

barrow for a weekly wage is a professional. At a 1972 conference at Fortress House, a delegate roundly asserted that "local societies are a write-off"; his remark was accepted as generally applicable, and was not contradicted. But it will only continue to be accepted so long as local societies are organised as at present with their members as amateurs, only fit for dog's-body work under professional direction.

Secondly, a Society needs to be able to charge against grants, the unassessable cost of time-consuming work done by its honorary officers and other members who receive no remuneration. A county authority making a grant will take the realistic view that if the work were done by contract, overheads of 10 per cent to 12½ per cent would be acceptable. Once a society has become a company it could, as it were, put on a business-man's bowler hat, if its overheads or administrative costs were challenged; it could ask for a written contract, in which the inclusion of overheads should be accepted without question by any auditor.

† To sum up, the conversion of an archaeological society into a company should give it both security

and confidence that any work it undertakes as an agent can be paid for at current rates, and not at a cut price just because its officers happen to be amateurs, unpaid and not accepting honoraria.

To return to Surrey and its future, the normal work and activities of the Society, its services to members, visits and publication of its Journal and Bulletin will continue as at present. But if motorways and road improvements multiply, if the extraction of gravel is increased, if town centres are re-planned, listed sites threatened, prehistoric features on commons eroded, the very volume and extent of all these factors will demand something new. This may be the setting-up of a full-time archaeological unit with field directors, a treasurer or accounting officer, a part-time secretary and ancillary staff. A controlling committee will also be needed, but a less formal one than that adopted for the Oxfordshire unit, since the unit will be set up under the auspices and general responsibility of the Surrey Archaeological Society. So a great advance will have been achieved towards recognising the equal value of amateur and professional work. This should be for the ultimate advantage of archaeology as a whole.

The New Inner London Archaeological Unit

THE INNER London Archaeological Unit will come into being from the 1st October and will initially cover six boroughs: Camden, Hackney, Hammersmith, Islington, Kensington and Chelsea, and Tower Hamlets; it is expected that in the very near future Westminster will also be included.

The Director of the Unit is John Hinchliffe, aged 27, who has served 18 months with the Oxfordshire Archaeological Unit, while the Senior Field Officer is Irene Schwab, formerly of Southwark Archaeological Excavation Committee. In addition, there are initially to be two Field Officers, only one of whom has yet been appointed —

Graham Black who has been working with Tony Johnson's L.A.M.A.S. London Docks' Group.

The London and Middlesex Archaeological Society which is sponsoring the Unit, is still engaged in the formative processes. With the Unit becoming operative, it will shortly be necessary to organise a Steering Committee which will include representatives from the various borough councils.

The first task of the Unit will be to settle into its comparatively spacious premises close to Liverpool Street Station but is actually in Tower Hamlets. The premises have been kindly provided by a City-based property company which is generously allowing the Unit to have them rent-free. There is a storage area on the ground floor and two floors of offices above.

The Unit may take several months to become fully operative as the needs of the area must first be fully assessed. However the recently completed Department of the Environment survey on Greater London and the L.A.M.A.S. research report, shortly to be published, should both be invaluable.



John Hinchliffe