



Archaeology  
Data Service

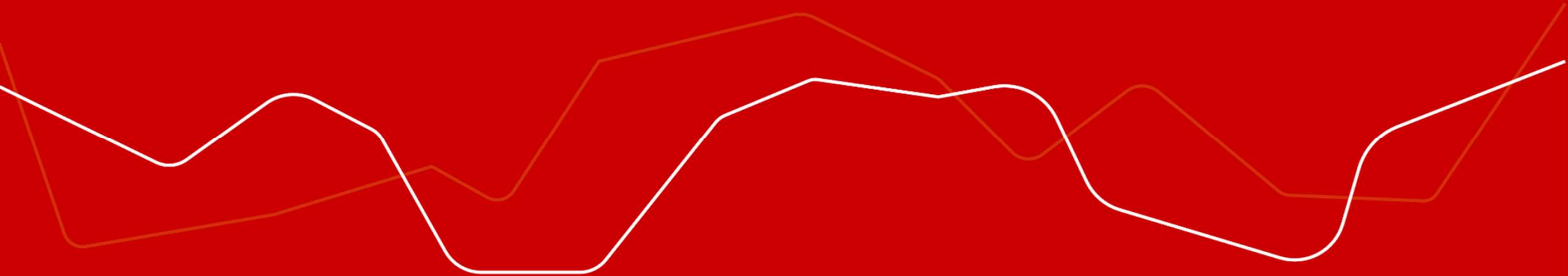
# 25 Years of Practical Digital Preservation: A Tale of Community- Driven Evolution

*By Jenny O'Brien 08/2023*

**Who Are We?**

**or**

**Where Did We Come From?**



# Purpose: Community Need

The Primary Record is Destroyed

The Record is Time-Sensitive

The Sector and its outputs were growing

The Community Thrives on Shared Knowledge



# Providing Access: Archsearch



## ▼ RESOURCE

- ADS Archive 3010
- Canmore 334635
- Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust 65185
- Defence of Britain Archive 20172
- Dyfed Archaeological Trust 32625
- Exeter City HER 971
- Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust 23994
- Greater London HER 70118
- Grey Lit Library 34288
- Gwynedd Archaeological Trust 12671
- Historic England National Inventory 309810
- Historic England NRHE Microfilm Index 7119
- Historic England NRHE Excavation Index 160701
- Historic Milestones Survey 26277
- Isle of Man HER 1723
- Lake District National Park HER 15437
- Merseyside HER 17950
- MOLA Archive 3169
- National Museums & Galleries

# OASIS – Reporting Events

- Online form
- Used by all fieldworkers
- Records event level data
- Data accessible by HERs & NMRs
- Upload of ‘Grey Literature’
- Record acts as metadata for report



