavations in their area. Archaeology can and should be an integral part of regeneration and larger-scale developments should put something back into the local community, either through presentation of individual archaeological sites, heritage trails, booklets etc, or by sponsoring local community schemes to promote a sense of place and historic distinctiveness, and to promote citizenship skills. Moreover, where developers contribute Section 106 money towards public realm and infrastructure improvements, it should be possible to allocate some of these resources for the same purposes.
I believe that for public archaeology the wheel has turned full circle. In the last ten years Heritage Lottery funding has begun the process of reconnecting professional archaeologists with the public. From personal observation the plethora of television programmes on archaeology in recent years, led by *Time Team*, has broadened the appeal of the subject and created a desire for people to have a go at archaeology and engage with their past. Until the Heritage Lottery Fund allowed grant aids for excavation from 2000 onwards, this desire to take part was frustrated, witness the lack of volunteer excavations advertised by the CBA during the 1990s. This country is blessed with a huge amount of local archaeology ideally suited to the needs and processes of Heritage Lottery funded projects. The nature of community archaeology schemes varies tremendously and often depends on the type of local group promoting the project. It is unfortunate that in some quarters archaeology is still seen as the preserve of the middle classes, but surely our heritage belongs to everybody? Moreover, archaeology can act as a force for good. In Greater Manchester projects have been able to demonstrate a growth of community pride, social interaction between the elderly and the young, and social inclusion where everybody can take part. It is so rewarding to see the pleasure of schoolchildren as they unearth finds that have lain in the ground for over 200 or 300 years; they also relish being able to undertake a stimulating practical activity that makes them think about and apply various class-taught skills and theories.

It is possible to produce a methodology for largerscale urban community archaeology excavations, based on the recent experiences of a number of successful and varied projects in Greater Manchester.

**Step 1: Site Identification**

The local Historic Environment Record (formerly Sites and Monuments Record) contains an inventory of all known archaeological sites, which provides a good starting point. This record is held by the county or unitary authority archaeological curatorial service and their advice will be essential in identifying appropriate sites. Generally, council-owned land is ideal, particularly urban parks and open spaces well used by and accessible to the local community where former halls, mansions, mills, housing etc. once stood. However, successful projects have also been undertaken on private land. It is often the knowledge and passion of local residents or heritage groups that determine the location of the site.

**Step 2: Archaeological Desk-Based Assessment**

This is the foundation document for the whole project. It is a formal, intensive study of historical documents such as wills and inventories and archaeological sources such as the Historic Environment Record. It will produce scaled-up historic mapping showing the evolution and location of existing and former buildings and related features. The study will involve a detailed site inspection to relate research findings to the existing landscape. It will identify the location and relative significance of potential below-ground remains to inform further, intrusive investigation. There will be a report on the findings which will place the archaeology in its local and regional context. This document will provide details for school packs, guided tours, displays, presentations, publications, websites and information boards as well as informing the excavation strategy for the site. This key piece of work should only be undertaken by a very experienced archaeologist. It will cost a few thousand pounds and this should be raised internally as a statement of intent and commitment (Figure 18.4).

**Step 3: Archaeological Evaluation**

This should take the form of non-intrusive techniques such as geophysical survey together with trial trenching, which is essential to identify the depth, extent and character of potential
archaeological remains identified in the desk-based assessment. The evaluation would determine the appropriateness of each archaeological site for schools or adult volunteer excavation, as well as providing essential information for risk assessments and other health and safety planning. This work should be undertaken at an early stage to inform funding proposals, and it may be possible to put the costs towards partnership funding for an HLF bid (Figure 18.5).

Step 4: Involve Key Stakeholders

In developing the project bid, a number of key bodies need to be brought in:

- local archaeology and history groups;
- councillors;
- local council officers from regeneration, education, museums, leisure and planning departments;
- Heritage Lottery Fund advisers and local sponsors;
- marketing;
- members of the local community;
- community workers such as arts and special needs.

Ideally, the project should have a political champion such as a local councillor or executive member.

Step 5: Community Dig

An educational archaeologist should undertake pre-excavation school class sessions to prepare the children on the history of the site and archaeological practices. This work ideally could form part of the Key Stage 2 curriculum Local History component, but the development of Citizenship Skills for high-school pupils is also relevant.

The small team of professional archaeologists who will run the dig will need about a week to set up the excavation site. This will involve machine stripping and hand cleaning down to appropriate archaeological levels and setting up the site compound. Good management of available space is absolutely crucial; for instance, an area should be set aside for the use of schoolchildren, ideally involving archaeology at shallow depths, with hard, varied textures and surfaces, and plentiful finds! Consideration should also be given to setting spoil heaps well back so that there are roomy circulation areas for an open weekend. Other areas may be needed for marquees for exhibitions and other functions. The ratio of professional training archaeologists to volunteers is just as important: a ratio of about 1 to 5 or 6 is right. Too many volunteers and they will get little in the way of worthwhile training, attention and direction, the archaeologists will get distracted and the archaeology will suffer. School classes should have teacher support and a minimum of two archaeologists with appropriate experience and with Criminal Record...
Bureau clearance. Weekend working is particularly popular and should be allowed since it enables weekday workers and whole families to participate, but must be balanced with the need to pay archaeologist weekend rates and provide staff rest time.

Of course, health and safety considerations should always be paramount. These include safe working heights, hard hats in deeper areas, machining undertaken before public participation, and Heras fencing used to create a secure excavation zone with controlled access. Whilst many community excavations are undertaken on sites of local or at best county significance, it is still essential to balance the needs of the participating community volunteers with the duty to properly record and excavate the archaeology (Figure 18.6). At the end of the dig some time should be allocated to allow the site record to be completed and the excavation area reinstated. After the dig there should be follow-up work by the educational archaeologist in the participating schools. Following site closure there will be a programme of post-excavation analysis, which will include sending finds off to relevant specialists to report on. There will be an excavation report, which would have limited circulation but which could be put onto a website as a pdf.

**Step 6: Participation**

It is normal practice to have one school class in the morning and one in the afternoon. The schools dig could be run as a separate exercise for one or two weeks before the main volunteer dig starts, or if there is room it could be run at the same time. It is recommended that the dig should last at least one month and run for at least two seasons. Clearly if
schools are involved then the excavation needs to take place during term time, although it could overlap with the end of term and start of the holidays. There should be an opportunity for families to participate, either at weekends or during school holidays. Schoolchildren should have a rounded experience of archaeology (Figure 18.7), so that they not only have a go at excavating with a trowel, but also undertake pot-washing and finds analysis, surveying techniques such as geophysics and levelling, and also looking at, recording and understanding the fabric of surviving historic buildings (if appropriate). At the end of the project schools could be invited to prepare presentations on their experiences and the archaeology/history of the site, developing ICT skills, and a politician could be invited to a presentation event to give out certificates.

As well as engaging with local schools, the project should widen participation by targeting schools from further afield in the borough and beyond; in particular children from deprived areas should be encouraged to take part. Equally, special needs groups should be invited in order to make the project socially inclusive. Such groups might include Age Concern, Pupil Referral Units, or disability groups with learning or physical disadvantages. The idea here is that people who might feel a reluctance to volunteer on account of, say, mobility problems and feelings of social exclusion are invited to join in and experience ‘hands-on’ archaeology.

The presence of a community arts project alongside the excavation would be very beneficial. This would enable people to take part in arts activities related to the archaeology, for instance painting aspects of the dig, sculptures relating to artefacts found on the excavation, mosaics etc. (Figure 18.8). This would also enable people to participate who feel unable to use a trowel. There would also be other non-digging archaeological activities such as pot-washing and understanding archaeological recording.

The numbers of volunteers taking part in the main excavation would need to be controlled through a booking system. It is likely that as well as local volunteers, archaeology students and amateur archaeologists from local societies will wish to take part. The amateur archaeologists’ experience and enthusiasm can be very beneficial. The project should have access to a marketing officer who would raise awareness amongst local businesses and raise sponsorship towards the project; this would heighten the feel of the community nature of the scheme. It is possible that larger local businesses may wish to send staff as part of ‘Business in the Community’.

**Step 7: Open Weekend**

An open weekend should be held at the end of the excavation to share the results and excitement of the project with visitors to the site. Local civic trusts or
heritage groups could play a significant role in helping at this event. A website should be set up and maintained on a daily basis during the dig, keeping people abreast of the latest discoveries. The open weekend should include a whole range of activities, including guided tours of the excavation site, finds displays, pot-washing, geophysical survey, divining, pot-making, wattle and daub-making, mosaic-making and other art activities on an archaeological theme, looking at the Historic Environment Record, Family History, etc. (Figures 18.9 and 18.10).

**Step 8: Legacy and Sustainability**

As with the schools there should be follow-up work with adult volunteers, in the form of study days, workshops, training events etc. It is possible that there will be enough interest for a new archaeology society to be formed. If this is the case, then the long-term aim should be to train this group up to be able to carry out their own research in the area, including recording historic buildings and archaeological remains. This could be seen as a contribution to the project’s sustainability.

There is a duty to undertake post-excavation analysis to produce a report on the results of the excavation, finds, geophysical survey and other archaeological works. This should translate into both an academic and a popular publication. Dependent on the character of the archaeological remains exposed, it may be possible to consolidate and display wall footings etc. At the very least there should be an information board on site commemorating the excavation, and an exhibition. The local museum should be closely involved with the project and be the repository for the archive and artefacts, some of which could go on display, further widening the audience reached by the project. The museum service may be able to link the community dig into existing education/outreach programmes. Artefacts not required by the museum could go into education boxes, as part of a teaching pack, to be distributed to participating schools. Whilst the actual dig will only last a couple of seasons, the school education boxes will provide an archaeological resource for a much longer period.

**Benefits**

Community archaeology can bring a number of benefits to professional field archaeologists. Many
deal with a treadmill of commercial evaluations and excavations, where archaeology is often seen by the developer as a hurdle to overcome and their skills and endeavours are poorly valued by the client. The change in attitude with community digs could not be more marked. The enthusiasm, wonder and dedication shown by local people on these projects is astonishing and serves to re-energise the professional staff with the excitement of the subject. In general terms it is hoped that raised awareness and understanding of the local historic environment will lead to its better protection. There is an opportunity to explore and undertake research excavations on sites that are unlikely to be examined through development-funded archaeology, for instance if they lie in Green Belt or on parkland; this will allow for a more balanced understanding of the archaeology of the area than one reliant on development-sited excavations. From a university viewpoint, these projects establish strong links with the local community and can make children aspire to higher education, which furthers the university’s aim of widening participation. A network of local archaeology societies has evolved on the Greater Manchester community digs, so that volunteers from several societies may help out on one site. This gives local groups a chance to participate on a large-scale excavation site without the worry of identifying a suitable site and having to set it up. Furthermore, ideas and equipment can be shared. Finally, a gratifying aspect of community archaeology is that it also gives archaeologists a chance to engage politicians’ interests in the subject, showing that archaeology can be a force for good in the local community and a potent educational tool.

There has been some criticism of professional archaeologists making profit from Heritage Lottery funded community archaeology schemes, but these do not generate large grants for the benefit of the archaeology unit. Much of the work is done ‘at cost’ and the professionals involved put in a great deal of unpaid time because of their commitment to the subject, the site being investigated and the infectious enthusiasm of the community involved. Nor do these schemes detract from the work of amateur archaeology groups. Indeed in places where these schemes have occurred, such as at Mellor, Moston and Northenden, new archaeology societies have been created to fill a vacuum. The knowledge and experience of local amateur archaeologists has enriched community schemes; for instance, members of South Trafford Archaeological Group have taken part at the Northenden Mill and Moston Hall digs, Tameside Archaeology Society at Mellor and Parkbridge, and Wigan Archaeology Society at Ellesmere Park near Eccles. The number of community digs now coming forward provides an opportunity for local amateur individuals and groups.
to take part in a wide range of archaeological projects, without the complexities of setting up and administering them. These schemes also provide local digs where A-level archaeology students and undergraduates can gain all-important experience of site excavation. The Local Heritage Initiative grant scheme, which was well suited to community archaeology projects, finished in 2007. But it has been replaced by a suite of grants to suit all scales of community archaeology projects, ranging from a few thousand pounds to over a million. Most archaeology projects will be in the Our Heritage category of £10,000 to £100,000. Projects such as Mellor illustrate how a local community project can start at a relatively small scale and build momentum to qualify for much larger grants.

