

Session ID	34
Session Title	Playing with the past, practising for the future : A workshop for experimental community archaeology
Start Time	Tue Dec 17 09:30:00
Room	728

Community archaeology isn't, and never should be, a box ticking exercise, a bolt-on to existing projects. It's about keeping archaeology in the public psyche, inspiring the next generation of curious minds, keeping heritage and history relevant whilst acknowledging its inherently political nature. It's about giving all of our fieldwork and research a relatable element, a touchstone to current community life that anchors it to ideas of belonging, identity, self, and cultural heritage. Community archaeology is as much about the future as it is the past – it ensures a future for heritage and for archaeological services. As budgets get tighter and funding gets scarcer, we need the public. The public, in turn need us – archaeology and heritage can provide opportunities for communities to form thriving hubs of culture, arts, and collaboration in the face of cuts to services and facilities. Beyond that, research is emerging into health and wellbeing outcomes of being involved in archaeology - tangible, quantifiable benefits that need strong further research and evaluation. We can provide a space for wellbeing to flourish, curiosity to be sparked, the incredible research and hard work of all archaeologists to be enjoyed and engaged with by a diverse audience. This session invites anyone working, volunteering, or researching community archaeology, public heritage, museums outreach and related fields. The format is of a workshop. We invite speakers to bring short activities - creative, playful, experimental - that the workshop participants can undertake and evaluate. We encourage submissions from individuals at any stage in their career.

9:30	Penelope Foreman, Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust; Penelope Foreman, Enabled Archaeology	What is Community Archaeology for?	
9:40	Poppy Hodkinson, Cardiff University	STEM and Archaeology in UK Primary Schools	<p>This activity was designed as part of a PhD project on Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics (STEM) engagement in UK Primary schools. My PhD was developed in response to concerns about the UK workforce's ability to meet growing demands from STEM industries. Recommendations for improving STEM participation in the UK highlight the importance of primary education, so this is where the research is focused. By utilising the links between STEM requirements in the national curriculum and archaeology, I developed a series of archaeological workshops.</p> <p>The activity introduces pupils (Key Stage 2, age 7-9) to the concept of stable isotope analysis, and how it can be used to understand the diet and geographical history of people in the past. Children are each given a character, and are challenged to investigate their lives using carbon, nitrogen and strontium data, alongside grave goods.</p> <p>Two methods were used to assess the impact of each workshop: questionnaires, and small-group interviews. The questionnaires gauged attitudes towards STEM using Likert-style statements (e.g. 'STEM is an important part of my life'), and asked pupils to reflect on skills used in each session (e.g. creativity, problem solving).</p> <p>Small group interviews used activities, such as word sorts and mind mapping, to gain deeper insight into participants' perceptions of STEM. By delivering the series of workshops, alongside the data collection methods described above, it was possible to observe how pupils' thoughts and feelings towards STEM developed across an academic year.</p>

10:00	Aaron Clarke, LP Archaeology	Playful People – Actual Artefacts	<p>Children and families are key audiences for heritage experiences and building knowledges of the past - for the present and for the future. Curiosity, inspiration and stewardship is fired by playful encounters and there is much scope to extend possibilities for public learning about the work of archaeology and heritage, underpinned by theoretical principles of museum and experimental participation.</p> <p>The centrepiece of this workshop is an innovative installation, a toy museum constructed from Playmobil figures and models, designed to enthuse and inspire family engagement with archaeological themes and artefacts. The 'displays' raise questions of experiential learning (Falk and Dierking 2000), challenge contemporary stereotypes (Holtorf 2007) and consider artefact sensitivities (Williams 2018).</p> <p>This workshop contribution will invite participants to interact with themed cameo set ups, from each room of the museum, as a mix of model layout, archaeological artefacts, experimental techniques and provocative discussion. Delegates will evaluate accessibility and relevance and fun!</p> <p>Falk, J. H. and Dierking, L. D. 2000. Learning from Museums: Visitor Experiences and the Making of Meaning. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press. Holtorf, C. 2007. Archaeology is a Brand! The Meaning of Archaeology in Contemporary Popular Culture. Oxford: Archaeopress. Williams, H. 2018. Introduction: public archaeologies of death. AP: Online Journal in Public Archaeology Special Issue 3: 1–24.</p>
10:20	Session organisers	Open Play!	An hour long session for drop-in play; several activities will be on the table, from archaeologists working across the UK and Europe, and participants will be invited to "have a go" and rate the activities based on their experiences.
11:20 BREAK			BREAK
11:50	Claire Walton, Butser Ancient Farm	Butser Ancient Farm and Wessex Archaeology: Engaging communities through experimental archaeology.	<p>Butser Ancient Farm is an open-air archaeological laboratory founded in 1972. The ongoing construction of various full-scale buildings from archaeological evidence provides fertile ground for academic research, through relationships such as the newly formed collaboration with UCL and the Institute of Archaeology. However, it also provides wonderful opportunities for non-specialised audiences to engage with the past. The sensory experience that three dimensional spaces offer makes interpretations of the past more tangible and relatable. And when archaeology is relatable, it gains meaning and ultimately value for all, specialist and generalist alike.</p> <p>While opportunities to connect with archaeology come in many guises, they rarely come in the form of a project to construct a Neolithic longhouse. Butser Ancient Farm and Wessex Archaeology have come together in a collaborative project designed to maximise the opportunities for academic, public and community engagement, including schools, marginalised groups and those with special needs.</p> <p>The aim of today's workshop will be for the speakers to explain how the project to construct a Neolithic house began, the thinking behind the collaboration and the potential initiatives for creating a 'web' of engagement. The possibility for information, skills and ideas to trickle up as well as down is made possible where a wide range of audiences can come together and learn from each other. During the session, the audience will themselves try out a hands-on activity relating to the project.</p>

12:10	William Rathouse, MOLA	Archaeology for Mental Health and Well-Being: Two Models	This paper examines the pros and cons of two different approaches to supporting mental health and well-being by use of archaeological activities and how they might interact with each other. Many of the archaeological projects aimed to support mental health and wellbeing, to promote recovery and develop coping skills have been full-time immersive excavation projects lasting between one and four weeks. These have been designed and run as part of projects like The Past in Mind and Operation Nightingale. These have been successful and participants have found a new area of interest, peer support group, direction of study, and even area of employment. However it has been recognised that after a short-term project, participants may well find themselves back where they started. A long-term or open-ended, little-and-often model for mental health and well-being archaeology is exemplified by the Ceredigion war memorials survey and proposals for the Thames Discovery Programme. It allows an ongoing engagement with archaeological heritage as a hobby, study, to promote employability or for other reasons, which can be adapted to fit whatever time the participant wants to, or is able to, devote. This paper will champion a combined approach and suggest means by which evidence may be gathered on outcomes for participants.
12:30	Penelope Foreman, Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust; Penelope Foreman, Enabled Archaeology	Discussion	
13:00	END	END	END