

Sussex Archaeology Forum

Meeting 12th November 2024, (Virtual)

Minutes

1. Apologies received from Luke Barber, John Mills, Elizabeth Lane (WAS), David Millum (CAP), Darryl Holter (Sussex Police), James Sainsbury (Worthing Museum), and Elizabeth Rice (HDAG, for the last part of the meeting).
2. Minutes from the previous meeting were raised and accepted.
3. Events Round Up (Previous and Future).
 - Matt Pope, **Sussex Archaeological Society** – It is currently the middle of the autumn lecture series, with 2 more talks to go (including on Lewes Castle), In the process of finalising the spring lecture series. The Long Man lecture speaker has been booked – watch this space! A date for the autumn conference will be set in the next couple of weeks.
 - John Funnell, **Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society** – There have been a series of summer walks including Firle Beacon, with Dr Janet Pennington and Newtimber. Walks have been written up by John and passed on to other members: to do next year. There have been day schools, including with Simon Stevens and David Rudling on Iron Age and Roman Coins, and a Monuments Mentor day with Gary Webster. There will be a series of lectures through the winter. BHAS have applied to the Changing Chalk project.
 - Martin Bell, **Reading University** - The interim report on Long Man of Wilmington has been revised, included in a Book on the Cerne Abbas Giant that came out last month. Discusses a possible candidate for the creation and date of the Long Man. The Bishopstone Saxon cemetery post-excavation work is coming along well (reports on Human remains, copper alloy remains etc). A Grant application is underway for a project investigating hollow ways in the Rother Valley.
 - Elizabeth Rice, **Horsham District Archaeological Group** – There have been a series of lectures over the summer, and are currently coming to end of the Autumn programme. The Last talk is on the 27th November, and the new series will start again in January (Programme TBC). There was a walk around Bucham Country Park in the summer – this will be leading to fieldwork soon. HDAG have also been trying to get members involved in the Changing Chalk project.
 - Louise Rayner, **Archaeology South-East** - ASE has been very busy recently (Site Summaries for May – November have been sent to the forum). They have been working on big sites at Tangmere, Cooden and Ford, which have all been producing the expected archaeology. ASE has also been undergoing an intense period of recruitment, including the first 2 apprentices through the Level 3 Archaeological Technician Apprenticeship Scheme for Non-Graduates. Outside Commercial work, it is the 50th Anniversary Year for ASE. A day conference is planned to close the year at the start of April 2025, with the programme being finalised now, but to focus on celebrating ASE's history and journey, discussing current projects throughout all offices, and also looking to the future. Flyers will

be circulated to the group when finalised. Archaeology South-East is also engaging with the Changing Chalk project: Gary Webster has been at ASE today with volunteers, and a networking day tomorrow (13th) in Brighton. The apprenticeship scheme has been through the Cirencester College – from 44 applications, 12 candidates were shortlisted and 6 invited to interview. It has so far been a very rewarding scheme as all applicants have been very enthusiastic.

- David Rudling, **CBA South-East** and **Sussex School of Archaeology** - In October was the annual history conference on living in Tudor and Stuart Sussex. Next year the conference will be on October 11th, on living in Victorian Sussex. There is a CBA Memorial conference for Malcolm Lyne coming up at Lewes, King's Church this Saturday, reflecting Malcolm's research interests which were very wide ranging. On 22nd March will be teaming up with Thames Mudlarking group to discuss searching for London's Lost Treasures – this will be very interesting for anyone interested in artefacts. On the 7th June will be pairing with SAS to hold a conference on shining a light on Roman Roadside Settlements in the South East (also at King's Church), and will include talks on Bridge Farm and Hassocks where Chris Butler is writing up on a similar site. There is also the University of Sussex Archaeological Society Lecture on the 27th November, where Lindsay Davies will be talking about writing historical novels – body in the bathhouse at Fishbourne. See website for more information.
- Nick Truckle, **Surrey County Archaeology Team** – A roundup has been provided to Luke. Most notably a big application has been submitted for Brookfield, with Cotswold being the contractors.
- Jane Clark, **Finds Liaison for Sussex** – There is a new part time Finds Liaison Officer. There have been 50 treasure cases this year, including 2 in situ hoards. There have also been some donations, including a Saxon sword donated to Littlehampton, and some other artefacts to Arundel Museum. There will be talks at Eastbourne Archaeological Society on 22nd November and SAS on the 10th December.
- Rachel Salter, **West Sussex Historic Environment Record** – It has been business as usual at WSHER – the A27 Arundel Bypass has been cancelled, and are awaiting final confirmation that all is finished before all reports will come to WSHER, hopefully by the end of the year. Good to hear work on Changing Chalk is progressing – WSHER has been adding the data to the HER on an adhoc basis. However, it has been noted that some Changing Chalk data is missing, with only a Historic England Reference Number, and these have been queried with David Knight.
- Neil Griffin, **East Sussex County Council Archaeology Team** – There have been several sites of interest lately, including a TVAS evaluation at Ringmer, in a plot where a medieval kiln was found in 1980s. Findings include lots of medieval and post-medieval pottery, linear features, and two unexpected brick/tile kilns. The latter are thought to be 16th/17th century. Another area on the same site had possible structural evidence, a wall and pit with a preserved timber structure, thought to be a well. Another interesting investigation has been undertaken by CBAS at Hailsham, which has encountered evidence of a Bronze Age Settlement. Keyhole excavations have focused on features with dating evidence, and work is ongoing. East Sussex County Council Archaeology Team

