



info@hwtma.org.uk
www.hwtma.org.uk

Supported through the
Defra Aggregates Levy
Sustainability Fund



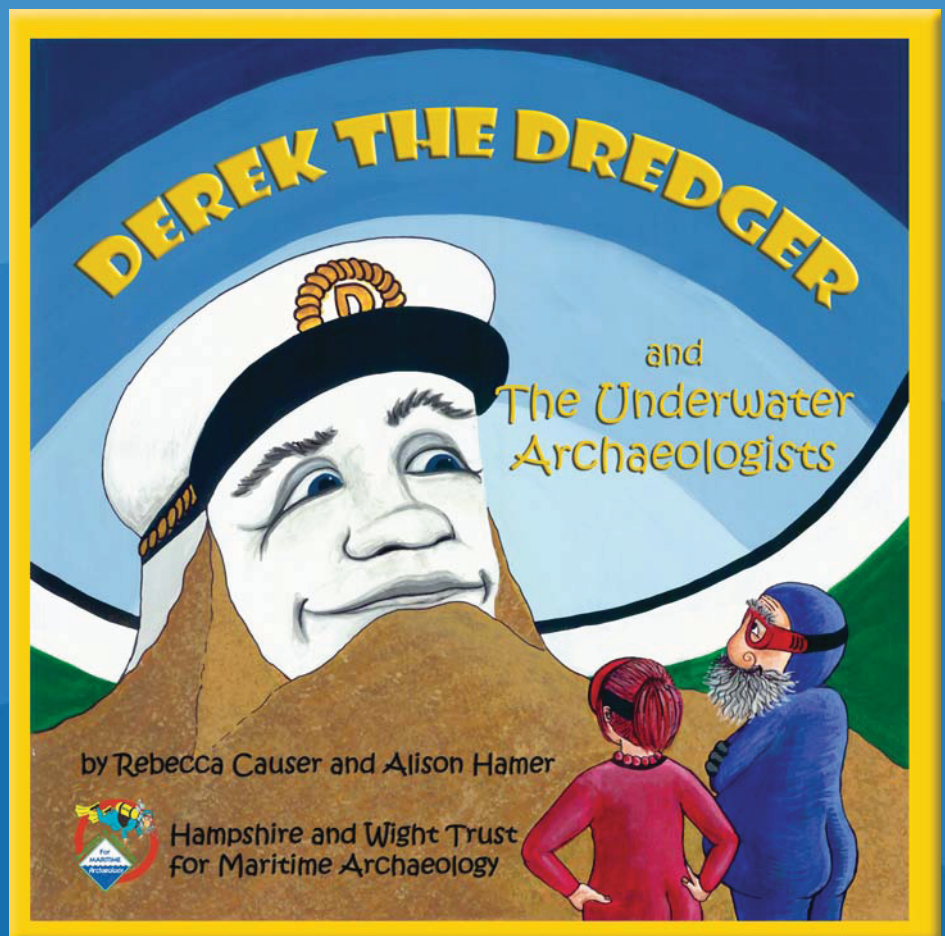
ENGLISH HERITAGE

**March
2008**

Derek the Dredger and The Underwater Archaeologists

FINAL REPORT

Hampshire and Wight Trust for
Maritime Archaeology



English Heritage
Project: 5392

Contents

I. ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	1
1. PROJECT BACKGROUND	2
2. DEVELOPMENT OF PUBLICATION FORMAT	3
2.1 ANALYSIS OF RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION ON STORYLINE AND TEXT	3
3. MARKETING, DISTRIBUTION AND INITIAL FEEDBACK	6
3.1 MARKETING	6
3.2 DISTRIBUTION	6
3.3 INITIAL FEEDBACK	7
4. ASSESSMENT OF EXTENDING 'DEREK' INTO A SERIES	9
5. PROJECT SUSTAINABILITY	10

EH Reference: ALSF 5393
HWTMA Reference: Project Code 414

i. Acknowledgements

A large number of people have contributed comments and thoughts on Derek the Dredger during its development phase. In particular we would like to thank: David Riordan, Ingrid Miller, Clive Barnes, Caroline Hamer, Allison Mason and BMAPA.

