

Restoring the balance

Since June 2002 the Museum of London, funded by English Heritage, has employed Vanessa Bunton in the post of Community Archaeologist (Local Society Support). She has met members of Greater London's archaeological societies and others involved in London's archaeology, in order to identify ways in which local societies can become more actively involved in London's archaeology, and how this might be achieved. She has recently produced her first report, which has been sent to local societies for comment. The report identifies five main areas of need, as expressed by local societies, summarised below:

Communication

A mechanism is needed to inform local societies about archaeological activity in their areas, and should be encouraged and helped to communicate with the wider archaeological community.

Demographic diversity/new members

Societies should be helped to advertise themselves and their activities more widely in the community, with a view to attracting a broader social mix and age-range of members.

Training

Societies need training in a wide range of activities. Workshops and training seminars could be organised specifically for members of local societies.

Fieldwork

Local societies need to participate in a wide range of fieldwork activities. Professional archaeologists should be encouraged to involve members of local societies in their projects.

London-wide and local research/training projects should be set up.

Archiving/publication

Many local societies have back-logs of unpublished material. Training should be provided in the creation and deposition of archaeological archives, and there should be more scope for local society publication.

The post is initially funded for one year (until June 2003). To help meet these needs, the post will have to be supported financially for a few years more. The ultimate measure of its success will be to reach the time when the post is no longer needed, because local societies are doing it all for themselves.

The state we're in

The first report of APPAG (All-Party Parliamentary Archaeology Group), *The Current State of Archaeology in the United Kingdom*, which was previewed in our previous issue, was published in January and is available from the Society of Antiquaries, price £2.50. It can also be found on the Internet at www.sal.org.uk/appag. An email discussion list has been set up (email appag-join@britarch.net to join), so that societies and interested individuals can have their say.

Apology

We apologise for the late delivery of this issue. The Editor's computer was out of action for two weeks during the preparation of the magazine.

Annual Lecture and Meeting

The Annual Lecture and Meeting of the London Archaeologist will be held at 7 p.m. on Tuesday 20 May in Room 612 of the Institute of Archaeology, 31-34 Gordon Square, London WC1. Jonathan Cotton will speak about 'London before London' (the new Prehistory Gallery at the Museum of London). Before the talk, the annual reports and accounts will be presented. The

proceedings will include the election of Officers and the election to the Publication Committee of six Ordinary Members, whose nominations should be made to the Secretary, c/o 8 Woodview Crescent, Hildenborough, Tonbridge, TN11 9HD. All are welcome to attend and subscribers are entitled to vote. Refreshments will be served from 6.30 p.m.