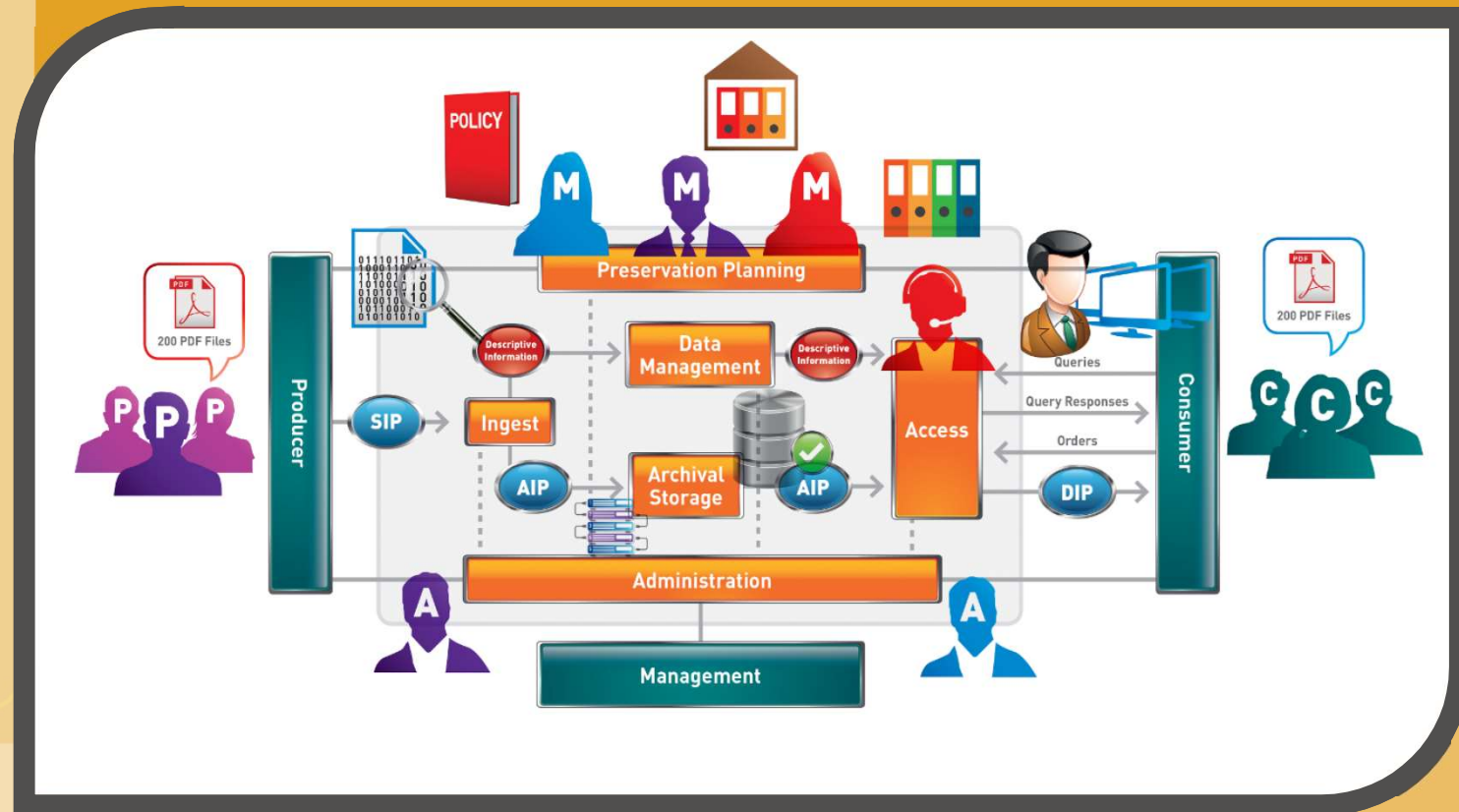
Online Access to the Index of archaeological investigations

# Developing Collections



# The First Digital Archivists

- Digital Preservation by Migration
- Front-loading processing and description
- Copying to long-term storage
- Online access
- Technical skills



# Managing our collections

## Checklist 1009870

Associate this checklist with an accession:

- Ready for accession (add to red list)
- Accession completed
- Procedures completed - AIP checks not necessary or have already been completed
- Archiving procedures completed - allocate for AIP checking
- If there are any amendments/edits/further work needed, tick this box (*ticking this box will send the archive back*)
- AIP checking completed
- Invoiced? (*to be ticked by the CDM/Archives Manager*)
- Form signed off (*to be ticked by the CDM/Archives Manager*)
- Data has been added to deep storage (*to be ticked by Digital Archivist*)
- Form complete (*to be ticked by Digital Archivist once release procedures have been completed*)

- Purpose
- Content
- Method of Creation
- Attributes
- Relationships
- Constraints and Dependencies