The book has been developed by Rebecca Causer and Alison Hamer. The initial storyboard was drafted by Rory Smith. Illustrations have been produced by Rebecca Causer.

This report has been written by Rebecca Causer and Julie Satchell.

1. Project Background

The expansion of public knowledge, interest and engagement in issues surrounding marine archaeology and aggregates is an area that requires development amongst all age groups. This has been recognised through the development of a number of education and outreach initiatives funded by the ALSF. However, there had not been any materials aimed at younger children. Capturing the interest of children at a young age provides a powerful platform for delivering information and engaging future interest.

A review of available children's literature demonstrated that young children regularly see images and read stories relating to industry and machinery. Stories involving diggers, tractors and boats are all particularly popular and there are even whole attractions devoted to educating children about digging machinery. Many industries are using heavy machinery to attract public attention from an early age and it was realised that marine aggregate dredging had this potential. It was envisaged that Derek the Dredger would be to marine aggregate dredging what Thomas the Tank Engine is to trains, and Bob the Builder is to the construction industry!

Using both the marine aggregate industry and maritime archaeology as key themes the concept of 'Derek the Dredger and the Underwater Archaeologists' was developed. The book is an illustrated, full colour story book that can be used as bedtime reading with younger children or as an aid to learning for Key Stage 1 school children. Through simple, expressive media the book introduces concepts of marine aggregates and maritime archaeology.

The project aims and objectives were:

Aim: To produce a children's book that introduces young children (aged between six and eight) to the relationship between maritime archaeology and marine aggregate extraction.

Objectives:

- To introduce a potentially complex subject using the simplest means possible so that young children find the topics accessible and fun.
- To create a character called 'Derek the Dredger' who will team up with Professor Archie O'Logy and Professor Marie-Time to introduce maritime archaeology and marine aggregate to children through their friendship and adventure.
- To turn maritime archaeology and marine aggregate dredging into imaginative, fun, exciting subjects that appeal to children aged between six and eight years old.
- To produce a fully illustrated, full coloured, approximately 28 paged, soft-backed book.

This report summarises the development, design and distribution of the book. As the project was initiated relatively late in the funding round there has not been much time to receive feedback on the book, however, comments collected to date have been included.

2. Development of Publication Format

The evolution of Derek into the final format for publication has been an interesting process which has drawn on the experience of a wide range of individuals and organisations (see acknowledgements for full list).

2.1 Analysis of Responses to Consultation on Storyline and Text

An initial storyline for the book was included within the original Project Design, this was used as the basis on which to draw up more detailed page by page text which was then circulated to a wide range of individuals and organisations for comment. Feedback was received from the archaeology sector, aggregate industry, teachers and education establishments and librarians specialising in children's literature.

The resulting feedback was a rather confusing set of recommendations that were at times contradictory. Some of the confusion may have arisen from reading the proposed text without viewing the accompanying images, which at the time were stored in separate electronic files. There were also queries over whether Derek was a book to be read to or with children or whether it was a 'learn to read' book. Derek was always intended to be read to or with children, although obviously this does not prevent slightly older children reading it themselves. The distinction between the two types of book is important as 'learn to read' books have particular language and skill development incorporated. This distinction may have contributed to the opposing comments on whether the language in the book was too complicated or too simplistic.

A sample of the feed back included:

John, ex-teacher:

"The storyline and language level might seem appropriate for 7 to 8 year olds, once you've defined some of the more technical vocabulary, but the past is a concept that children of this age are only just starting to get to grips with, many six year olds will struggle with the concept and chronology of the past few weeks or months, let alone the distant past of years, decades or centuries. Aiming this sort of literature at 6 to 8 year olds is difficult because this encompasses such a wide range of rapid cognitive development in children. The difference between a 6 year old child at the lower end of the ability scale and an 8 year old at the top end is enormous. I think this uses a simplistic storyline that will leave many 8 year olds cold, whilst using concepts and vocabulary that many 6 year olds will not comprehend."

Rebecca, outreach specialist:

"It's quite jaunty and upbeat, although the storyline is too simplistic for 8 year olds while saying that 'Archaeology is like History' is still confusing for the younger end of the 6-8 age range. They need to understand about things 'in the past' and have them placed into context. I have never produced a book using terms and concepts about archaeology for anything else than 8 years, and then it has been non-fiction. I would worry about the overuse of this term."

