

unities role, and also support and encourage amateur archaeological work in the capital.

A detailed work programme for the London FLO has not yet been formulated, but experiences in Kent might provide a framework of responsibilities for the post in London.

Already London has a huge database, which has enormous potential to archaeologists, finds specialists and other researchers. Nonetheless, there is a large backlog of data still to be entered on to the museum's new database, and hence management of this, as well as the entry of new records, could well be a key task of the London FLO.

The London FLO will concentrate on recording objects found in Greater London, and is likely to be keen to liaise with mudlarks, metal detectorists and members of the public. As in Kent, the London FLO will probably wish to travel to detecting clubs which meet in the suburbs, and work closely with local museums. Currently we are unsure of the exact number of detecting clubs in London, and the extent to which members would readily co-operate with the Portable Antiquities Scheme. However, as with club members in Dartford, Sidcup and West Wickham who liaise with the Kent FLO, it is likely that most detectorists who live in Greater London will also detect in the neighbouring counties. This might present problems of duplicating data unless the remit of each FLO is firmly established.

The topographical context of most finds made in London is still likely to be from the Thames

foreshore, as this is where most detectorists search, although farmland in the suburbs could account for a significant number of discoveries. Members of the public are likely to make chance discoveries whilst out walking in parks or digging in their gardens. However, these are unlikely to make a great contribution in terms of numbers, though quite possibly in archaeological significance, as unrecognisable non-ferrous objects and pottery shards are often dismissed by inexperienced finders, unaware of their importance for understanding our past. It could therefore be a useful role of the FLO to educate the general public on the contribution they can make towards the understanding of London's heritage.

From the experiences in Kent it is clear that London would benefit from a more proactive system for recording portable antiquities than hitherto exists. Surely London, with its wealth of heritage and our nation's capital, needs an FLO, a dedicated person who could facilitate finds recording, publicise the benefits of liaison between archaeologists, detectorists and the public at large, and give general advice on best practice, finds recording and the Treasure Act.

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Excavations and post-excavation work

City of London. Museum of London Archaeology Service, Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London N1 7ED (020 7410 2200).

Croydon & District, processing and cataloguing of excavated and museum collections every Tuesday throughout the year. Archaeological reference collection of fabric types, domestic animal bones, clay tobacco pipes and glass ware also available for comparative work. Enquiries to Jim Davison, 28 Blenheim Park Road, South Croydon, CR2 6BB.

Greater London, by Museum of London Archaeology Service. Excavations and processing in all areas. General enquiries to MOLAS, Mortimer Wheeler House, 46 Eagle Wharf Road, London, N1 7ED (020 7410 2200).

Borough of Greenwich. Cataloguing of excavated and other archaeological material, the majority from sites in the borough. For further information contact Greenwich Borough Museum, 232 Plumstead High Street, SE18 1JT (020 8855 3240).

Hammersmith & Fulham, by Fulham Archaeological Rescue

Group. Processing of material from the Borough. Tuesdays, 8.00 p.m.-10 p.m. at Fulham Palace, Bishop's Avenue, Fulham Palace Road, SW6. Contact Keith Whitehouse, 85 Rannoeh Road, W6 9SX (020 7385 3723).

Kingston, by Kingston upon Thames Archaeological Society (KUTAS). Processing and cataloguing of excavated and museum collections every Thursday (10 a.m.) at the North Kingston Centre, Richmond Road, Kingston upon Thames KT2 5PE. Enquiries 020 8546 5386.

Surrey, by Surrey County Archaeological Unit. Enquiries to Rob Poulton, Archaeological Unit Manager, Surrey History Centre, 130 Goldsworth Road, Woking, GU21 1ND (01483 594 634).

Individual membership of the Council for British Archaeology includes 10 issues a year of British Archaeology, as well as the supplement CBA Briefing, which gives details of conferences, extra-mural courses, summer schools, training excavations and sites where volunteers are needed. The individual subscription rate of £24 p.a. includes postage; payment should be sent to C.B.A., Bowes Morrell House, 111 Walmgate, York, YO1 2UA (01904 671417).