



ATF Training Award 2020 shortlisted projects

The annual Archaeology Training Forum Award is usually presented at the ClfA Conference in April but this year it will be awarded at a later date and the judging is taking place at the moment. There are some excellent entries this year and it is good news that there are such high-quality training initiatives being run – and such enthusiastic and dedicated people running them. You can find out more information about shortlisted entries below.

Community Archaeology Training (CBA East Midlands)

An innovative low cost workshop-based training course lasting one day was held on 22 June 2019 aimed at non-professional archaeologists who take part in community archaeological field projects. The aim was to provide a basic understanding of project management for test-pitting, field-walking and excavation, covering all stages from preliminary, pre-project research to archive deposition and introduce the trainees to best practice at all stages of an archaeological field project.

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The Heritage Hero Awards

Following a successful pilot by Archaeology Scotland, the Heritage Hero Awards launched in January 2017, to coincide with Scotland's Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology. It is a wider achievement award designed to offer a framework, focus and reward for groups undertaking history, heritage and archaeology projects. They increase the number of young people meaningfully engaging with heritage and archaeology. [Read more...](#)



PAST Field School Photo credit: Bournemouth University



PAST: Bournemouth University's Professional Archaeological Skills Training

PAST is directed by the University's archaeological consultancy BUARC as an extra-curricular, voluntary programme of learning open to all third year and Masters students enrolled on archaeology programmes. It compliments Bournemouth University's archaeology programmes which offer a blend of theory and practical experience enhanced by further practical opportunities. The Field School is also open to members of the public and wider community. [Read more...](#)



Scotland's Rock Art Project (ScRAP)

This five-year project aims to enhance understanding and awareness of prehistoric rock carvings in Scotland through community co-production and research. The project has run an intensive training programme for community teams and students to enable people to locate and identify rock art in the field, to create detailed records and 3D models of the carved rocks, and to upload the data to a bespoke database via the project website, where they become publicly accessible for research, education, management

and wider appreciation. [Read more...](#)

Society for Museum Archaeology Resources & Training Project (SMART)

An ACE-funded, three-stranded project including updated guidance, training workshops and a mentoring scheme. The guidance takes the form of separate packages of information combined in an on-line resource to promote best practice and provide training materials. The workshops were aimed at museum staff with little or no specific expertise in archaeology, offering training in the curation and management of archaeology collections. The mentorship scheme provided one-to-one training and advice for museum staff with no archaeological experience; trialled in the south-east of England, hopefully to be extended across the UK. [Read more...](#)



20 years of Archaeology Thistle Camps – the National Trust for Scotland

2019 marked 20 years since the first National Trust for Scotland (NTS) Archaeology Thistle Camp which were developed to answer a growing need for archaeological engagement and conservation practice within the sector at a time of considerable economic pressure.

In that time around 80 Archaeology Camps at 21 Trust properties across Scotland have provided 860 places, equivalent to 7500 days of volunteer time. [Read more...](#)



Community Archaeology Training (CBA East Midlands)

Organised by the East Midlands regional group of the Council for British Archaeology (CBA EM), an innovative low cost workshop-based training course lasting one day was held on 22 June 2019 aimed at non-professional archaeologists who take part in community archaeological field projects. The aim was to provide a basic understanding of project management for test-pitting, field-walking and excavation, covering all stages from preliminary, pre-project research to archive deposition and introduce the trainees to best practice at all stages of an archaeological field project.



Removing turf with a machine before an excavation. Photo credit CBA East Midlands

The impetus to devise this training workshop resulted from two surveys carried out by the CBA EM in 2016, to examine the scale of the problems experienced by community archaeology groups in finding long-term storage for their archives. The surveys revealed serious deficiencies in the way that some projects were being carried out, and also generated a number of unsolicited comments about the need for training. There has been a lack of an overall guidance for non-professional archaeologists about how field investigations should be run – and in particular the planning and preparation. The source material used in designing the training day was augmented by the findings from a survey of training needs in community groups that was carried out by the CBA in 2018.

A recent report by Worcestershire Archives and Archaeology (2016), commissioned by Historic England (then English Heritage), highlighted the great potential research value of community-led archaeological investigations but also flagged a number of skills and knowledge gaps, including implementing a research focus on projects and ways of disseminating results.

With the rise in particular of NHLF-funded community archaeology projects, a number of local-interest groups have been created alongside the long-established county-based archaeological societies. These groups in particular need support in the planning and management of archaeology projects, a need which has been highlighted by many in the sector.



