

The Sedgeford Historical and Archaeological Research Project



Archaeological Archiving: Principles and Best Practice

Regrettably archiving is a neglected part of the archaeological process but one that each archaeologist is committed to as soon as they undertake any research project. This course will introduce you to the basic principles of archaeological archiving, taking you from the planning stages of a project, through the fieldwork or research itself, to post-excavation processes and packaging, and finally through the preparation of an archive for deposition with an archiving repository like a museum. The morning session will introduce you to these basic concepts and the materials and techniques used during the archiving process. During the afternoon we will explore SHARPs archives and as a group activity will closely examine the archive of one of SHARPs own projects. We will look at each category of material, discussing its characteristics and challenges and will then begin the process of cataloguing and archiving the material.



Useful Reading and Preparation:

No prior reading or preparation is necessary for the day, but you will be sent a pdf of the SHARP 'Archaeological Archiving Handbook, Guide to Best Practice' just before. Don't feel you need to read the document in time for the day as the course will closely follow this guide. However, the Handbook will act as an aide-mémoire and will hold more detail than can be covered during the face-to-face time available to us. Please feel free to print a copy to bring along to follow and take notes. A bibliography of archive-related documents and publications is available at the back of the Handbook, as well as useful websites.

Archival Course Timetable

On arrival, please make your way from the car park to the main marquee, find a seat and take in the atmosphere on site. You are welcome to help yourself to tea/coffee on arrival. Our team will try and greet you on arrival but as there is usually a lot going on first thing in the morning this is not always possible. During the site notices you will be introduced to your tutor Anj.

8.15 am	Site notices- Daily meeting for allocating work, reading notices, everyone (even those staying off-site) must be onsite by this time as there can be important health and safety notices.
8.30 am	Introduction to course, and lectures
10.30 – 10.50 am	Tea break

	Further lectures
12.30 – 1.30 pm	Lunch break
	Practical experience with SHARP Archive
3.15 – 3.35 pm	Tea break
	Practical experience with SHARP Archive
5.00 pm	End of work

What to bring

We will be working at Boneyard field in the site huts, marquee and/or larger gazebos so please bring/wear clothing appropriate to the weather on the day. Sturdy and comfortable footwear is a must. Everyone who attends needs eating vessels and cutlery for lunch and tea breaks (although if you forget we can provide some from the kitchen).

	Plate and bowl
	Cutlery
	Cup/mug
	Appropriate clothing for all weathers
	Decent footwear – the field has areas that have nettles so sandals are worn at your own risk
	Insect repellent – we are close to a river so get mosquitos
	Sun cream – there is little shelter on the site
	Hat

If you would like to make notes, I recommend a notepad and writing materials. Power may not be available on site to charge multiple laptops. For writing, please bring a pencil in addition to pens as we will only use pencils when working near archive material.