The Government has put a great deal of emphasis on local community engagement in recent years, yet at the same time the Heritage Lottery Fund had its budget slashed to fund the Olympic Games and local authority funding was tightened up to 2012. Moreover, Heritage Lottery applications and the administration and evaluation of grant-aided projects remain very complex, which can put off some community groups from applying. Whilst the future remains uncertain, it can be seen that community archaeology projects have provided benefits for a whole range of people. In particular it is pleasing to see professional archaeologists reconnecting with the public through the shared excitement of archaeological discovery; long may this continue!

Most of this article was written in the year after the Manchester Archaeology for All Conference in 2006 and then updated to 2012. However, it is worth reflecting on the impact of the recession of 2008 and its aftermath on community archaeology. From a curatorial view it has been an extremely challenging time, with significant local authority cuts to funding. This has resulted in the loss of local government archaeology posts and, in some areas, of services. In England the North and the Midlands have seen the most severe impacts. The number of posts has declined from around 410 in 2005 to less than 300 in 2014. Community archaeology posts and time spent on community engagement have been particularly hard hit as services have had to focus on essential duties such as maintenance of the Historic Environment Record and archaeology planning advice. At the same time, national agencies including the Council for British Archaeology and English Heritage have restructured due to funding reductions, which has led to the loss of educational and community engagement jobs. University departments and museums have also seen a decline in archaeology posts.

In many parts of the country, local government archaeologists have contributed information from the Historic Environment Record, essential advice, inspiration and support to successful community archaeology projects. The importance of this work has recently been recognised through the Heritage Lottery Fund publishing its Archaeology: Good Practice Guidance in February 2013. This is aimed at community groups looking to undertake a project that has an archaeological dimension. It also provides guidance for Heritage Lottery staff in determining the suitability of project proposals. It establishes the need to deposit project archaeology reports with the Historic Environment Record and to seek early and continuing advice from local government archaeologists. All of this helps to ensure that the archaeology is targeted appropriately, carried out to a good standard, and the results properly disseminated.

Sadly, the continuing crisis in local authority funding is creating areas of the country where curatorial advice cannot be obtained for community projects. Effectively, it has become a postcode lottery whether or not you can get good local archaeological advice and information in setting out your community archaeology project. Surely this is not right.

It is a sobering thought that the University of Manchester Archaeological Unit and the Greater Manchester Archaeological Unit were closed down by the University of Manchester, respectively in 2009 and 2012, despite helping to deliver nationally recognised successful community archaeology projects across Greater Manchester. The last few years have demonstrated just how vulnerable archaeology is to the winds of political and economic change.

Notes
1) Planning Policy Guidance Number 16, DoE, November 1990.
2) Miller & Aldridge 2011.
4) Redhead 2012.
Future Trends for Public Archaeology

Don Henson

Introduction

There is nothing new in people doing archaeology for the sheer fun of it. Amateur archaeology has a long history in Britain. At first, the emerging discipline was marked by the creation of national societies, such as the Society of Antiquaries of London, the Royal Archaeological Institute and the Cambrian Archaeological Association, between 1707 and 1844. The second generation of groups was formed at county level, with most (32) of the county societies being formed between 1836 and 1878.

The next phase of public involvement came after the Second World War, with the creation of about 150 smaller, district-level societies and field groups (the peak of group formation being in the 1960s). Progress from one generation of groups to the next has seen a narrowing of geographical focus, but a widening of the numbers involved in archaeology.

In parallel with this, a profession of archaeology was slowly being created. This began in the museums, with a Keeper of Archaeology being appointed at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford in 1683 and the British Museum being founded in 1753. Universities then followed, with the Disney Professor of Archaeology being appointed at Cambridge in 1851. A major step forward was the creation of field discipline, beginning at state level in 1882 with the post of Inspector of Ancient Monuments, following the creation of the Royal Commissions on Ancient Monuments in 1908. However, this was a very small profession. As late as 1961, Kathleen Kenyon could only enumerate 189 professional archaeologists outside of museums.1

This changed in the late 1960s and 1970s with the formation of city-based field units (although Southampton Unit was formed as early as 1958) and local authority field services (e.g. Oxfordshire SMR in 1965). By 1982, the profession had grown large enough to allow the formation of a professional body, the Institute of Field Archaeologists, now the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIfA). A survey in 2002 enumerated 5710 professional archaeologists,2 roughly the same figure as those employed in 2012.

The Professional-Volunteer Interface

The professional and amateur sectors have never been entirely separate. Professional support for amateur archaeology has traditionally been delivered through part-time adult education. Another important way of bringing the public into archaeology was the short-lived Manpower Services Scheme in the 1980s aimed at the unemployed, a number of whom went on to become professional archaeologists. Research by the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) showed that the number of archaeology courses in adult education increased from 195 in 1961 to 687 in 1980. Later CBA research with a different methodology was able to count 1327 part-time courses in 1999 that covered aspects of past material culture. Since then, there has been a decline in courses as government funding has prioritised vocational education at the expense of what is deemed ‘liberal’ adult education. In 2004, there were 1124 courses, with further cutbacks since then. By 2005 there had been a 23% drop in the number of universities offering archaeology in continuing education, a 20% drop in the number of courses and a 49% drop in the number of locations where courses are taught.

A gap has opened up in the provision of professional support for voluntary sector archaeology. This has been filled in a number of ways. Some of these have been national schemes or projects.

The Defence of Britain Project was run by the CBA from 1995 to 2002. It was a field survey of 20th-century anti-invasion defences in the United Kingdom. It managed to tap into a hitherto unrealised depth of interest in military archaeology. Some 600 volunteers took part in the creation of a
vast database of nearly 20,000 sites (Figure 19.1).

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) began in 1997 to provide support for the implementation of the new Treasure Act. It has played a major role in acting as the link between archaeologists and metal detectorists, although it does deal with anyone finding portable antiquities. The Scheme’s audience is much wider than the traditional audience for ‘officially packaged’ heritage. The PAS has recorded that 47% of finders who use the scheme come from social grades C2, D and E (skilled and unskilled manual workers, those on pensions, benefits and the unemployed, forming 49% of the population), compared with the 29% of museum visitors who come from these sections of society.3

Young Archaeologists

The Young Archaeologists’ Club (YAC) began as Young Rescue in 1972, and has been part of the CBA since 1993. It has reached up to 3000 members aged eight to sixteen (Figure 19.2), through a network of about 70 local branches all over the United Kingdom. Running this network are about 400 volunteers. Some YAC members have become archaeologists (such as Simon Thurley, the Chief Executive of English Heritage), but many will not. These will help to provide an enthusiastic and informed part of the public and be able to carry on their interests later in life in a voluntary capacity.

Perhaps more important for public engagement with archaeology are the local projects that have sprung up in recent years. The creation of the Local Heritage Initiative (LHI) in 2000 saw an explosion of applications for funding by local heritage groups. Using a narrow search for archaeology projects on the LHI database4 yielded 233 archaeological projects being funded over the six years of the initiative. A similar search of the Heritage Lottery Fund database5 produced 172 projects funded between 1994 and 2006 (although a wider definition of archaeology would yield many more). This fourth generation of local groups is often very local; tightly focused on a neighbourhood, village or even one site.

Professional Support and Funding

Some community projects are initiated by the profession. The Shoreditch Park Community Archaeology Project was run by the Museum of London and saw over 3000 people (including groups of young offenders) participate in uncovering the remains of four terrace houses which had been damaged in bombing raids during the Second World War. Oral history of people who had lived in the houses helped bring the archaeology to life.

LHI funding enables groups to use methods they would not otherwise have access to, such as geophysical prospection, e.g. the Great Ayton...
Community Archaeology Project working on their newly discovered Mesolithic site. Similarly, LHI funding enables groups to work with professional organisations in both survey and excavation, as with the Hadstock Society’s research project around their local late Anglo-Saxon church.

Some public archaeology projects have been going for a long time. The Leicestershire and Rutland Archaeological Network (see Chapter 15) is based on the work done by Peter Liddle in Leicestershire since the 1970s. It now has a system of volunteer Archaeological Wardens who can monitor local finds, survey sites, liaise with metal detectorists, keep an informal watching brief on building work in the area and act as planning consultants to the parish council. There are also Heritage Watch Groups and Wardens who help monitor and conserve the heritage of the countryside and landscape, and an archaeological fieldwork group.

Leicestershire has long been an exception: active professional support for community archaeology. Recently however, there has been a significant growth in the number of community archaeologists, whose primary role is supporting voluntary sector archaeology at grassroots level. The creation of such posts was called for by the CBA in its evidence to the All Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group (APPAG) enquiry in 2002, and accepted by APPAG in its 2003 report. A quick and superficial count shows about 20 people with the job title of community archaeologist, and about 50 who have community archaeology as a major role. Professional expertise in public archaeology is now increasingly being taught through various MA programmes (such as at Bishop Grosseteste University College Lincoln, Newcastle, UCL and York).

The kinds of work done by these archaeologists are varied. To take examples just from Yorkshire: the Greater York Community Archaeology Project, funded by the York Archaeological Trust, provides training and support for local groups in and around York, lending fieldwork equipment and helping liaise with specialists, as well as giving talks to the public. Similar support is provided on a freelance basis by Kevin Cale to a variety of local groups in North Yorkshire, on a project-funded basis, including one project linking an adult archaeology group with local schools to pass archaeological knowledge on to the younger generation. In South Yorkshire a new project will bring together the university, local museums and the WEA to work with local communities in Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham and Sheffield to develop their archaeological skills and understanding of their local historic environment as a...
Chapter 19: Future Trends for Public Archaeology

way of empowering them to work themselves with others in their communities.

The CBA has a role to play in supporting community archaeology. We have long been active in running the Young Archaeologists’ Club and National Archaeology Week. We are now developing our role as advocate for community archaeology within the discipline, and for greater public engagement in general. Archaeology for all is our strategic goal and underpins everything we do. Our new Community Archaeology Forum is a dedicated web space for community groups, where they can upload news about their work, communicate with each other and find advice. We also aim to develop the underpinning research that will support our advocacy of community archaeology.

The discipline now has its own community of community archaeologists. This community is beginning to debate issues crucial to working with the public. We are not just doing it but thinking about how and why we do it. There have been various conferences and sessions at conferences in recent years highlighting community archaeology and its practice, including *Archaeology for All* in 2006. The debate about how we work with the public has begun to move on to discussion about what effect we are having on the public, and what effect they are having on our archaeological practice. At the very least they will often challenge us on what is significant in heritage, with an emphasis on the personal and local; as in the Castleford Heritage Group’s interest in the recent industrial and built heritage of their own town within living memory. Some key questions to think about are whether we define or create communities in our work, or whether they come to us already formed. If we are creating the communities, do we have a responsibility to think carefully about what we are creating, and what level of support they will need after we have gone? Does the community we work with have to be geographical, or can it be a social community? If it is a social group, is there not a danger of creating a ghetto effect for them by separating them out as a group? How far do we take on board the concerns of post-modern archaeology and act as the servant of the groups we work with, or how far do we assume the role of teacher, guide and leader of groups? Who sets the research agenda for the work of the community, and how does this fit into wider research agendas within the discipline?

**Conclusion**

The future for community archaeology is positive and challenging. We are beginning to establish the social role of archaeology, and we are beginning to widen the archaeological circle to include new audiences. We need to listen more to communities themselves, and engage ourselves with a holistic vision of heritage in which archaeological remains are only one part of the past to be explored. Intangible heritages, local history, archives, folk tales, artistic responses to the historic environment, ecology and natural environmental studies etc. all have relevance to local people.

The world of ICT and new media is opening up new possibilities for engaging with people, e.g. the Ruthin heritage trail where local historic environment information can be viewed on a borrowed PDA as part of a town trail, or using wiki technology to allow access to, deposition and modification of archaeological research data. Widening the social background of the archaeological audience will itself present new challenges. We may have to learn new ways of speaking, new styles of discourse, and how to accommodate people with specialised needs.