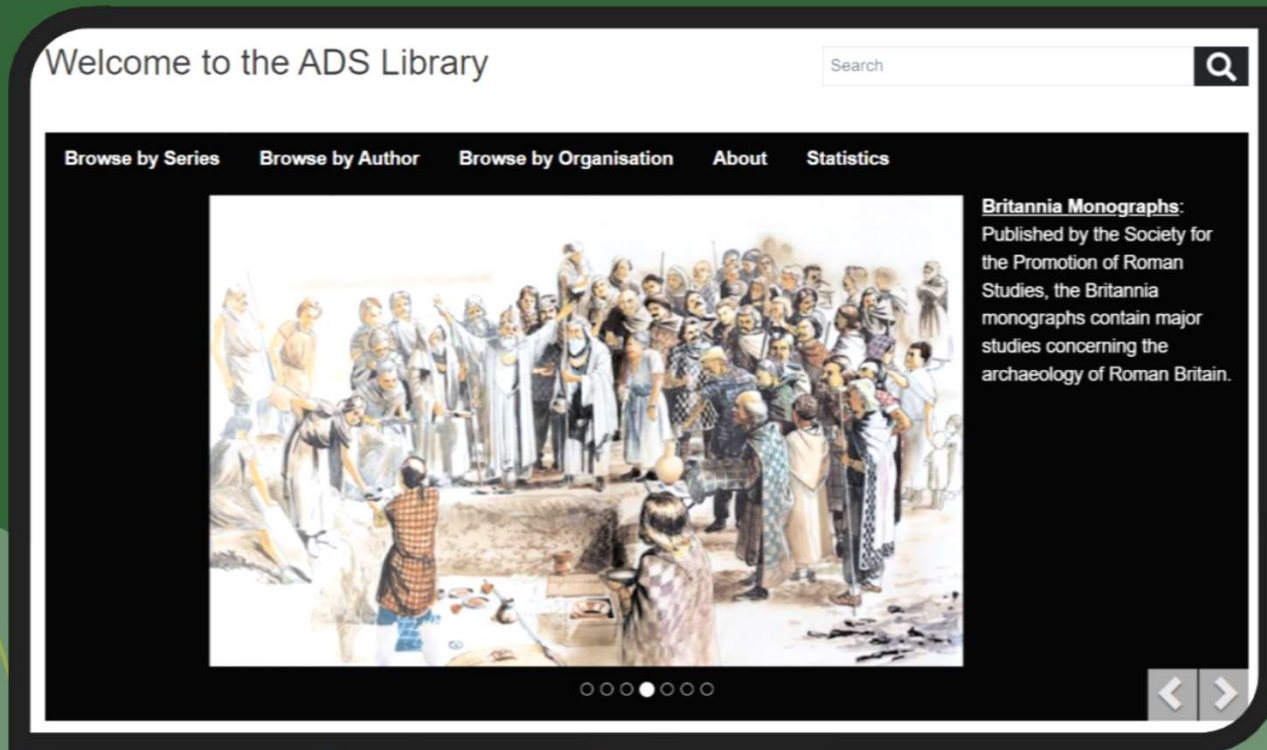


# Managing our objects

- Purpose
- Content
- Method of Creation
- Attributes
- Relationships
- Constraints and Dependencies



# The ADS Library



- OASIS
- Digitised Journals and Monographs
- Internet Archaeology
- Publisher Feeds
- Grey Literature Scanning Projects
- Grey Literature from ADS Archives

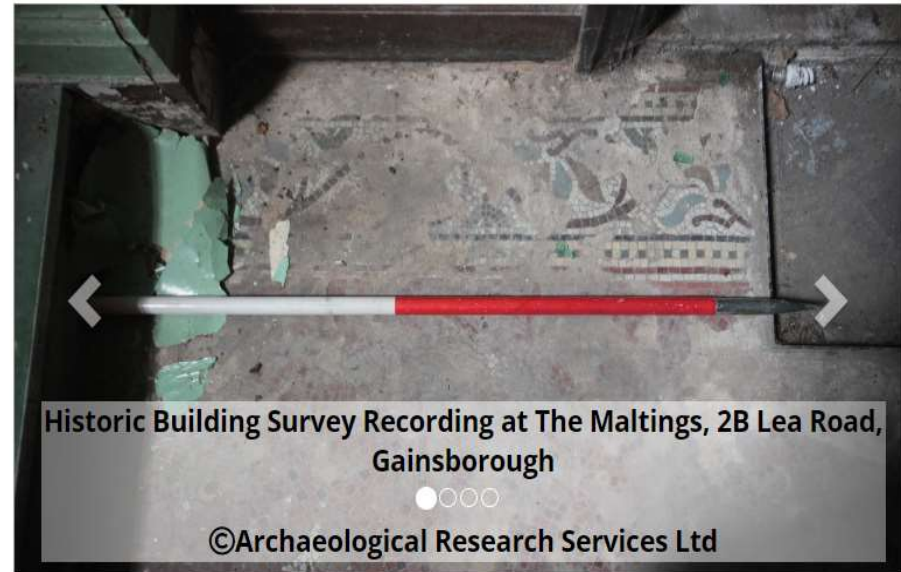
# OASIS – all things to all people

## Users may be interested to know that OASIS

- holds details on **116229** historic environment projects in the UK
- has enabled **70169** reports to be made publicly available in the **ADS Library**
- is used by **4267** people
- used by **2165** organisations