Training workshop with trainees discussing case studies. Photo credit CBA East Midlands

Feedback from the workshop is being used to revise content ahead of a further event later in 2020 and the aim is that this workshop model can be reused and rolled out through the CBA regional network. This open and flexible methodology can be used to engage users in a wide range of training needs. With its emphasis on coaching and peer to peer learning it is hoped that this will provide a way to deliver sustainable and user focused training for community archaeology.

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The Heritage Hero Awards

Archaeology Scotland originally ran the Heritage Heroes project between 2012 and 2015, and realised that, unlike the Duke of Edinburgh and Arts Award, no achievement awards existed for archaeology/heritage projects. Following a successful pilot, the Heritage Hero Awards officially launched in January 2017, to coincide with Scotland's Year of History, Heritage and Archaeology. It is a wider achievement award designed to offer a framework, focus and reward for groups undertaking history, heritage and archaeology projects. The awards increase the number of young people meaningfully engaging with heritage and archaeology. The awards are free, have minimal paperwork and are designed to be as inclusive as possible. There are now 12,225 awardees and due to demand are now open to adult volunteers although young people remain the key focus for the awards.



Photo credit: Archaeology Scotland

The main aims are to improve self-confidence and wellbeing through engagement with challenging heritage projects which inspire young people to develop a lifelong interest in the past, and to help foster links between heritage organisations, community groups and young people



Photo collage from a recent Flodden YAC/Kick the Dust project Photo credit: Jane Miller

The Awards team are involved in the CPD training of teachers to encourage use of archaeology and the Awards as a tool for delivering the curriculum. We have also delivered CPD sessions for archaeologists and heritage professionals, encouraging use of the Awards for strengthening the impact of their engagement with schools and youth organisations. More recently we have been working with the Council for British Archaeology to train YAC leaders in the use of the Awards.

ATF Training Award 2020 shortlisted projects (cont.)

Heritage Hero Awards play an important role in keeping archaeology and heritage in the educational mainstream, increasing the number of young people meaningfully engaging with heritage and archaeology and often acting as introduction to archaeology and heritage as both an interest and career option. This engagement builds self-confidence, develops important transferable skills, and increases understanding about the past. Young people offer different viewpoints, opinions, attitudes and abilities that can shape the interpretation of our archaeology and heritage in a profound way. Engagement also helps foster a lifelong interest in the past, important for safeguarding our heritage for the future and helping encourage the next generation of heritage professionals.

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PAST: Bournemouth University's Professional Archaeological Skills Training

Bournemouth University's wide range of undergraduate archaeology programmes offer a blend of theory and practical experience enhanced by excellent placement opportunities, field trips and field schools to encourage life-long learning and prepare students for employment.

Discussions with BU graduates, current students and archaeologists in the commercial sector identified a gap in student training opportunities, leading to the creation of a voluntary, extra-curricular Professional Archaeological Skills Training Field School (PAST) in 2016 and has evolved and developed over the years through participant feedback. It embeds innovative approaches, including technology enhanced learning aligned to the Archaeology Skills Passport, to address the skills training required within the wider archaeology sector and is linked to National Occupational Standards in Archaeology.

The training focusses on building upon students' current knowledge through an experiential field school experience where abstract concepts can be put into practice through active experimentation, individual or group activities and reflective observation. In addition to the core aspects of archaeological excavation and recording which are a critical part of any archaeological field school, PAST introduces participants to secondary and tertiary skills including an awareness of health and safety in fieldwork, post excavation procedures and how these impact on collection of information in fieldwork, surveying in archaeological fieldwork and Computer Aided Design (CAD). The overarching aim is to provide participants with a diverse, collaborative learning environment in which to develop skills that can enhance employability.



*Christopher Priske completing an excellent plan drawing
Photo credit: Bournemouth University*



PAST Field School Photo credit: Bournemouth University

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Scotland's Rock Art Project (ScRAP)

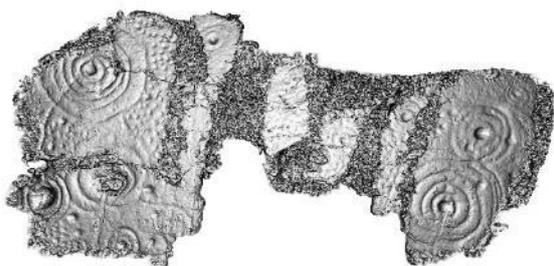
This five-year project (2017-2021) aims to enhance understanding and awareness of prehistoric rock carvings in Scotland through community co-production and research. The project has run an intensive training programme for community teams and students to enable people to locate and identify rock art in the field, to create detailed records and 3D models of the carved rocks, and to upload the data to a bespoke database via the project website, where they become publicly accessible for research, education, management and wider appreciation.