Tim aged 42 and Freddie aged 5 :

*We read the book to Freddie and she probably is a bit young for it but given that you're looking for honest feedback we thought that for a 5 year old there are quite a few words which aren't understood and by the time you've explained them all, the story has rather lost its way. **But pictures would probably help.** Freddie liked the ending but the majority of the plot could have been more exciting with heaps of buried treasure or something.*

Kate, ex teacher:

"Doesn't the term 'Professor' need a definition? Not sure about the word artefacts – maybe a new word?"

"... a piece of flint" – children aren't going to know what flint is."

"...Will children know the word "investigate"?"

Judy, archaeologist:

*"I think this could be very good, they have done extremely well with the material but I also think it is vital that a small panel of kids of the age group is consulted. As far as the story goes, I think the use of some pithy adjectives would really bring the story to life -- eg section 2- what is the sea like- is it **murky** underwater? Is the seabed **sandy** ? 5- is the pile of sand and gravel **glistening**?"*

While taking into account recommendations for any factual changes related to the aggregates industry or archaeology, a decision was made to prioritise the comments made by those working within children's literature, particularly those who are responsible for direct delivery to children from a range of age groups, and the responses from children themselves. But it was still felt that there were many contradictions in the comments, particularly over the level at which the language was pitched. To make a final decision on this aspect it was decided that further opinion was necessary and Clive Barnes, Manager of Library Services to Children and Young People, Southampton City Council, was consulted. We felt that he would provide a professional, objective opinion of the book.

"I would say that it would be suitable for 6-7s. 8 is probably the upper limit because you are using the idea of a dredger with a human personality, and the storyline is very simple. Younger children would need to read it with their parents.

The text is at the right level for this age group, but needs some work on grammar and construction e.g. p4 should read "the (not a) big ship sailed to their rescue" to connect it to the ship on page 3. The text could even be made shorter and simpler in places. e.g.21 "thrown around by the enormous and dangerous sea" - you could remove "and dangerous" because that's already included in enormous (which actually loses it's power with "and dangerous" after it). Similarly p 22, you don't need brightly after shining. And "tiny" on the same page is probably the wrong word - I think distant is meant.

I like the way the story incorporates real aspects of maritime archaeology - disappointment at not finding anything, engines that don't work, the way the weather is important and the dangers of storms when working at sea - all as part of the story rather than being explicitly pointed out.

You need the right technical words where you can use them, and most often a definition is actually supplied in the text (artefacts might be an exception). I think that's the best way to do it rather than having separate definitions.

You need the illustrations to be exciting and humorous. Even older children will accept the idea of a dredger with a face if it's funny enough. You don't need to put too many adjectives into the text. If the illustrations do their job properly, they'll give you all the excitement, atmosphere and fun you need."

All of Clive comments were taken into account and were then collated with the rest of the feedback. One reaction was to slightly alter the age group from six - eight year olds, to five - seven year olds, and to emphasise again that the aim was to produce a 'read with parent story book'. The story text was revised and the initial storyboard developed prior to a further round of consultation. Only once the illustrations were finished, was the fully illustrated text re-circulated for any further comment and changes. At this point several more children were consulted, as it was felt that their feedback would be the most valuable of all.

Abi (age 5) and Amanda Bowens (parent)

"Initial statement: 'Look, Archie's got a friend and she's got a pink wetsuit!' (big hit!).

Abi really enjoyed the book, the story and the pictures. She declared: Funniest bit: the page where Archie has his arse sticking out of the sand - she's still laughing about that.

Best bit: when they find Derek's granny.

Favourite picture: the underwater shipwreck.

She totally got the fact that they do the same with the foreshore wrecks as with the underwater wrecks.

Some confusion over what a dredger was but when we went back and did the Page 11 again - it cleared that one up.

As a parent, comments:

Good length for this age group. Brilliant colourful pictures and characters that will appeal to all. Appropriate language level. Really brilliant!"

Ella (age 5) and Mark Beattie-Edwards (parent)

"Ella loved the book and really enjoyed the illustrations. Two improvements would be to add HWTMA into the glossary, and add to the title of the glossary 'words you might not know'"

Sam (Age 6) and Garry Momber (parent)

"Sam really enjoyed the book, but got a bit sad at the end. He felt that Bernadette was not pleased enough to see her grandson again."