We have got used to the idea that archaeology as a discipline has multiple voices within it, with what can be radically different approaches to the past. We now need to get used to the idea that those multiple voices include those of the public, with their own approaches to the past. What we are beginning to see is a bottom-up democratisation of archaeology, with community archaeologists at the spearhead of change.

**Notes**

3) MLA 2004.
4) [www.lhi.org.uk/index.html](http://www.lhi.org.uk/index.html)
5) [www.hlf.org.uk/english/grantsdatabase/](http://www.hlf.org.uk/english/grantsdatabase/)
Emerging Trends in Community Archaeology

Rob Isherwood

Introduction

Community archaeology has been a rapidly growing phenomenon in 21st-century Britain. Examination of the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) website reveals evidence of 257 current or recent projects with archaeological components. Such projects are located across all regions of the United Kingdom. They exist because of the establishment of the HLF and subsequent rule changes that permitted funds to be utilised for payment of archaeological fieldwork costs. In this paper I will examine the origins of the concept of community archaeology and, in the light of research located around case studies of HLF funded community archaeology projects, identify emerging trends in community archaeology. I will argue that it is vital that archaeologists recognise, understand and respond to developments in the changing relations between communities and their material heritage. Indeed, it is within the arena of a community archaeology project that such relations are being explored and developed by all participant groups. Community archaeology projects, and in particular those funded by HLF, are manifestations of social and political change. This dynamic has significant implications for professionals involved in facilitating community archaeology projects. This paper will progress by looking forward and considering the significant issues that are liable to confront providers of community archaeology and those seeking to develop its practice.

The Origins of Community Archaeology in the United Kingdom

Before the current phase of HLF funded community archaeology projects, two separate strands to the history of community archaeology can be identified in the United Kingdom. The origins of the term itself, and the first strand, relate back to 1976 and the work of Peter Liddle in Leicestershire (see Chapter 15). In his role as Archaeological Survey Officer, Liddle established what was to become the Leicestershire Archaeological Network, which enabled and encouraged local residents to become actively involved in researching and curating the archaeology of their places. His idea was mutually beneficial to both professional archaeologist and amateur in that professionals could call on the support of many willing volunteers to aid in the task of surveying the area and the amateur was given “…the right to participate in its discovery.”

The second strand to the history of community archaeology in the United Kingdom relates to the period in the 1980s when funding became available through Manpower Services Commission (MSC) programmes to fund archaeological fieldwork within training schemes. For a few brief years in the second half of the 1980s many large-scale projects took place. For example, within Greater Manchester, a community archaeology project was established in each of the ten boroughs. When government funding priorities changed, however, this source of funding was promptly closed.

These two strands, whilst being very different in nature to many of the community archaeology projects in the current phase of HLF projects, are significant in a number of ways. Peter Liddle’s Leicestershire network has successfully managed to operate continuously since the 1970s. It demonstrates an approach to community archaeology that is not dependent upon large-scale state funding. Its practicality and value can be seen in terms of rural communities such as Leicestershire where the fieldwork methodology is based around fieldwalking and requires little in the way of costs. It demonstrates the value of fostering a sense of ownership with associated rights in respect of local archaeological remains. The MSC funded community
archaeology highlighted the vulnerability of projects that are reliant on access to state funds. Indeed, I would argue, the experience of the MSC funded community archaeology has left an impression on the minds of many within the profession as to what community archaeology projects ‘look like’, and about the role of the professional in respect of the amateur. MSC funded archaeology was all ‘top-down’ archaeology. Projects were designed by professionals on sites deemed to be appropriate for community participation. Opportunities were created for interested individuals to participate and receive skills training. This is the image and understanding of community archaeology that became established in the minds of many professional archaeologists.

The current phase of HLF funded community archaeology projects is very different in two crucial respects. Firstly, access to funds can be acquired by non-professionals seeking to run their own projects. Such groups will usually employ a professional archaeologist as site director and project facilitator. This crucially alters the power dynamic between professional and amateur. Secondly, this phase of community archaeology projects is taking place in changed social and political conditions. Political discourse has been drawn to the theme of ‘community’. During the 1990s the issue of social inclusion was brought to the centre of debate and ‘inclusivity’ became a talisman of New Labour. Building communities came to be seen as an effective means to develop social responsibility. Indeed, the idea of community was viewed as “a nexus of rights and obligations...important for the well being of all.” Thus community archaeology becomes something more than an opportunity for public participation in archaeology - it becomes a shared activity capable of contributing to the goal of ‘building better communities’.

The implications of this are great in respect of the maintenance of funding for community archaeology. The ‘community’ aspect legitimises the provision of state funding for archaeological fieldwork. Consequently, tangible community benefits need to be visible. Perceptions of the social value of community archaeology projects will inevitably become crucial to future access to state funding. In 1999, Timothy Darvill identified two broad groupings into which archaeological research could be categorised: problem-orientated research and development-prompted research. He saw problem-orientated research as being undertaken to explore interesting archaeological problems and development-orientated research as being undertaken to rescue archaeological evidence before it is destroyed.

I would argue that it is now possible to see the emergence of a new category of archaeological research, community-orientated research, where fieldwork is undertaken for reasons other than the purely archaeological. This is an issue and a situation that needs to be confronted and addressed by the profession. In what situations is it appropriate to carry out destructive archaeological excavation? Are certain sites too important or sensitive to be the focus of a community archaeology project? And, how do you respond to active community groups who argue that “You can’t tell us where we should dig”?

Contemporary Community Archaeology in Practice

The funding of archaeological fieldwork by HLF within community projects has created a range of
new opportunities and associated issues for both the profession of archaeology and for society in general. The facility now exists for community groups to initiate and design archaeological projects of their own, projects designed with particular aims and objectives in mind. Indeed, this dynamic has widely been observed with projects now frequently being categorised as ‘bottom-up’ or ‘top-down’.

The ‘bottom-up’ project is generally viewed as being initiated from within one or more community groups whilst the ‘top-down’ project is viewed as being initiated from within professional organisations. However, in spite of the general recognition of such a distinction between styles of community archaeology project, the issues and implications that surround such opposing styles, I would argue, have not properly been considered or explored.

‘Bottom-up’ Projects

The Dunbar Vaults Project (Figures 20.1 & 20.2) was able to draw on the skills and experience of community members who had previously established the very active ‘Dunbar’s John Muir Association’.15 The Liss Roman Villa Project in Hampshire (Figure 20.3) was also designed by community members who possessed great organisational, administrative and management skills.14 These skills had previously been employed in a successful campaign to acquire a redundant school-building complex as a community centre, in direct opposition to Hampshire County Council who had alternative plans for the site. What is apparent is that for a community group to initiate and design a project they will require the knowledge of what funding is available, the confidence to consider placing an application, and ultimately the skills required to design a successful funding bid. Clearly, not all community groups will have such capabilities. Thus, ‘bottom-up’ projects are most likely to occur in localities where there are community members who possess a particular set of requisite skills.

The examples of Liss and Dunbar exemplify projects that have a very clear group of project ‘owners’. For each of these projects new groups were formed, the Dunbar Vaults Investigation Group and the Liss Archaeological Group. These groups both own and control their respective projects. Their relationship with professional archaeologists is as clients: they both employ an archaeologist to act as project consultant and facilitator. This is an arrangement that creates a changed power relation between amateur and professional archaeologist than has traditionally existed in the past.

‘Top-down’ Projects

‘Top-down’ projects are liable to be rather more confused in terms of ownership and organisation than ‘bottom-up’ projects. Such projects may be
derived from a variety of sources; for example, the ‘Silchester Town Life Project’ was initiated from within the Department of Archaeology at the University of Reading; ‘Dig Manchester’ was initiated by a Manchester City Councillor, Paul Murphy. The top-down project will almost certainly be professionally driven. This may be solely by professional archaeologists or, as with Dig Manchester, by a partnership of professionals, some of whom are archaeologists. Within ‘top-down’ projects the professional archaeologist is liable to be in a position to determine what type of site is deemed suitable for community participation. Such deliberations do not occur with ‘bottom-up’ projects. This point is exemplified by the Dunbar Vaults Project which, because of the nature of the site (Figure 20.2), can only accommodate four excavators at any one time. Such a site would never have been selected by professionals for amateurs.

‘Top-down’ Versus ‘Bottom-up’

In the early stages of my research I questioned many archaeological curators about projects in their areas. Often the terms ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’ were used to describe projects. Interestingly, some curators appeared to perceive the ‘bottom-up’ project as a purer form of community archaeology, something they were especially pleased to see in their area. In East Lothian, for example, I was directed towards the ‘bottom-up’ Dunbar Vaults Project rather than the ‘top-down’ Prestongrange Community Archaeology Project. Curators, however, tended to have more concerns or worries over ‘bottom-up’ projects. An example was provided of a project that had under budgeted for fieldwork costs and of a project that had been ‘over zealous’ in its excavation work and destroyed important archaeology because it lacked experienced supervision.

The issue of ‘top-down’ versus ‘bottom-up’ raised its head in debates at University College London’s ‘Archaeology in the Community’ conference in June 2006. A number of delegates felt it wrong to design a community archaeology project for a locality whose community groups had not asked for it specifically. This point of view was countered by those who had been involved in top-down projects with the view that communities will not ask for things if they have no knowledge about the possibilities or the potential in the first place. Moreover, they may lack the knowledge or skill base to create their own project. It was further observed that volunteers who participated in ‘top-down’ projects tended to be very positive about the experience and often demanded further such opportunities.

I have so far utilised the terms ‘bottom-up’ and ‘top-down’ as binary oppositions. This has been done to highlight variables in the power relations between professionals and amateurs in differently styled projects. I would not wish to argue that one style is superior to another. Rather, I would argue that the underlying social and political conditions tend to predetermine what style of project is possible in a given locality. I would also argue that the projects themselves are very individualistic and don’t necessarily lend themselves to such categorisation. For example, it could be argued that the now completed ‘Dig Moston’ project had elements of both ‘top-down’ and ‘bottom-up’. The crucial point I wish to make in this discussion is that archaeologists involved in projects that are patently ‘top-down’ need to reflect carefully on the power dynamics of the project. Is there greater scope for democracy? Are we being too limiting in respect of site type offered and the scope of archaeological activity available for amateur participants?

The HLF Effect

The existence of HLF has had two specific effects on community archaeology – it has enabled a large number of projects but it has also styled projects. For projects to be successful in obtaining funding they need to demonstrate benefits beyond archaeology. For example, the original bid drawn up by the Dunbar Vaults Investigation Group could have been described as problem-orientated archaeological research. Initial soundings from HLF suggested that their application would be unsuccessful unless they could show how they were going to take the project to the wider community. The solution to the problem that persuaded HLF to accept the bid was to plan a programme of public dissemination. The Dunbar Vaults is a particularly challenging site for community archaeology because the confined nature of the vaults limits participation levels.
Most HLF funded community archaeology projects demonstrate community benefits in terms of broadening public access and widening participation. Educational opportunities are a strong selling point. Visits by local schoolchildren are important components of many community projects. Site tours and open days attract visitors who are interested but not inclined to participate more fully as volunteer workers (Figure 20.4). An interesting issue for project organisers, and in particular the archaeological consultant, is the extent to which children can participate in excavation work. Schoolchildren are catered for in different ways from site to site. On some sites such as Liss (Figure 20.5) there is a mock trench where items are ‘loaded’ and dug up each day. At other sites, such as Dig Manchester’s Moston and Northenden digs or the Royton Lives Through the Ages Project (Figure 20.6), schoolchildren are able to excavate real features. They are full participants. Compromise between the perceived archaeological value of a site and the social and educational value of other aspects of a given project may well cause tensions between different interest groups and attitudes and solutions will vary between projects. An example of policy in respect of this issue can be seen in the following statement:

“The integrity of the research of the University of Reading’s Silchester excavation cannot be compromised even for so worthy a cause as broadening public access to archaeology.”