is very busy currently, so please be patient. While there is a large funding gap at East Sussex County Council, Archaeology does not seem to be immediately threatened but this could change – watch this space. Final decision on funding will be made in March.

- Chris Greatorex, **East Sussex County Council Archaeology Team** – There is the Lewes Archaeology Group programme of Winter Lectures. At 7.30 on Friday, the programme is online. These will continue into the spring.
- Sophie Unger, **East Sussex Historic Environment Record** – ESHER has recently moved to a new database, which was launched internally 3 weeks ago. This is very different visually to our old database but the data will be the same. If you are asking for data, please be patient at this time. New HER searches will appear slightly different, but please feedback if you think anything is missing or not quite right. New database uses a Getty Institute open source software called Arches. The County Council is very positive as to its functionality and its potential for outreach and other areas.

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- Matt Pope, **Sussex Archaeological Society** – Society is happy to provide letters of support relating to ESHER if need be. Notes that West Sussex archaeological advice is covered by James Kenny at Chichester, Nick Truckle for Horsham, and Place Services. West Sussex development management is busy.
- Neil Griffin – Thanks to Matt for Advocacy. Notes that Districts and Boroughs have generally been very supportive. Rachel Salter Noted that in West Sussex districts provide archaeological advice and are doing the best possible.
- John Funnel – Notes the Field Activities at BHAS. It has been a successful season at Rocky Clump, with 3 – 4 times more finds than other seasons, mostly consisting of Late Iron Age and Romano-British material, including 2 complete Dog burials. 48 people attended this season including lots of young people which is great to see. Also notes that grants are available through CBA SE. The next grants meeting is in April, but please contact earlier if need be for anything urgent.
- Martin Bell – On the closure of Eastbourne Heritage, asked the implications for the museum collection and outstanding reports. Chris Greatorex replied that the plan is that collections will go to the Towner Art Gallery – the Archives officer will be staying on for the transition period. However, no reports have been received, and there is no money to solve this forthcoming from Eastbourne Borough Council. Concern was raised over finds being used as a school collection at Beachy Head Visitor Centre. Neil Griffin raised concern over the archives for excavations including those on the seafront at Eastbourne. East Sussex County Archaeology are doing what they can, though it falls beyond their remit.
- Martin Bell emphasised the duty of an archaeologist to write up projects they're responsible for, and queried if any of these projects have been done in partnership with other organisations. Matt Pope emphasised that the forum is a great venue for organisations coming together. Is it worth sending out a statement on good practice for to people to consider? For example, a very positive message of things that people should be thinking about when undertaking archaeological work in Sussex? The matter was discussed including practicalities of who should manage this. It was decided that this is worth revisiting to ensure a simple statement would suit each group including local societies and West Sussex.

Next meeting will be in the Spring, Date TBC nearer the time. Apologies were made for the lateness of arranging this meeting. The next meeting will be in person in the Education Resource Centre in Lewes. Thanks for coming and for your updates – we very much appreciate it. See you in the spring!

Thomas Davies 12/11/2024