All comments from children were taken into consideration and all changes were made.

Although the extended consultation process had a significant impact on the already tight project timetable it was thought that this was a valuable exercise to have undertaken as it enabled the final product to be as suitable as possible for the intended audience.

3. Marketing, Distribution and Initial Feedback

The marketing and promotion of the book has been through two main stages, initial publicity about the forthcoming publication alongside promotion of the range of Aggregates to Outreach resources, and a flurry of activity towards the end of the project when the book had been delivered and was available for sale. This section reviews the current and future marketing.

3.1 Marketing

Derek has been, and is being, marketed through a range of initiatives these include:

- Combined marketing with other HWTMA ALSF funded resources
- Promotion at events
- Adverts in periodicals and newsletters

Two additional methods of promotion have been developed within the project:

- Pin badges – a set of three badges each featuring the principle characters within the book, Derek the Dredger, Professor Archie O'logy and Professor Marie Time.
- Two large size laminated copies of Derek – versions of the book which are made available at events where Derek is on sale, have also been used in schools (see section 3.3 for initial feedback), will be used in the children's room of the Underwater Archaeology Centre, and will hopefully be used in an Underwater reading session for the national 'Extreme Reading' project (BBC news are interested in this).

Further marketing will be promoted through reviews in appropriate journals and magazines, and will be part of the publishing/distribution package.

3.2 Distribution

Two principle methods of distribution have been developed for Derek:

- Bulk Print for immediate sale at events, exhibitions, and shops.
- Print-on-Demand through 'Author House', this innovative high-quality printing technology allows books to be printed one at a time or in small quantities in response to customer orders, and therefore eliminates the need for substantial investment in inventory, distribution and warehousing.

Despite the delivery of the final publication relatively late within the project timetable it has been on sale at the following events:

- The Education Show (Birmingham)
- The Dive Show (London)
- ALSF Technical Conference (London)
- National Science Week Event (National Oceanography Centre, Southampton)

And will be on sale at:

- IFA Conference (Swansea)

In addition to making the bulk printed copies available at a range of local and maritime related venues direct requests for orders have also been received from Aggregate Companies whose staff would like copies.

By combining the two printing methods it is possible to reach a very wide market and should increase the distribution and impact of the publication.

3.3 Initial Feedback

Most feedback received to date has been in the form of emails to staff rather than any formally collected. Early response to Derek has been extremely positive as shown in the collated comments which are outlined below.

Towse Harrison, Chiltern YAC

"DEREK THE DREDGER is a small, but copiously illustrated full-colour book for younger readers.

The detailed and colourful paintings give animation to the story for younger children while the text is suitable as an introduction to the complicated subjects of maritime archaeology and aggregate extraction for readers to age 9/10. It is such a pleasure to see illustrations from real paintings rather than the computer generated cut and pastes of many other titles.

In the company of two of HWTMA's regular characters, Professors Marie Time and Archie O'Logy, we are introduced to the pleasures and perils of underwater archaeology and the partnership that can be achieved when archaeologists and aggregate companies work together to locate, identify, understand and preserve archaeological remains.

The story involves shipwrecks, storms and an unexpected family reunion. We are also introduced to the friendly face of Derek the Dredger himself, who is looking to be another useful mascot to explain the work of HWTMA. The nature and need for aggregate extraction is not well understood by those more familiar with the land (adults included). So, Derek with his wonderful 'giant hoover' and his explanation that he sucks up sand and gravel from the seabed to 'help to build roads and homes for people on the dry land' is an opportunity for children to start asking different questions.

The lobster, which appears in most of the illustrations, deserves a story all of her own to discover just what is the significance of the flint tool she has found!

With 'Derek The Dredger', HWTMA have added another colourful success to their growing stable (or should I say cargo?) of books for young people. Now I shall wait to find out more about the lobster!"

Use of Derek with a School Group

Amanda Bowens, HWTMA Officer, took the large format Derek into Netley Primary school for a special reading session where the whole class gathers together to read a book and produced the following report:



Children using the large laminated version of Derek for group reading

"I took Derek (large and small) to read to the children, I let the kids take it in turns to hold up the large book and turn the pages (while I read from the small book). The book went down really well with the kids. I didn't have long enough with each group to read the whole book but they LOVED spotting the lobster and got the gist of the story and what archaeologists and dredgers are.

