

## **Sarah Watson – Personal Statement**

I have had the privilege of serving the Sussex Archaeological Society since 2020, initially co-opted onto the Council for a two-year term before being formally appointed as a Trustee in 2022. Since 2023, I have chaired the Finance and General Purposes Committee, a role that has placed me at the heart of the Society's strategic and operational decision-making during a period of significant challenge and transformation.

My connection to Sussex runs deep. As a long-standing resident, I am proud to call this county home and remain passionate about its rich history and cultural heritage. My journey with the Society began in the 1990s as a member, where I participated in several excavations led by Peter Drewitt—experiences that ignited and cemented my lifelong love for archaeology. I hold a BSc (Hons) in Archaeology and Religion from the University of Southampton, and my professional career spans over three decades in economic development, regeneration, and skills—both in the UK and internationally. This has equipped me with extensive expertise in change management and the leadership of large, complex programmes.

Currently, I serve as Chief Operating Officer at NESCOL, a 60-acre Further Education college in Surrey. My remit includes strategic planning, finance, estates, health and safety, and IT systems—all areas directly relevant to the Society's ongoing efforts to rebuild and stabilise. I am also a Trustee of Age UK West Sussex, Brighton and Hove—a charity close to my heart, where I continue to advocate for community wellbeing and inclusion.

I am standing for re-election to continue supporting the Society as it advances its strategic plan—moving from stabilisation to consolidation, and ultimately towards sustainable growth. My role as Chair of F&GP has been central to this journey, helping to navigate complex financial and governance challenges with resilience and resolve. Despite the difficulties, I remain deeply committed to the Society and optimistic about its future as a leading archaeological and heritage organisation in Sussex.

It would be an honour to continue contributing to the Society's next chapter—ensuring its legacy endures and thrives for generations to come.