Community Archaeology and Local Government

The emergence and styling of community archaeology projects across the United Kingdom tends to be variable and perhaps increasingly so in recent times. This observation is highlighted by study of examples of community archaeology in developer-funded archaeological projects. Such projects carry obvious problems for the inclusion of community dimensions. These problems in general are centred around the conflict of interests between the developer who wishes to proceed quickly and at minimum cost and of interested locals who may wish for access and a level of participation in the exploration and study of local archaeological remains. Issues of power and ownership come to the fore in such circumstances. The central figures with power to make determinations are liable to involve local politicians in conjunction with their appointed archaeological curators and planning officers. The outcome of deliberations by the central figures will ultimately be determined by balancing a range of factors. These factors will include:

Fig 20.5: Father and son team at the Liss Roman Villa Project.
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- local economic conditions. The potential of a
- land ownership. The landowner/developer may
- the level of local interest in archaeology and
- the perceived archaeological potential of the site
- the strength of the relationship between heritage

The archaeological curator that is minded to promote community archaeology on developer-funded sites will have to be aware of all the factors and consider what level of community participation is viable. The most potent example of community archaeology within a development scheme is that of Hungate, York, where large-scale programmes of community participation have extended over a number of years and large portions of the site. Another but less extensive example is the project at The Butts, Worcester. The significance of these two examples concerns their location within historic cities where sites with potential for development are at a premium. In such cases the potential for the archaeological curator to impose community dimensions on a development project is massively enhanced. In cases where local conditions are perhaps not so conducive to large-scale community participation the curator may seek to acquire site access for communities through the provision of site open days. Such cases are becoming increasingly common. Good examples of this are the development of the Grand Arcade site in Wigan and Oxford Archaeology North’s excavation at the new Co-operative Headquarters site in Manchester.

Local social and economic conditions can be seen to be influential in determining the frequency and styling of community archaeology provision. A particularly recent trend has seen the potential for community archaeology diminished very strongly in a number of areas across the country. The cause of this lies in the variable approaches of local authorities to the national economic condition which has demanded sizeable cuts in local government budgets. Archaeological curators and advisory services who have frequently been the promoters of community archaeology either as project designers of ‘top-down’ projects or facilitators of ‘bottom-up’ projects have in some instances been axed (Merseyside and Sandwell) or had their role and effectiveness severely diminished (Greater Manchester) as a consequence of massive budget cuts. The valuation of heritage within the budgeting plans of local authorities across the country would appear to be disparate, with some areas in particular targeting heritage.

HLF Funding Policy and Heritage Planning Policy

Within the ministerial forward to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) published in March 2012 it is stated that “…in recent years, planning has tended to exclude, rather than include, people and communities.” I would argue that the evidence does not support this statement. Indeed, study of NPPF reveals a significant change of emphasis and tone in respect of the role of communities in the management of their local heritage resources. Previously, issues of public and community involvement and participation were very much to the fore. For example, the DCMS White Paper of 2007, Heritage Protection for the 21st Century, makes explicit the need to respond to demands from within society for greater involvement in heritage issues: “…they want to see the historic environment at the heart of planning, regeneration, of environmental stewardship, and of building sustainable communities.” I would argue that the growth of community archaeology projects at this time, and in particular those funded by HLF, developed to a large extent as a consequence of the close alignment in philosophy of heritage planning initiatives and HLF funding policy. Within Policy Directions to the HLF in 2007 issues of community involvement in managing local places are strongly evident. For example, the directions speak of “…[t]he need to involve the public and local communities in making policies, setting priorities and distributing money… [t]he need to increase access and participation for those who do not currently benefit from heritage opportunities.” Whilst the Heritage Protection White Paper never reached the statute books, it reflected current political thought and direction and its underlying philosophy can be seen continuing into Planning Policy Statement 5, which was published in 2010. The rights of communities to have a participatory role and voice in the management of local heritage places is clearly evident within paragraph HE7 which states, “If the evidence suggests that the heritage asset may have a special significance to a particular community that may not be fully understood from the usual process of consultation and assessment, then the local planning authority should take reasonable steps to seek the views of that community.”

Moving forward to NPPF, the requirement to consider local communities and involve them in the
management of their heritage places is no longer in evidence. Indeed the ministerial forward (see above) that suggests local communities were previously excluded seems rather strange as the 2012 policy seems to be the one that marks a strong change of direction away from public inclusion, not only in what it directs but also in the underlying philosophy. Now the strongest emphasis is placed firmly on sustaining development. Direction in relation to community inclusion is notably absent. This situation, I would argue, presents a clear threat to the further development of, and provision for, community archaeology in the coming years. The objective of HLF to involve community groups in the management of their places now appears to align less strongly with planning policy. Moreover, the recent cuts to local government archaeology services (see above) has meant that many officers who previously served to facilitate community archaeology have either been removed or had their remit drastically reduced.

The Developing Practice of Community Archaeology, and Implications for the Future

The provision of funding by HLF represents significant opportunities for community archaeology in the United Kingdom. These opportunities are being explored by many groups around the country within very individualistic projects. The concept and practice of community archaeology is being developed within the work of unique and vibrant projects around the country. There are however a number of key developments which have taken place within community archaeology that need to be grasped and addressed.

HLF funded community archaeology is different from earlier forms of community archaeology in two crucial respects:

- community groups have the facility to initiate and design projects themselves. Thus, the role of the professional archaeologist will need to be negotiated with project organisers if effective partnership projects are to be established. Establishing an appropriate power dynamic may not be straightforward. For example, tensions may well occur when determining if a site is appropriate for a community archaeology project. Also, HLF officers will need to ensure the viability of archaeological work proposed by non-professionals before grants are awarded. This may require outside consultation such as that already employed in respect of historic buildings;

- projects will have objectives that are ‘community’ orientated as well as ‘archaeology’
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Active involvement in a community archaeology project often influences or changes the long-term attitudes and behaviour of participants in a number of ways. Moreover, such changes are liable to have consequences:

- participants often wish to continue the experience they have had beyond the life of the project. Indeed, participants in projects frequently speak of wanting a second phase or new project. The consequence of this will inevitably be increased pressure for funds on HLF once repeat applications begin to compete against new applications;
- participants tend to become more aware of heritage issues and increasingly see themselves as stakeholders. Indeed, this aspect of community archaeology fits well with political agendas which seek to develop civic engagement. More empowered communities, however, are liable to seek access or rights in respect of all archaeological fieldwork conducted in their localities. This might be expected to extend towards developer-funded archaeology which previously has tended to stay hidden from local communities.

Finally, it is important to appreciate that the state funding of community archaeology projects through HLF clearly places community archaeology within the political arena. It needs to be understood that state funding of community archaeology projects through HLF will only continue if the ‘community’ benefits of projects are clear and explicit. The changing economic and political climate has already begun to impact heavily on community archaeology in some local authorities through the contraction of local government archaeological services. This is a developing problem for community archaeology as local archaeological officers have frequently been significant players in driving ‘top-down’ community projects and encouraging and supporting ‘bottom-up’ projects. The need for a strong archaeological lobby is ever increasing if the practice and theory of community archaeology is to continue to flourish.

Notes

1) www.hlf.org.uk/english/grantsdatabase.
2) This paper is founded on the presentation of the same title which I delivered at the ‘Archaeology for All’ conference held at the University of Manchester. It draws on my doctoral research into the phenomenon of Community Archaeology. This research, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), was completed in 2009 (Isherwood 2009). Much has happened in the world of Community Archaeology since 2009, and so, new material is included here to reflect further emerging trends’.
6) Liddle 1985, 3.
7) Hunter & Ralston 1997, 35.
13) I don’t see this category as being necessarily exclusive of the other two categories.
14) Isherwood 2009, 36-44.
15) ibid, 28-36.
16) ibid, 44-54; Nevell 2013.
17) Isherwood 2011, 15.
18) Smeed 2006.
21) Hughes ND.
22) Miller & Aldbridge 2011.
23) Redhead 2012.
24) DCLG 2012.
25) ibid. 2012, i.
26) DCMS 2007a, 4.
27) ibid.
28) PPS5.
29) DCMS 2007b, 7.
Chapter 21

Community Archaeology, Occupational Therapy and Learning Disability: A Practical Case Study

Brian Grimsditch & Doug Hawes

Introduction

This chapter outlines the case for involving people with learning disabilities in community archaeology, and explores some of the successes and lessons learned in the course of the first year of Dig Greater Manchester.

October 2011 saw the launch of Dig Greater Manchester (DGM), by the University of Salford Centre for Applied Archaeology. Its five-year mission is to increase community involvement and interest in archaeology throughout every borough of the Greater Manchester region via a series of two-week-long evaluation excavations, culminating in two larger excavations at the end of the project.¹

Learning Disability and Meaningful Occupation

Part of the remit of DGM is to encourage the involvement of disadvantaged and disempowered sections of the community, as well as the involvement of people with disabilities. People with learning disabilities often straddle both groups, as a

Fig 21.1: Worsley New Hall community excavation (funded by Peel Investments). Image courtesy of Swave Aerial Photography.
significant learning disability is often associated with significant social and practical disadvantages. People with learning disabilities are also more likely to have physical disabilities and to experience mental health problems.

People with learning disabilities are less likely to be in employment, more likely to be reliant on benefits, and are often targets for financial, social and other abuse and exploitation even within their local communities. Opportunities for real meaningful activities or voluntary work are often sparse, and where they exist, can often result in segregation into day centres. For people who are more able, and for whom the activities on offer at the day centre are under-demanding, there is quite literally nowhere to go. Supported employment organisations have long waiting lists, limited access to jobs or are having their funding cut. Where employment is found for people, it is often in more low-paid and low-status jobs.

Motivation to engage in an activity or occupation generally develops as a consequence of encounter, experience and experimentation, a slow movement from exploration, through hesitant competency, to more fully fledged competency and ultimately to mastery of the activity. This begins in childhood. People with learning disabilities have often been denied suitable childhood experience of occupational possibilities on which to draw, and where they have, the lesson learned is a crushing ‘you’re no good at this’. Again, this is perhaps even more likely to be the case for people with more moderate disabilities, whose difficulties may be less immediately apparent to the non-specialist and who may not have been diagnosed until adulthood. Thus, many people have no idea what they want to do, and have been, to some extent, conditioned to avoid potentially stressful and humiliating new experiences. Consequently, inactivity and boredom are common features of life for people with learning disabilities.2

Community archaeology offers a potentially excellent remedy to some of these problems. The commitment is for a relatively short period, the possible tasks are many and varied, often physical, and usually outdoors (indoor activities include finds processing). The potential for modifying the intellectual or physical demands for each task is good. The work ethic is serious, but relaxed in manner. Almost everybody is a volunteer, so all are of equal status, which in social terms (after the Hollywood films Indiana Jones and The Mummy and, of course, TV Channel 4’s Time Team) is high rather than low. Tell someone you dug the garden today and they grunt. Tell them you’ve been doing archaeology and you’ll get a different reaction (Figure 21.1).

The aim of the current article is to explain some of the more practical aspects of ‘making it happen’, which we hope will be of interest to health and social care professionals and archaeologists alike. What follows is a broadly narrative account of how occupational therapists and archaeologists have come together over the last year to make this possibility a reality.

**Community Archaeology and Occupational Therapy**

The occupational therapists (OTs) and support staff mentioned in this chapter are employed by Manchester Learning Disability Partnership (MLDP). This is a partnership organisation between Manchester City Council and Central Manchester Foundation Healthcare NHS Trust. OTs hope to improve people’s health and wellbeing by encouraging them to engage in occupations. At the lower end of the activity scale, these are things like getting up and getting dressed, in the middle range it’s looking after a house, cooking and shopping, and at the top, it’s getting a job, playing a musical instrument, going to the pictures, doing art – whatever is important to people. OTs attempt to improve people’s function so they can do things themselves. Sometimes they assess and modify people’s physical environments (e.g. put in a shower or an extra stair rail) to make things easier or safer – and sometimes, as we mentioned above, they have to hunt out new things for people whose limited experience of life makes them unsure what they want to do. But finding these opportunities is not always easy.