Some interesting responses were received by the children. When I asked (before reading the book) if anybody could tell me what an archaeologist did, in the first group, a rather shy boy's hand shot up immediately. I was delighted that he knew and asked him to tell the rest of the group. He was very confident in his response which declared that "Archaeologists climb up to the top of a mountain and shout RALALALALRA!....."

Other answers included: "making biscuits", "digging up worms" (after a prompt that they sometimes dug things up) and "making people angry" (not sure where that one came from!).

I think the regular shrieks of "There's the lobster!" made for a rather non-standard reading session with the children. Hopefully they'll let me come back and do it again sometime!"

Industry Responses

Mark Russell, BMAPA

"The marine aggregate industry has worked in very close partnership with English Heritage to develop our collective understanding of the marine historic environment, both directly and through the Aggregate Levy Sustainability Fund. 'Derek the Dredger' provides a simple but incredibly effective insight into not only the importance of the marine historic environment, but also the responsible role played by the marine aggregate industry in identifying and protecting features of archaeological interest. We warmly welcome 'Derek' as a way of introducing what can be quite technical and complex issues to a younger audience"

Rob Langman, Hanson Aggregates Marine Ltd

"I think the Derek books and c.d. are excellent. I have already got a lot of interest from the staff of the office, ships and wharves wanting to get a copy of the books and c.d. and furthermore if the outreach programme is still running, to potentially visit their children's schools to further the understanding of marine archaeology and marine dredging. About 25 people have already placed an order for a copy of all three components of the Derek series so Hanson will be placing an order soon.

The activity books were able to keep my nephews occupied - which is unheard of!"

Ian Selby, Hanson Aggregates Marine Ltd

"Derek has been well received by industry ... everyone likes the idea & story"

Teachers Responses

Allison Mason

"As a first attempt at writing for children, I think you have done an impressive job! You have managed to deftly weave a host of facts and information into a wonderfully wacky adventure story full of good humour. Becca's illustrations, done in bold, bright colours, are truly inspired, and a perfect match for the text. Each page is filled to overflowing with action and vitality - just what a good children's book needs to capture (and keep!) interest and attention. The glossary feature of the book is effectively written in 'child speak'.

As a classroom teacher, I think that the book would work well as a whole-class read-aloud and also for one-on-one sharing. It has excellent browsing potential in addition to being solid reference material."

4. Assessment of Extending 'Derek' into a Series

The initial popularity of Derek the Dredger and the Underwater Archaeologists has highlighted the possibility of extending this concept into a popular children's series of publications. Possible ideas could include:

- Derek the Dredger and the Underwater Archaeologists discover Bouldnor Cliff – This important Mesolithic site in the Solent has had a

limited amount of outreach work to date and we feel that a children's story could bring this fascinating site to a new audience. Derek could accidentally dredge up a lobster who tells him about this special site. Derek calls the archaeologists in to investigate. The lobster has a special flint hand axe that she rubs to take everyone back in time to see how people might have lived at the site 8,000 years ago.

- Derek the Dredger meets other industries – Derek is used to introduce children to other offshore industries including renewable energy, oil and gas, fishing, marine development etc. Derek would be seen as the initial contact with each of the other sectors.
- Derek the Dredger and the Protected Wreck Site – Obviously Derek can not dredge near a protected wreck site but he could find one that is later researched by the underwater archaeologists and protected. This could all be used to explain the process of the Protection of Wrecks Act.

5. Project Sustainability

All profits from Derek the Dredger are being held in a ring-fenced fund which will be used to help keep a range of the ALSF education and outreach products sustainable. This includes all proceeds from the bulk print of 1000 copies and royalties from print on demand copies.

For the bulk print copies the cover price for Derek has been set at £4.99 for direct sale, this will be discounted for retailers purchasing multiple copies for onward sale. The specific use of the proceeds will be agreed with English Heritage, but is it intended to use them to fund re-prints of the ALSF Children's Activity book which is available free of charge and future bulk prints of Derek.