

Sussex Archaeology Forum

Meeting 22nd November 2023, Virtual via Teams

Minutes

1. Apologies received from Anne Lock, TVAS South, Darryl Plamer, Rose Hooker, John Skelton, Nathalie Cohen, Maria Medlycott and Liz Lane.
2. Minutes from previous meeting approved after amendment raised by Martin Bell (thank you). Corrected minutes to be circulated with these current minutes.
3. **Group reports-** Highlights (refer to society websites for more details).
 - **CBA South-East** – conference held on Sat 18th Nov, although numbers of attendees was lower than hoped. Very good programme and speakers. [News and Events | Council for British Archaeology South-East \(cbasouth-east.org\)](#)
 - **University of Sussex Archaeological Society** lecture programme, see Facebook page for details. Wednesday 22nd November, 7.30pm (online) ‘Roman Imperial Sculptures in Sussex (and beyond): New Research’ [The University of Sussex Archaeological Society | Brighton and Hove | Facebook](#).
 - **Sussex School of Archaeology** lecture 23/03/2024 Disposal of the Dead in Iron Age and Roman South-East England. Also a history talk planned about the Stuarts & Tudors [HOME | tssa \(sussexarchaeology.org\)](#)
 - **Archaeology South-East**. Seaford Head Knowledge Exchange, looking for potential partners. Project is looking at impact of accessing natural and cultural heritage on the well-being of young people (aged 16-24) living in Seaford’s urban areas. 1st meeting is planned for January in Seaford. Please contact Jon Sygrave for further information j.sygrave@ucl.ac.uk.
 - **BHAS**. A number of summer walks at Ditchling Beacon and Hollingbury led by 2 young members, hoping to do more next year. Lecture programme and 3 day schools planned for 2024 (Chris Butler on flints, Mike Allen on palaeoenvironmental,, Luke Barber on pottery). 18/12/2023 Sarah Green will be speaking after the BHAS AGM on *Crete: The Myth of the Minotaur and the archaeology of the Minoans*. [main programme \(brightonarch.org.uk\)](#). Grants available via CBA South-East.
 - **WSSC**. Levelling Up and Regeneration Bill has now been made an Act and includes a statutory duty to maintain the Historic Environment Record which cements the HER further in the planning system. Actual details of what this might mean in terms of additional work and funding is not yet known.
 - **Worthing Archaeological Society**. Successful fieldwork over medieval house at Sompting [Worthing Archaeological Society - Home](#). Erosion at Climping Beach continuing at a pace and revealing further archaeological evidence, the latest being a complete LIA/early Romano-British cremation urn. Currently at Chichester Museum awaiting excavation. The beach will continue to be monitored as and when possible.
 - **Horsham District Archaeological Group**. Details of summer fieldwork and talks available via Facebook [Horsham District Archaeology Group | Facebook](#). Sally Cotton *Roman Glass*

in Britain, day schools on practical archaeology in Jan & Feb 2024 (Simon Stevens), more in the pipeline. HDAG website no longer functioning.

- **Sussex Find Liaison Officer (PAS)**. Talks given to Chichester Archaeological Society and Sussex Archaeological Society – PAS and updated Treasure Act. In touch with Chichester Museum regarding urned cremation eroded from soft cliff at Climping (see above).
- **Lewes Archaeological Group**. Next talk is by Matt Pope *The last Neanderthal and first Sapiens of the English Channel Region*. Full programme at lewesarchaeology.org.uk.
- **Sussex Archaeological Society**. Zoom talk by Hana Morel 28/11/2024 [Autumn Talk: Hana Morel 'Climate Change to Climate Action in Heritage' - Sussex Past](#). SAS Conference 17/02/2024 [The Sussex Archaeological Society Conference — Sussex Archaeology: A 175 Year Heritage - Sussex Past](#).
- **Heritage Crime**. Reported incidents are currently very low, but lead theft from churches is an issue. Darker evenings may lead to increase in criminal activity and antisocial behaviour. Old St Helens Church (Scheduled Monument) continually suffering from antisocial behaviour and Sussex Police are in contact with Historic England and Hastings Borough Council.
- **Chichester District Archaeology Society/James Kenny**. After further success at Priory Park where part of the Norman Castle was possibly identified in 2023, the area will be revisited in 2024 [Fieldwork \(cdas.info\)](#).

4. Highlights

- **Worthing Archaeological Society**. Returning to Sompting medieval house excavations in 2024.
- **ESCC** – slight down turn in planning consultations but workloads remain high. Fieldwork slightly dropping off and two large, long running sites (Willingdon (TVAS) & Westham(CBAS)) are nearing completion. 2024 election, national/global economy likely to affect workloads. A number of enforcement cases recently where planned archaeological works not implemented correctly. New HER Technician appointed since September 2023 (Dr Tom Davies) and is undergoing training.
- **Luke Barber**. Recording of Bodiam Ice House completed but excavations of internal pit on hold pending replacement of a lintel. Pit doesn't look like it will contain many artefacts
- **Archaeology South-East**. Please contact Jon Sygrave for further information j.sygrave@ucl.ac.uk.
- **BHAS**. Another successful year at Rocky Clump with 66 different volunteers attending across the season. LIA/early R-B farmstead site with one area containing a large assemblage of pottery including some decorative Samien. Large 12m x 8m x 1.8m deep pit of unknown function. Appears to have been deliberately backfilled in one event and contains flint (flakes, hammer stones and cores) and pottery of Bronze Age date. No evidence of a flint seam within the pit. Martin Bell suggests at meeting that it could be a marling pit, but would be unusual for the Bronze Age. Hopefully extending area to the north in 2024 subject to availability of a supervisor.
- **Martin Bell**. Currently working on the publication of the Bishopstone Anglo-Saxon cemetery excavations which is due in about 2 years time. Bone reports due in January 2024, grave good illustrations c. 50% complete. There may be plans to carry out some further fieldwork in 2024. [Bishopstone Anglo-Saxon Cemetery: work towards publication - Brighton & Hove Museums \(brightonmuseums.org.uk\)](#).

- **Sussex Find Liaison Officer (PAS).** Summary circulated.
- **WSCC.** Rampion 2 fieldwork ongoing, 2 small targeted areas of evaluation and areas opened up around a Napoleonic Barracks near Lyminster and a complex Late Iron Age/early Roman farmstead near Crossbush, with possible evidence for Early Iron Age activity. A29 realignment fieldwork underway.
- **Horsham District Archaeological Group.** Summary circulated. Further excavations at Alfoldean proposed for 2024.
- **Chichester District Council.** Still busy and lots of trenches filling with water. Major site at the Rolls Royce Factory extension. Geophysics indicates LIA/early Roman site.

5. AOB

- Malcolm Lyne sadly passed away last week after prolonged illness. He will be greatly missed and did much for Sussex Archaeology and Roman pottery studies in particular. His passing leaves a bit of a gap in Roman pottery reporting. ASE have an in-house specialist who can assist on a commercial basis. James Kenny mentioned Richard Rowlandson (Stanstead-based) who might also be available. Contact James for details.
- ESCC to provide Luke Barber with emails of current Historic England Inspectors for adding to the circulation list (done 22/11/2023).
- WSCC no longer have shelf space for the near-complete run of Sussex Archaeological Collections. Contact rachel.salter@westsussex.gov.uk if interested.

6. **Next meeting** – likely to be virtual in March. Date/time/venue TBC.

22/11/2023 Neil Griffin