One of the authors happened to come across DGM on the internet by chance in January 2012, partly because he previously worked as an archaeologist himself. If it were not for this, he would not have known about DGM, nor perhaps have made the first exploratory phone call. A good tip, then, for community archaeologists is to contact your local community learning disabilities team (and, for that matter, community mental health teams). Try to get to speak to the occupational therapists there, who will generally be the best and most likely point of contact for identifying volunteers, but any professional will suffice. Try to get an email address and send them a flyer so they don’t forget (send them this book!). Put an advert in All Together Now or a similar regional disability publication. Contact MENCAP. But make sure you make clear that support may be needed for volunteers (see below). For occupational therapists and other health workers a good tip is to find out what is going on in your area – the internet, or the popular magazine Current Archaeology is a good source and there is quite a lot of community archaeology going on at the time of writing.

The next step is to arrange a meeting. It sounds
simple, but the value of the authors actually meeting up early in the process cannot be overestimated. Not only could we put names to faces, but we could share information about DGM and OT respectively, our resources, responsibilities and organisational priorities, build a rapport and get some formal clarity over what DGM and OT could expect from each other.

For example, from an OT point of view, we wanted to know that we would be welcomed whenever we could arrange for people to come, as the two-week length of the evaluation digs might otherwise make it hard to get dates. We agreed that our applications would be prioritised and that it would be okay for the same people to come to repeated sessions/digs if they wanted to. We also wanted to know that DGM were willing to alter and grade tasks to make them more accessible.

From a DGM point of view it was important to know that people with learning disabilities would be properly supported. Archaeological sites can be dangerous places, and DGM staff cannot be everywhere at once. The archaeology itself must, naturally, be protected and recorded and dug appropriately. We agreed that a good way to proceed would be to start with a small number of more able people, supported at all times by OT staff. These staff would, as necessary, work alongside and help direct people with learning disabilities, assessing skills and adjusting support as we went along. Over time, we agreed that greater numbers of people, perhaps with more profound disabilities, could be involved.

If all of this sounds overly obvious, it should be borne in mind that many disability work placements fail, not because work placements cannot be found in the first place, but because appropriate support is not put in place and maintained once the placement starts. This can result in task failure, or injury, or simply in disabled people having a bad experience and not coming back. We also agreed that the ‘Art to Life’ therapeutic groups run by the OT service artist would visit each dig. These groups tend to have people who have greater levels of learning disability in them as well as more profound physical disabilities. The art groups would ensure members were adequately supported. DGM would ensure that archaeological staff members were made available to welcome and facilitate each visit.

The central message here is that we believe that early and proactive meeting and team working between DGM and the OT service played a pivotal role in ensuring the subsequent success of the site.
volunteers’ experiences and art group visits. People knew each other before the first site day, the archaeologists were set up to accommodate people, possibly at short notice, and the OTs knew that they needed to stay with and support the volunteers.

**Attendance at DGM**

Over the course of 2012, four DGM excavations were carried out. These were at:

- Etherstone Hall in Leigh, a possible moated medieval hall with subsequent late medieval and early modern redevelopments;
- Close Park in Radcliffe, the site of a medieval fortified manor house overlain by a grand 19th-century house and workers' cottages associated with a bleach works;
- Chadderton Hall and park, an 18th-century manor house with ancillary buildings;
- and Wood Hall in Reddish, a 19th-century hall and farm complex overlaying a late medieval hall.

There was an additional excavation at Worsley New Hall in Salford, a prestigious and well-known Victorian country house. This was funded by Peel Holdings as a community project.5

The ‘Art to Life’ art group have attended all five of these excavations, with between two and five members on each visit. These visits have provided an opportunity for people with some extremely profound learning and physical disabilities to visit and participate to some degree in the process of community archaeology. Similarly, their artworks have provided material for the illustrations of publications. On the last dig of the year, at Reddish, smooth teamworking between ‘Art to Life’ staff and DGM staff meant that pictures produced by the group on a Tuesday were scanned, copied, blown up, laminated and decorating the fencing by the time of the open day the following Saturday.

Two site volunteers attended four of the digs for a total of five full days. A further two people came to one dig each for a day. A total of six staff from the OT service attended the digs in a support capacity. Benefits were most clearly observed in the two volunteers who attended regularly and it is clear that they found the experience positive. However, a more structured narrative of the five days’ involvement is worth giving here, to help draw out some more general conclusions and lessons.

**Day 1**

At Worsley New Hall (Figure 21.2), our two volunteers spent their first day, supported by two OTs. Introductions to DGM staff and paperwork were completed. The first hurdle encountered was access to the site. The OTs had intended to visit and assess access, but had unfortunately been unable to do this. One volunteer did have some mobility problems and the short walk through muddy and uneven woods presented a real challenge for him. However, with careful physical support and encouragement, he managed. An alternative and safer access route to a road close to the site was identified, with the OTs using their cars to transport the volunteers to and from the site hut at breaks. For all subsequent days, the OTs ensured they prioritised making a short site visit the week before the dig commenced, to meet with DGM staff and ensure access arrangements were satisfactory.

On site, the majority of the time was spent trowelling and brush cleaning the brick cellar floors of the Victorian house for photographic recording. Initially, the volunteers were quite unsure of the process and had to be coached (by continuous modelling and repetition of verbal prompts) in the correct ways to use trowel and brush, to maintain a clean environment, and to work systematically as a team. They also needed to have explained to them the purpose and therefore the approach to this type of cleaning - the importance of clearly defining each brick, not using a brush on wet soil to avoid smearing. As each individual encountered different problems (e.g. one tended to work fast, but sketchily,
whilst another tended to work excessively slowly) it was found useful to team up in pairs, one volunteer to one OT, so that modelling and prompts could be focused on the difficulties observed.

At this stage, the volunteers found it hard to distinguish archaeological finds from pieces of stone and root, and tended to want to call the archaeologists over for each individual possible ‘find’. They also found it hard to maintain rhythm and concentration. However, a good and well-defined area was well cleaned by the end of the day and the volunteers expressed satisfaction.

One volunteer asked the OTs if he could do some simpler but heavier work in the afternoon, and this was duly negotiated with DGM staff. This seemed to match his skills and disposition and his help was much appreciated by DGM staff and other volunteers, with whom he quickly struck up a rapport.

Day 2

On the second day at Worsley New Hall, our new access route worked smoothly. The day was spent in continued cleaning of brick surfaces. It was noticeable how much improved the volunteers’ skills were. They understood the process of teamwork and the mechanics of cleaning, and support and grading was more focused on giving each a ‘strip’ of a width appropriate to their skill and speed, so that the team as a whole worked to a continuous line. They demonstrated better discrimination in distinguishing finds of material culture from natural stone and root and better patience in agreeing to wait for DGM staff to pass by to show them finds rather than hailing them for each one. The day’s cleaning included such features as drains, large postholes and areas of metal corrosion, and the volunteers began to participate logically in discussions about the interpretation of these. Again, a well-defined area was cleaned and the volunteers could see results at the end of the day.

On this second day the OTs reduced support, with one OT present at the start of the day, a period of doubling up and another then present at the end of the day.

Day 3

The third day was at Radcliffe Close Park in Bury (Figure 21.3). Two days had been planned at this site, but the first was rained off. A third volunteer joined for this excavation, and two OTs attended. This was the first ‘true’ DGM site the volunteers had attended.

Day three was towards the end of the dig and the first task allocated was adjusting the fencing to allow better safe public access for the open day. Volunteers and OTs alike had to quickly learn the principles and practices involved in separating, moving and rejoining the large fencing panels. One volunteer was then supported to learn the fine motor skills and clockwise/anticlockwise principles needed to use the spanner, whilst the other two were supported to use their enthusiasm and physical strength to move the panels in a safe manner. Again, it was necessary for the OTs to support different people closely in different ways and have a high degree of consciousness of health and safety and teamwork. By morning tea break, the volunteers’ (and the OTs’) understanding of the processes and principles was much improved, and the task was completed. The volunteers expressed a wish to engage with some archaeology, but there was limited actual digging going on by this stage of the excavation. However, between them, DGM and OT staff discussed the options and agreed that it would be useful, practical and safe for the volunteers to straighten some large badly collapsed archaeological trench sections. This gave them the opportunity to lay out and cut to a straight line, to handle trowels, shovels, buckets and barrows, and to observe and understand the principles of archaeological stratigraphy in one of its simplest forms. Once more it was necessary for the OTs to model and prompt for the tasks, and coordinate health and safety. Volunteers were also able to compare the overall view of the site before and after the sections were cleaned up and notice the difference. Once more, one volunteer lent his strength and enthusiasm to work with another DGM
volunteer backfilling a trench. They were then asked as a team to help put a fence round this area as the last task of the day. The volunteers responded well to this direct request for their help, with a clear sense of purpose, pride and teamwork.

Day 4

The fourth day was spent at Chadderton Hall and park (Figure 21.4), with the two regular volunteers, supported again by two OTs. Again, this was towards the end of the dig, partly because the first week of the dig was very busy for DGM staff with school parties. The first task was fencing for the open day once again, and this was accomplished smoothly, with a sense of growing competence, using and consolidating the practical and problem-solving skills learnt on day three. For the second task, our volunteers separated, with one moving part of a spoil heap to improve access for the open day, whilst the other expressed a wish to do some trowelling. However, the trowelling was of limited success, partly because the area to be worked on was smaller and more restrictive, with sticky puddle clay to be removed from cobbles, and partly because the cobbles were actually uncomfortable for the volunteer to position himself upon. He soon rejoined the other to finish moving the spoil heap.

The afternoon task was to de-turf a small trench ready for participatory digging on the open day. This was carried out alongside other DGM volunteers and a good rapport was established. This was really the volunteers’ first experience of primary excavation (albeit of topsoil), and they displayed a clear enthusiasm for both the quantity of modern finds coming out and for the identification of the uppermost layers of archaeology below the topsoil.

The overall day helped consolidate fencing skills and use of heavy digging tools, as well as giving an opportunity to actually dig. The support of both OTs was needed in order to support the volunteers when they separated, to model tasks and to monitor health and safety, as some of the trenches were extremely deep and walkways narrow. A clear sense began to emerge of the volunteers’ roles as increasingly competent and reliable members of the whole team.

Day 5

The fifth and final day was at Wood Hall Farm, Reddish Vale Country Park (Figure 21.5). Again, this was towards the end of the dig. Our volunteers had specifically requested fencing and de-turfing as favoured tasks and DGM staff accommodated. The volunteers were allocated a clear but complex fencing
task, involving beginning to remove fencing to enclose an adjacent area whilst a member of DGM staff was still recording in a trench, backfilling the trench when ready, and then de-turfing and removing topsoil for a new area. With minimal prompting from DGM staff, volunteers took the responsibility for this whole series of tasks from start to finish, and from the outset took very seriously the idea that this was ‘their’ job for the day.

The fencing went very smoothly and competently, despite awkward angles, the need to carefully work around an open trench with a person in it, and a shortage of fence panels. During the course of the day, it was suggested that the volunteers may like to assist DGM with fencing during site preparation and restoration days, and they indicated they would like to do this in future.

In backfilling the trench, the volunteers had an opportunity to observe and pick out more modern finds in the fill and to learn more efficient methods of shovelling (a firm platform, depositing the shovel load in a defined place), and understand the reasons for backfilling (preservation, safety). One volunteer was extremely interested in the finds located in this way, and has requested to be involved in the cleaning and identification process in the future.

In de-turfing and removing topsoil, the volunteers learned new skills of cutting and stacking turfs, and consolidated skills in shovelling, particularly the gentle scraping over an emerging archaeological cobbled strip. They also experienced finding and clearly defining an archaeological feature for the first time, and were able, with prompting, to apply the skills of careful and systematic work learned in other tasks well (stopping at the appropriate level, observing changes in surrounding soil contexts, ‘feeling’ with the shovel blade when scraping gently and resisting any temptation to dig deeper to follow the feature at the edges).

A new volunteer also attended this site with a different OT for another half day and experienced some trowelling and cleaning. He may wish to return in the future.

**Observed Benefits**

OT staff generally assess and focus on people’s motivation for an activity, their habits and patterns around carrying it out, and the actual skills they need to have or develop to do it successfully. In these terms, the OTs have observed improved motivation, with high and sustained motivation to attend, and interest in the sites and processes of excavation shown. Volunteers are keen to tell others all about the work. Volunteers have also developed work patterns and habits, initially by simply recognising breaks and work times and learning the use of tools.