Recording rock art at Nether Glenny. Photo ©Historic Environment Scotland

A key skill that people were keen to acquire but had little or no previous experience of was 3D modelling (photogrammetry). Other skills that people were especially interested in developing were field photography, using GPS, and identification of rock art and other archaeological features. Our training aimed to address these, and other skills. We consequently worked closely with the North of Scotland Archaeological Society (NOSAS) and colleagues to develop the content of our training courses and supporting guidance material, and refined this in response to feedback. To encourage best practice for rock art recording more widely, all the guidance documents are publicly accessible and downloadable from our website 'Record' pages <https://www.rockart.scot/record/>

As a result of the training, we have established and are supporting 12 community teams who are actively engaged in recording rock art across the country. Work is on-going, and together we have so far created detailed records for over 1000 of the 3000 known rock art sites in Scotland, and made over 750 3D models. All the data is publicly accessible and downloadable via our website search tools, and this is



3D model of rock art at Newlaw Hill. Photo © Historic Environment Scotland

already having a significant impact on the management and awareness of rock art in Scotland. The ScRAP team are now starting to analyse the data co-produced with our trained community teams, and the outcomes of this research will make a valuable contribution to current understanding and appreciation of prehistoric carvings in Scotland, and their relationship to similar carvings in other parts of Britain and Europe.

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Stephen Lowry (SEMDP) engaging with pottery at the Mary Rose SMART workshop. Photo ©Katrina Burton

This combined approach is aimed at addressing skills training needs within the museum sector highlighted by the HE funded surveys of museum capacity between 2016 and 2018

(<http://socmusarch.org.uk/projects/hesma-annual-survey-of-museums-collecting-archaeology-reports/>).

Four free regional workshops supported by travel bursaries, were held between November 2019 and February 2020, which introduced 80 participants to the multiple ways that archaeology collections can be managed to best effect and used to engage and inspire people of all ages, beyond the medium of display. Trainers provided case studies to illustrate how even the smallest of archaeological collections can be used to best effect, where to get information, advice and support.

All workshop content was recorded so that it can be made available via the Recording Archaeology YouTube Channel and SMA's website along with annotated slide shows. SMA's workshops are being considered by SE Museum Development as a model to deliver training for other subject specialisms.

The SMART mentorship programme was inspired by the SMA surveys into museums across England between 2016-2018, which highlighted not only growing skills gaps caused by the loss of specialist staff, but also demoralisation and isolation of staff and volunteers when tackling issues with their collections without in-house specialist support. The programme matched five museums in need of support with five experienced museum archaeologists, who acted as mentors. It included training for mentors, the development of resources to support the mentor/mentee relationship and will provide

recommendations for a national roll out.



Katrina Burton at the Newcastle SMART workshop. © Society for Museum Archaeology

The overall impact of this training programme will be to help museum staff to acquire and develop the skills to imaginatively unlock the potential of archaeological collections as a source of inspiration for a wide range of audiences. The project has also enabled SMA to more effectively reach non-specialists and promote its role as a source of advice and support to staff and volunteers working with, or responsible for, archaeology collections.

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In that time around 80 Archaeology Camps at 21 Trust properties across Scotland have provided 860 places, equivalent to 7500 days of volunteer time. Each camp is usually week-long and involves 10-12 volunteers supervised by two qualified Trust archaeologists working to CfA and National Occupational Standards.



Glencoe 2019. Photo credit: The National Trust for Scotland

The camps were designed to act both as a training opportunity and to provide management and interpretation information for the Trust's archaeological portfolio. Not only do volunteers learn specific archaeological fieldwork techniques such as survey, excavation and artefact care, they also participate in archaeological condition monitoring and conservation interventions using broader heritage skills, such as turf building, timber frame construction and thatching. Post excavation training is offered in artefact identification, cataloguing and conservation, the production of site maps, plans and illustrations. Reports are co-produced with our community of volunteers and can also be used for formal assessment or case studies for those engaged at a University level.

Some of our volunteers have come back on numerous camps and have increased their knowledge and skills, becoming supervisors and camp leaders. A number of our volunteers have gone on to take University courses and become professional archaeologists, using the skills they developed on the Thistle camp scheme to gain access to employment in the heritage sector.



Culzean Caves in 2018. Photo credit: The National Trust for Scotland

Thistle Camps and our volunteer training programme offer a depth of insight into archaeological sites through ongoing seasonal research, allowing individuals to become immersed in the geography and heritage of places as well as offering opportunity for reflection and re-interpretation. They have enhanced the role of archaeology within local communities with regular annual excavations throughout Scotland and had a wider impact on our sector through the promotion of archaeological skills in local and national media.

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