This has now developed into actual defined and expected roles over time, first as a fencing team, and then as a de-turfing team preparing small new trenches ready for open day participation.

Communication skills have improved with regard to the content, relevance and timing of work-related communication. Volunteers have improved their abilities to understand and follow instructions and prompts. In the area of intellectual processing skills, we have seen improvements in concentration, patience and general work discipline. Also noted were improvements in problem-solving (e.g. when fencing an odd-shaped area). We have seen the development of specifically archaeological skill-sets such as finds spotting and identification by type, and distinguishing, excavating and cleaning up simple stratigraphical layers. Last but not least, we have seen improvements in physical motor skills – in overall gait, posture, and general fitness when on site, and in better physical co-ordination and endurance when trowelling, shovelling, barrowing, fencing, and using the spanner.

The DGM experience, then, appears to have had a very positive impact on the health and social well-being of the volunteers so far. We look forward to seeing this continue.

**Lessons Learned**

Everybody is, naturally, an individual, and the support strategies may well be very different for a different group of volunteers. However, we believe the following may be useful to bear in mind for other archaeologists keen to involve people with learning disabilities, and for other OTs or other health staff thinking of supporting participation. Some may also be valid for people with severe mental health problems - purely physical disabilities are likely to generally present less of a support issue, once basic issues of mobility, access and appropriate tasks have been addressed:

- ensure time is made to assess each site thoroughly for access beforehand. Access and disability issues may not be insurmountable, given good foreknowledge, but can be disruptive and upsetting if not encountered until the day itself;
- OT staff are required to support volunteers – or at least, staff who have the ability to assimilate and analyse the components of a task quickly themselves, whilst simultaneously grading and adapting the task to make it manageable for the volunteer, and continuously reviewing this, to ensure enough support is provided to ensure safety and feasibility whilst still providing interest and challenge. Often skills may appear to have been learned, but need reinforcement at a later
time. In practice this means OTs or very skilled support workers are needed! The relatively short duration of most digs, however, means that this time commitment from OTs is realistic and cost-effective from an NHS point of view when set alongside the health benefits derived by the volunteers;

- volunteers require clear and detailed explanation, often repeated, as well as modelling and prompting, particularly for new tasks. In this case it was very useful that one of the OTs already had archaeological skills and knowledge – for other projects where this may not be the case it may be that a member of site staff or a very skilled and dependable general volunteer could be allocated to work alongside OTs and volunteers with learning disabilities. Whichever solution is chosen, close support, often 1:1, is required for new and/or risky tasks, at least for a while;

- volunteers will express interests and preferences for what tasks they wish to do, and these should be accommodated as far as possible. However, a balance needs to be maintained between volunteers exercising some choice and control over tasks and encouraging volunteers to continue and complete agreed tasks and respond to the demands of the team and the archaeological project in hand. If a volunteer seems reluctant to continue, this can often be simply an indication that a further aspect of the tasks needs simplifying or further explaining, or simply that a short break or change of pace is required. Many people with learning disabilities are unused to the general ethic of a working day, and may have spent a lot of time in environments where they are given excessive (and empty) ‘choice’ and few demands are made upon them. It may take some time to adapt;

- it appears useful to allocate defined tasks which have a clear start and finish and pursue these to completion, rather than move from partial task to partial task and area to area. It is useful if task sequences are simple, and the areas to carry them out in are spacious and relatively visually uncluttered;

- volunteers may be proud to identify and ‘own’ an ancillary task, which they become skilled in doing, such as the fencing in this example. This can help build confidence, a positive work ethic and a sense of pleasure in task and role;

- volunteers are keen to engage with the actual archaeology, but can have some difficulty doing so. In practice, we have found that the uppermost archaeological deposits and the topsoils above are ideal starting points as they are easy to work, often rich in (modern) finds and provide a good opportunity to actually excavate without putting complex and fragile deeper deposits at risk.

### Conclusions

A great deal has been achieved and learned by collaborative working between DGM archaeologists and MLDP occupational therapists in 2012. Two volunteers with learning disabilities now appear committed and enthused to the DGM community archaeology project over time and both objective and subjective accounts of their experiences indicate it has been very positive for them and helped maintain their general health and wellbeing.

Many more have had the opportunity to explore and be involved through volunteering for shorter periods of time or through the ‘Art to Life’ art group site visits. In future years we hope to build on these achievements, expanding the breadth and depth of involvement and independence of longstanding volunteers and introducing new ones.

We hope that this chapter will assist others who may be thinking of supporting people with disabilities to participate in the process of archaeology. We would like to thank all DGM and OT staff, and all volunteers and other participants with learning disabilities, for their support, enthusiasm and commitment.

### Notes

1) There is a blog for Dig Greater Manchester which can be found here: diggreatermanchester.wordpress.com.
2) HMSO 2009.
3) For discussion and definitions, see for example Smith & Waterton 2009, and elsewhere in this volume.
4) Current Archaeology No. 283 (October 2013).
5) Current Archaeology No. 279 (June 2015).
Dig Greater Manchester: Accessing, Exploring and Celebrating Local Archaeology

Chapter 22

Adam Thompson

Introduction

Dig Greater Manchester (DGM) is a five-year community engagement project (2011-6), designed to widen participation in heritage within the Greater Manchester region. The project is funded by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA) and run by the University of Salford’s Centre for Applied Archaeology (CfAA), in conjunction with the Greater Manchester Archaeological Advisory Service (GMAAS). The small core professional team is managed by Adam Thompson and Brian Grimsditch and the project’s education archaeologist, Sarah Cattell.

Dig Greater Manchester builds on the successes of previous community engagement programmes such as the Tameside Archaeological Survey, ‘Dig Manchester’ (see Chapter 4), and other HLF-supported community heritage projects undertaken by staff based at the CfAA and GMAAS since the late 1990s.1

Reasons for the Project

In 2007-8 over 70% of the UK population visited one or more historic sites. In light of the public popularity of historic sites, in July 2009 the National Audit Office published a document entitled Promoting Participation within the Historic Environment and in December 2009 the Public Accounts Committee published a report, also entitled Promoting Participation within the Historic Environment.2 Both were highly critical of English Heritage’s and the DCMS’ approach to widening heritage participation and called on local volunteer groups, charities and local authorities to ‘identify the historical stories in your areas’. The Dig Greater Manchester project aims to empower these aspirations and do just that.

From the outset, Dig Greater Manchester had to be about far more than simply increasing the numbers involved in archaeological work; it had to have real, tangible community benefit.

In October 2009 the Department for Communities and Local Government published its Building Cohesive Communities: what frontline activities need to know document,3 which called on volunteer, charity and local bodies to “develop a shared story of place that takes into account the history of the locality and its communities.” It was with this inspiration, to view the exploration of the past as an endless and significant quest which empowers people, that the project was founded and a number of themes and key target groups were adopted.

The Aims of DGM

In 2009 the former University of Manchester Archaeological Unit conducted a rapid assessment of the archaeological potential of local authority land within Greater Manchester, using the Historic Environment Record (HER). Sites with favourable assessments were then examined in more detail to produce a shortlist of possible dig sites within each local authority.

Consultations were carried out with each local authority for demographic and social considerations which resulted in the identification of one main dig site plus one backup for each authority. Each of the target sites was then subject to a test-pitting programme to confirm whether archaeological remains were still present. The sites with the best surviving remains were then chosen to go through to the evaluation stage. Over the course of the project thousands of local people across Greater Manchester and Blackburn with Darwen, ranging from absolute beginners and schoolchildren to experienced archaeology volunteers, will become involved in their own history and heritage, gaining hands-on experience of an archaeological excavation.

All of this will contribute to the project’s three overarching research aims, which are to examine the significance of community archaeology, the practice
of community archaeology, and the archaeology of industrialisation in the Manchester city region.

The Five-Year Programme

While the aims in themselves are worthy, it is also vital that the involvement of the volunteers adds quantifiable value to the project, and this will be achieved in several ways:

Evaluations

Each authority has had a small-scale (two weeks) evaluation dig during the first three years of the project in order to assess the nature and extent of any surviving archaeological remains within each site. The final day of each evaluation was given over to a public open day. The digs were open to adult volunteers of all abilities from across the eleven local authorities and offered up to 25 volunteer places per day, equating to 300 days of volunteer time per evaluation.

Adult Skill Workshops

In addition to the evaluation digs, there were also volunteer places available for in-depth training in various non-intrusive archaeological techniques such as historical research, geophysical survey, archaeological building survey, graveyard survey and finds processing. The in-depth training took the form of five one-day workshops catering for between ten and twenty volunteers, resulting in an additional 290–350 days of volunteer time per evaluation, which, at Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) rates of a notional £75 per day, is worth at least an additional £239,250–£288,750 over the first three years of the project alone and represents 3190–3850 volunteer places.

Schools Programme

As well as adult volunteer opportunities there is a formal education programme, which allows school involvement in the project at primary, secondary and further education level. The school programme is run by a dedicated education archaeologist and involves a classroom session introducing children to archaeology, followed by a half-day site visit allowing children the opportunity to participate in the dig. At the end of the project each school involved received a Key Stage-specific teaching package created for use in future student projects. During each evaluation up to 30 children from ten local schools were offered the opportunity to get involved in the project, which represents 300 school places per evaluation.

Publication & Dissemination

Throughout the duration of the project there will be a dedicated facebook page and blog keeping people up to date with the project. Each local authority will get a series of five evening lectures and presentations focusing on the results of their evaluation dig and other local heritage matters. There will also be two public conferences (at the end of the third year and at the end of the project) allowing volunteers to hear about what the project has been achieving beyond their own local authority.

Flagships

In the final two years of the project (2015-6) there will be two large-scale (five weeks) ‘flagship’ excavations, which will revisit two of the evaluation sites. The location of these digs will be based on the sites’ potential to yield further archaeological remains and the public interest in the site during the evaluation phase, as per the aims of the project. The digs will offer at least 25 volunteer places per day, equating to 725 days of volunteer time per flagship site. In addition each flagship will offer a further five one-day training sessions in various archaeological techniques catering for between ten and twenty volunteers, resulting in an additional 290–350 days of volunteer time per flagship. Using the same HLF calculation as previously the ‘flagships’ are worth at least an additional £152,250–£161,250 in volunteer time over the final two years of the project, and represents 2030–2150 volunteer places.

The Excavations

All eleven evaluation excavations were completed by the autumn of 2014. The first of these was at Etherstone Hall, Wigan, in March 2012. The same year saw further excavations completed near Radcliffe Tower in Bury, Chadderton Hall in Oldham, and Wood Hall in Stockport. In 2013 DGM undertook evaluations at Moss Bank Park in Bolton, Balderstone Park in Rochdale, Hulme Barracks in Barracks Park, Manchester, and Buile Hill Park in Salford. In 2014 the last three evaluation excavations were at Cheetham Park in Tameside (Figure 22.1), Witton Park in Blackburn, and finally Longford Hall in Trafford during October 2014.

The Wigan evaluation explored the archaeology of a medieval house, which was rebuilt by a local cotton merchant during the early 19th century. After the house was demolished the site became overgrown with woodland and was blighted by fly-tipping, vandalism and anti-social behaviour. As a direct result of the archaeological evaluation and community interest generated, the local council cleared the area and made it safe, creating footpaths
and a performance space for long-term community use in the process.

The second evaluation in Bury’s Close Park explored the area around the medieval Radcliffe Tower and later workers’ housing, which were built as part of a bleach works that occupied the site in the 19th and 20th centuries. This successful excavation uncovered much evidence and generated a great deal of public interest. It resulted in the creation of the Bury Local History Group and a successful HLF bid to improve access to the monument, interpretation of the site and integration of the monument into the park.

Chadderton Hall was the scene of the third evaluation in 2012. The 17th-, 18th- and 19th-century hall and its outbuildings were investigated. The close relationship that developed with the team from Oldham Council resulted in a design for further work on the site.

The final evaluation of 2012 was at Wood Hall in Reddish, Stockport. This explored the site of the hall, which turned out to be a farm from the 19th century. The dig also saw park rangers working closely with school groups and has led to further joint initiatives between these two departments.

The first dig of 2013 was at Moss Bank Park in Bolton. We identified the remains of Moss Bank, which was an 18th-century mansion house belonging to the owner of the local bleach works, and Higher Bank, a row of 18th-century workers’ cottages.

Balderstone Park, Rochdale, saw the exploration of the site of a 17th- to 19th-century hall and its outbuildings. This had a varied history. Rebuilt in the 1780s, it was used as a school and by a tenant farmer before in 1851 being sold to a local mill-owner, Joshua Radcliffe, who again rebuilt the hall in 1852. The dig uncovered well-preserved remains of both later halls with hints of earlier activity.

Perhaps the site that has gained most attention nationally has been the excavation of Hulme Barracks, in Manchester. Occupied from 1804 to 1915, it was the home of the 15th King’s Hussars, who took part in the Peterloo Massacre on August 16th 1819, when around 60,000 campaigners gathered on St Peter’s Fields in Manchester to demand Parliamentary reform. Four trenches explored the site’s barracks, canteen, riding school, perimeter wall and adjoining terraced houses. These remains provided, for the first time, physical evidence to illustrate the human side of the story of the hussars in Manchester.

Buile Hill Park, Salford, completed that year’s investigations. Hart Hill House was investigated, where there were extensive and well-preserved remains.

Fig 22.1: Excavating Eastwood House, in Cheetham Park, Stalybridge, Tameside, in 2014.
remains of the 1861 villa residence. This was erected by a local merchant, James Dugdale, and replaced an 18th-century hall.

The final three digs of 2014 all investigated Victorian villa residences built by local textile families. The first studied was at Cheetham Park, Stalybridge, in Tameside. The excavations revealed most, the spectacular footprint of Eastwood House, built by the leading factory owner in Stalybridge, John Frederick Cheetham, in the late 1820s. The site volunteers included members of the Tameside Local History Forum who had already been inspired to develop a spin-off community archaeology project at the nearby Newton Hall in Hyde.4

At Witton Country Park in Blackburn, Lancashire, Witton House was explored. This had been built in 1800 by Henry Feilden, the biggest landowner in Blackburn at that time and heavily involved in the textile trade. It replaced the old 16th-century hall, which lay to the east.

The final DGM evaluation excavation was the exploration of part of Longford Hall in Trafford. This site is best known for its association with the Manchester cotton magnate John Ryland. He bought the estate in 1857 and lived here until his death in 1888. Though he rebuilt the hall and landscaped the grounds, there was an earlier hall from the 18th century. The site is also crossed by one of the region’s most mysterious ancient monuments, Nico Ditch. Thus, to finish the evaluation stage of the project we excavated the outbuildings to the rear of the hall and hunted for the line of the ancient ditch.

Schools and Youth Programme

One of the key aims of Dig Greater Manchester is to promote participation by local schoolchildren and other young enthusiasts. This is in order to nurture and encourage the next generation of archaeologists and to inspire them to take an active role in its exploration and preservation. This will result in not only increased knowledge of the local area but also a sense of ownership of their heritage and a desire to help preserve it. In addition to this the objective of the schools programme is also to enable teachers and educators to include archaeology teaching in their regular timetables, whether as part of a history project or as a way to build maths, science, English, art or geography skills.

The schools receive an introductory classroom
session followed by a half-day visit to the site to take part in the dig and a Key Stage-specific activity pack, including a selection of finds from the site.

In the classroom students can chat with an archaeologist about various aspects of archaeology and what they already know and think about the subject, as well as learning about the history of the site they will be visiting. The students also take part in a practical activity to teach them about the preservation of buried materials and help develop the skills used in the analysis of artefacts.

The site session builds and expands on the classroom teaching with a particular focus on practical activities. The two-hour sessions are held during the main evaluation and students are given a tour of the site with the remainder of the session spent digging and taking part in a second activity, such as building survey, artefact analysis or graveyard survey.

The activity pack is designed not only to complement the practical sessions but includes information sheets and a wide range of archaeological activities that can be used with future students without the necessity of taking part in a dig, providing a lasting legacy of archaeological education across Greater Manchester. The pack is also aimed at encouraging those taking part to include or build a class project around the site or the wider subject of archaeology and present their findings and experiences to their peers and the local community.

Since the very first excavation in Wigan the project has seen several undergraduate and postgraduate students from local universities volunteering on site, keen to improve their fieldwork skills and boost their portfolios. Students from the nearby universities of Manchester and Bolton, as well as Leicester and Sheffield, have taken part, while from further afield students have travelled from Scotland and even Australia and New Zealand to gain some on-site experience.

“As an archaeology student from another country, who has not yet had the chance to participate in an archaeological excavation, my experience with the Dig Greater Manchester projects has been fantastic,” said Ryna from Australia of the time she took part in the Etherstone and Newton Hall excavations. “I received a tremendous amount of help, guidance, support and care from everyone on board. I was also allowed to participate in various tasks and learned quite a lot about excavation methods and techniques, as well as the methods of conducting an archaeology research project and what is required in terms of surveying, gathering information and working as a team. Dig Greater Manchester also gave me many opportunities to meet other like-minded people and establish some useful contacts for my future endeavours in archaeology. I would highly recommend this volunteering opportunity to both students of archaeology who are building up their fieldwork experience and to archaeology enthusiasts and all who have an interest in local heritage, as I found it highly rewarding and enjoyable to be part of this project. Thank you for all your help, and I will certainly keep in touch after I return to Australia. I definitely plan to come back to England in the future, and I will let you know when I do!”

During the first eight excavations 2419 primary and secondary schoolchildren (Figure 22.2) from 76 Greater Manchester schools have visited the sites and taken part in activities, while special visits for sixth form colleges that offer A-level Archaeology, including Oldham Sixth Form College, have brought approximately 20 students to four of the eight digs.

One of the schools that visited the Wigan excavation in 2012 was St Joseph’s Primary School in Leigh, and headteacher Anne McNally, who organised the activity, says that the children found it extremely worthwhile:

“Our children have been inspired by the dig and the work they have been doing. During the warm weather just before we finished for Easter the children were allowed on the school field. A number of them came to me with handfuls of pottery that they had dug up from just below the surface of our land and were talking about what they thought they were and who had used them. The school is built on land where terraced houses and a mill used to be, and these treasures are now on display in class!”

This post-exavation enthusiasm is a characteristic also observed by Loraine Gleave, a schools volunteer with the Tameside Local History Forum who assisted with a number of children’s activities, both on site and in schools:

“The ten schools that I visited with Sarah Cattell [the project’s educational archaeologist] both pre- and post-dig commented on how good Sarah was with the pupils and how her enthusiasm for her subject shone through. When I spoke to some of the adults on the dig with their classes they were really pleased they had the opportunity to do something so exciting and, despite the weather, had a great time. The schoolchildren were all primary age, ranging from one Year 3 class to Year 6, and in the school where I work as a volunteer they have a finds box, which I look at every week. Right after the dig some of the Year 3 pupils asked if they could explore the playground!”

Opening Access to All

To complement this capturing of youthful enthusiasm and to make the project accessible to as many people as possible, opportunities to participate have also been made available to people with learning disabilities and other special needs.

One example of how this has been received is
provided by the way the Manchester Learning Disability Partnership has attended five digs so far (see Chapter 21). The partnership deals with people with learning difficulties. There are two groups within the partnership: one that uses artwork in order to improve and create learning opportunities, and another that does more physical work on the sites, including some excavation. During their time with the project the therapists and supervisors have observed improvements in their clients as a result of the work they’ve been doing.

**Adult Education and Training**

One of the key elements of the Dig Greater Manchester project is the provision of archaeological education and training, which is there to be taken up by participants of all ages. Education is the natural link between enabling a community to access its heritage and engaging with it to ensure its continued relevance and preservation.

‘Education’ is a broad term encompassing archaeological learning of all types whether it is an informal chat on site or a formalised structured workshop. The nature of Dig Greater Manchester and community archaeology in general is such that informal education and training is ongoing from the moment volunteers are shown how to use a trowel, through on-site discussion and supervision to the production of the archaeological record in the form of recording.

Dig Greater Manchester is committed to providing good-quality relevant formal training in the shape of workshops, lectures and a dedicated schools programme for all Key Stages. In doing so the project is not only able to reach a wider variety of people, catering to all interests and abilities, but also is ensuring the future preservation of Greater Manchester’s heritage by giving its communities the tools to continue to make it their own.

The educational elements of the project are loosely divided by age, with the schools programme aimed at those still in formal education, and lectures and workshops for adults.

By far the most common form of adult training within the project is the daily on-site supervision and instruction offered to the excavation volunteers at

![Fig 22.3: Adult volunteers receiving training in excavation techniques at Radcliffe Tower, 2012.](image-url)
each evaluation (Figure 22.3). This is an opportunity for members of the public to learn the basics of archaeological excavation from professional archaeologists in a friendly and relaxed way. Every volunteer is given individual training in the use of tools and the methodology of excavating different structures and features as well as more specialised techniques such as recording and finds processing. This enables everyone on site to be involved according to their interests and abilities and in turn progress towards gaining new skills. Such a personal approach means that training can be tailored to the individual whilst maintaining the quality of experience for the wider group.

In addition to this on-site training a more structured scheme of workshops and lectures is running alongside the main excavation timetable. Each borough will host five of each event on a range of related skills and subjects. These are open to everyone regardless of whether they were at the excavation or not. In the first year of the project staff from the CfAA gave ten workshops and eight lectures across five boroughs, training and speaking to nearly 400 people.

Workshops

The aim of the workshops is to train volunteers in various archaeological processes and techniques, enabling them to use what they have learnt either on subsequent DGM sites or their own local projects. Each workshop lasts between one and two days and covers a specific activity in detail and to professional standards. Workshops have been held in geophysics, desk-based research, finds processing and analysis, graveyard survey, buildings survey, on-site recording and excavating test pits. Each workshop combines a balance of teaching and practical activities to ensure that the skills being taught are relevant and conform to industry standards and guidance.

Lectures

The lectures on offer are intended to cover wider historical and archaeological subjects but with some reference to issues associated with the evaluation sites. The lectures last between one and two hours and are usually held in the evenings to cater for those unable to attend daytime events. Speakers are drawn from the CfAA staff as well as local historians and experts. So far lectures have taken place on the Historic Environment Record, the historical backgrounds of the evaluation areas, the DGM project in general, excavation results, and medieval churches of the North West. In addition to this, CfAA staff have also taken part in or given talks at local history and community fairs.

Recording Impact

Working with the Centre for Applied Archaeology Dr Sharon Coen, Senior Lecturer in Psychology, University of Salford, has been exploring the impact of community archaeology on its participants. The project, ‘I Dig therefore I am: place, identity and participation in community-based archaeology projects’ aimed to explore the role played by participating in community-based archaeological projects in the development and construction of place-identity and attachment. Dr Coen and her team used focus groups with 24 participants (of which 11 were male and 13 were female) in five areas of Greater Manchester (Chadderton, Manchester, Radcliffe, Salford and Stockport) who were involved in the Dig Greater Manchester project. The goal of these focus groups was to understand whether and how the experience of participating in the digs modified, strengthened or initiated identification and attachment with the local environment and the local community. The results of the study offer insights into the potential benefits of community-based initiatives in fostering positive relationships with an individual’s local environment and community.

Dr Coen and her team conducted a series of focus groups asking participants to talk about their experiences in participating in Dig Greater Manchester. They asked them to talk about the reasons behind their participation, their experience of working at the dig, and the impact that working on the sites had in terms of the way they thought about the place they live in and their community. The key results were as follows:

- overall, participants were enthusiastic about the experience, which they found enriching;
- one of the positive aspects of participating in the Digs was the fact that volunteers felt a real sense of comradery, where the usual divisions we experience in our society (based on age, socio-economic status, competence and knowledge) disappeared. There was a real sense of cohesion, where everybody was there working together for a common goal;
- participants reported that the experience helped them make new friends;
- participants reported that the experience had made them feel closer to the local area and the local community;
- for a good proportion of the volunteers the experience led to further engagement with the community, by participating in other Digs or initiatives linked to Dig Greater Manchester, signing up to other community-based archaeological (and non-archaeological)
Conclusion: Adding Value

While it is clear that Dig Greater Manchester is about far more than numbers and statistics, it does not mean that these are insignificant or aren’t worth highlighting. In total, the value of the whole programme is around £707,950, of which the ten AGMA authorities and Blackburn with Darwen Council will supply £427,053 over four-and-a-half years. As highlighted, this is creating places for at least 6500 schoolchildren, nearly 4000 local volunteer places and over 5000 open day places and is providing much greater access to heritage across the city region. By 2016, when the project reaches its end, it is anticipated that an additional £100,000 will have been generated in spin-off projects.

An example of this is the successful Heritage Lottery Fund bid submitted by Bury Council to undertake further work at the site of Radcliffe Tower within Close Park. The Dig Greater Manchester work already undertaken at the site had uncovered a great deal of evidence, resulting in much local public interest. The information and enthusiasm thus gained were used to develop this project, involve more community volunteers and conserve the remains. This approach was based on the Dig Greater Manchester methodology and is resulting in the provision of greater public access to the tower, a listed building and scheduled monument.

It was anticipated that the increased participation and publicity created by the project would lead to a number of new local history and archaeology societies being created, which will be supported through the loaning of equipment and provision of training. Thus, the Bury Local History Group was set up by one of the volunteers whose interest in the subject was fuelled while helping out at the excavation in Radcliffe’s Close Park.

By accessing, exploring and celebrating the city region’s unique heritage, DGM is helping communities to understand and enjoy their local history in a very hands-on way, leading to it being cherished more and, therefore, protected by those communities. This definitely cultivates a sense of place and distinctiveness. What DGM is doing is creating an opportunity for local communities to become involved in their own history and heritage in a number of ways. It is also acting as a catalyst inspiring further analysis, presentation and, most importantly, enjoyment of local heritage.

Notes

2) Public Accounts Committee, Participation within the Historic Environment, National Audit Office, July 2009; HMSO, Participation within the Historic Environment, December 2009. HMSO.
3) DCLG, Building Cohesive Communities: what frontline activities need to know, October 2009, HMSO.
4) Nevell 2013b.
Suzie Thomas

Introduction

Community archaeology has certainly made its mark in the context of archaeology within the UK and overseas too. This publication, and the impressive legacy of many of the projects described herein, are testimony to the acceptance of community archaeology as a significant aspect of archaeology in general, worthy of analysis, record and discussion. As a piece of terminology, it seems to have superseded the closely related ‘public archaeology’ as the term of choice for many archaeological projects when describing their provisions for public dissemination and participation opportunities. Many archaeological organisations now employ, either permanently or through funded contracts connected to specific projects, a community archaeologist.

Furthermore, the application of the concept of ‘community archaeology’ to both volunteer-led (‘bottom-up’) and professional-led (‘top-down’) archaeological projects and groups would suggest a degree of flexibility in how we define and understand community archaeology, which can adapt itself depending on the circumstances to hand.

Voluntary Groups

Many volunteer-led archaeological groups and societies are now seen as examples of community archaeology in action, and this was certainly the case when the Council for British Archaeology (CBA) carried out its research into the nature, scale and needs of contemporary community archaeology. Many of these groups have a long history, and are often connected to the tradition of learned societies, for example in the case of the Spalding Gentlemen’s Society, the oldest of the groups found still to be active and engaging with archaeological material. Other groups have formed more recently around a specific project or site, as can be seen with the Mellor Archaeological Trust, which since 1998 has been carrying out investigations on the land of John and Ann Hearle, often with external support through grants and donations. The Mellor Heritage Project has been successful in engaging local people, not least the Hearles themselves, as well as students and other archaeologists through volunteering opportunities and even employment opportunities attached through successful grant applications directly to the project, blending the voluntary sector with the paid heritage sector in the name of community archaeology.

A lot of groups are also attached to a specific area or region (for example, county, town or city archaeological societies) and again they are sometimes connected to specific community archaeology projects, for example as partners and participants representing the ‘community’ element of the archaeology, while also employing the guidance or directorship of a professional archaeologist or organisation. Meanwhile others, particularly if they have been in existence a long time or have an experienced membership (for example, and hardly surprisingly, many archaeologists also join these sorts of groups on retirement), are perfectly capable of, and confident in, carrying out their own fieldwork independently.

Voluntary Versus Professional

Increasingly, although not by any means a new phenomenon, professional (as in paid) archaeological organisations, from consultancies to local authority and museum services to university departments, are also incorporating ‘community archaeology’ into their remit of activity. Sometimes the community engagement is a (or the) core objective in itself, as with the involvement of the Centre for Applied Archaeology at the University of Salford in the Dig Greater Manchester project, and sometimes it is an add-on to existing work or research, as with elements
introduced in 2012 as part of the University of Glasgow’s ongoing Strathearn Environs and Royal Forteviot (SERF) project. However, here caution must be counselled. While there are countless examples where engagement has been successful and complete, there is still the risk that incorporating community archaeology into wider strategies reduces it to a ‘tick-box’ exercise. Arnstein’s famous ladder of participation is known to many, with degrees of ‘tokenism’ higher than ‘non-participation’ but still short of degrees of ‘citizen power’, and parallels have been made between this model and interpretations of public and community archaeology. The risk, as we are all aware, is that the imposed targets, limited time, and sometimes the pressure to deliver projects that might not actually be seen by the community in question as necessary or beneficial, can mean that community archaeology becomes a requisite ‘bolt-on’ to other seemingly more important matters.

These can range from artificial audience targets imposed by funders and grant-givers (the grant itself possibly being the key driver for involvement, rather than belief in community archaeology as a worthy exercise in itself), through to unpopular development schemes inserting a ‘community archaeology’ programme into their schedule in the hopes that it will mitigate bad feeling in the community. As Arnstein herself stated in her seminal paper, “the idea of citizen participation is a little like eating spinach: no one is against it in principle because it is good for you.” However, it should not be seen as a chore to carry out because of its perceived benefits; groups and individuals can generally tell when their participation is invited only begrudgingly or in a limited (non-participatory or tokenist?) sense.

**Community Archaeologies**

As many have noted, and as alluded to in this brief chapter so far, community archaeology as a term can be seen, then, as either a ‘top-down’ strategy for organisations wishing to recruit or engage volunteers, or can be interpreted as a ‘bottom-up’ initiative originating in and driven by the community itself. In some ways, it is perhaps unhelpful to try to separate these different types of community archaeology, as many times the conditions and requirements vary on a case-by-case basis. For example, excavations at...
Binchester in County Durham (Figure 23.1) are ‘run jointly by Durham County Council, the Dept. of Archaeology, Durham University and Dept. of Classics, Stanford University and the Architectural and Archaeological Society of Durham and Northumberland’. Equally, excluding particular forms of engagement from the broad church that is community archaeology may actually leave us open to missing out on key case studies of how different structures can work out in practice.

However, whether top-down or bottom-up, a combination of both, or somewhere in between, inevitably at some stage (if not all) of the processes involved, the assistance or guidance of a paid archaeologist will be required. In terms of facilitation of community archaeology, whether through an organisation-led initiative or through other arrangements by which a group or project may request or procure trained (professional) assistance, this presents an opportunity for archaeologists to develop their careers (or aspects thereof at least) as bespoke ‘community archaeologists’. The CBA recognised the growth of this area, and the perceived need for more archaeologists with a remit to support and encourage community involvement. The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF), through the award to the CBA and partner organisations of a ‘Skills for the Future’ grant to facilitate the Community Archaeology Bursaries Project. endorsed this view (Figure 23.2). A fundamental component of all of the traineeships, which last for twelve months each, is that it is recognised that working with different communities and groups requires a specific set of so-called ‘soft skills’, which are not necessarily provided or introduced to archaeologists during their university or college educations, or other apprenticeships.

Still, anecdotally I have heard more than one professional archaeologist say that, in many ways, a good community archaeologist is ‘born, not made’. This perhaps refers to the social skills, patience, and capacity to explain important concepts in a variety of ways, that a community archaeologist will need in order to work successfully. This leads to another question, which is often reflected in the ways in which archaeological projects have been evaluated for different outcomes. To what extent should the priorities of community archaeology activities, whether led by non-professionals or paid archaeologists, focus on the social and community outcomes over the outcomes of the archaeology
Conclusion: Community Archaeology in the UK: Looking Ahead

...These outcomes are prioritised by major grant-givers such as the HLF, who “want more people, and a wider range of people, to engage with heritage.” However, it is crucial that archaeology that involves communities, the voluntary sector, non-professionals, or any other term used for those outside of the paid archaeological sector, does not become an excuse for ‘bad archaeology’. The number of qualifications or amount of professional experience held by the person carrying out the work is irrelevant to the archaeological heritage being excavated, surveyed, fieldwalked, processed, or whatever form the investigation takes. There is still a requirement, for the sake of the archaeological record as a whole and our collective knowledge about and understanding of the past, to follow best practice in any archaeological investigation, including finding non-intrusive and non-destructive options where feasible. Many groups are very good at this already, whereas others might need more guidance or awareness built into their research plans. Equally, paid archaeologists should not see community archaeology projects as an excuse to carry out a more simplified and less rigorous version of the types of investigations that they would carry out in other circumstances. Moreover, more time and care may be needed, taking into account the lower levels of experience or skill that some (although not all) participants may have, as well as really thinking through how one explains the necessity of each stage of the archaeological investigative process.

Archiving

Another connected issue, which is a perennial problem, is that of archiving collections from archaeologically intrusive fieldwork. Following a meeting in 2011, the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME), the Society of Museum Archaeologists (SMA) and the Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers (ALGAO) issued a joint Statement of Intent on undeposited archaeological archives. This comprised six agreed objectives, including “to achieve within a reasonable timeframe an agreed policy statement on the management of archives that cannot be deposited because there is no appropriate museum or store.” This, the last of the objectives, may in particular have significant implications for the results of community archaeology projects, particularly those that are community or volunteer led. Many archives and collections resulting from non-professional archaeological investigations are stored (if at all) in less-than-ideal settings, such as the garage of a group member or in only temporary spaces with little provision for ongoing conservation, as was mentioned to me by several community archaeology participants when I worked at the CBA as Community Archaeology Support Officer. It would seem that re-established limits on what can be stored in museums and other official repositories (an essential measure nonetheless, given the existing pressures on archive storage and conservation) are inevitable and likely to be more formalised than before. What safeguards, then, can be added to ensure that community and voluntary archaeological endeavours are not unfairly discriminated against due to their lack of, or at least limited in many cases, formal professional archaeological involvement?

Conclusion

Returning now to the title of this concluding chapter, my personal feeling is that community archaeology is not going away any time soon; it most certainly seems to be here to stay. It is a valid, integral and essential part of the wider discipline of archaeology. This is not to single it out as ‘different’ from other archaeological practice, but rather to emphasise its ubiquity within British archaeology at present. The trick of course is to make sure that it is incorporated in a meaningful and inclusive way that compromises neither the community nor the archaeology.

Notes

1) Thomas 2010.
2) Hull and Thomas 2010, 37.
3) Mellor Archaeological Trust 2012 and see Hearle & Hearle, this volume, Chapter 5.
4) Campbell 2012.
7) Arnstein 1979, 216.
8) See for example Moshenska, Dhanjal & Cooper 2011.
9) Roman Binchester Blogspot.
10) www.archaeologyuk.org/community/bursaries.
11) HLF 2012.
12) SMA 2011.
13) ibid.
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The practice and impact of community archaeology has developed rapidly in the early 21st century. There are now many different ways of doing, and bodies involved in, this activity, which encompasses archaeological work done by voluntary groups with the assistance of universities, museums, and archaeological trusts and companies. A range of vigorous debates have emerged, from the division between public and community archaeologies, to the role of HLF funding, and the nuts and bolts of project delivery by local groups.

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Back Cover: One of the public signs used for the Dig Manchester open day at Wythenshawe Hall in 2007.

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