## In the last 3 months alone

- **2677** records created
- **2881** reports released



# Archiving Large Infrastructure Projects

## HS2 Historic Environment Digital Archive

High Speed Two Ltd., 2021.

### Introduction

#### Overview

#### Collections Map

#### HS2 Collections:

- Phase One
- Phase 2a
- Phase 2b

#### Metadata

#### Usage Statistics

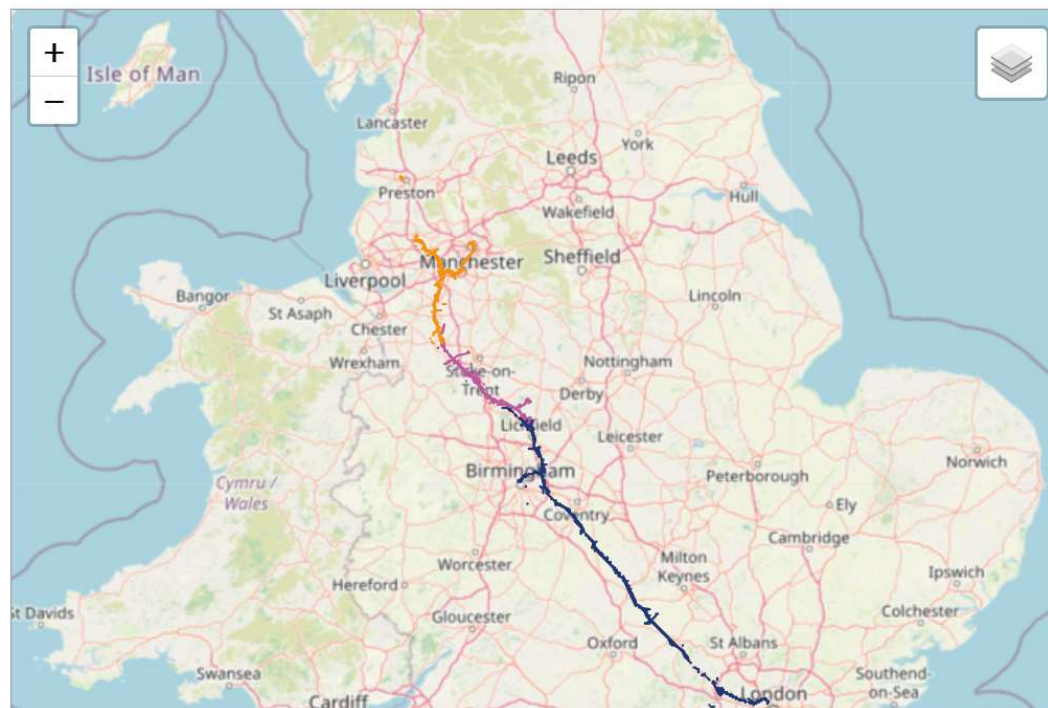
Data copyright © High Speed Two Ltd.  
unless otherwise stated

This work is licensed under a The  
Open Government Licence (OGL).

# HS2

### Downloads

Below is a map of the project area. This map provides a preview of the phases of HS2. Use the layers button in the top right corner of the map to navigate the different previews. Once a layer is displayed on the map, you can zoom in to investigate or click the area to go through to the phase directly.



# Curatorial Strategy

...”to put forward a vision and pathway to achieving a richer value-added archive through more efficient and effective metadata collection, creation, and use.”

Jenny O'Brien ADS Curatorial Strategy 2020

## Long-term aims

*Based on the challenges and opportunities we have going forward*

### DISCOVERY

- Allow users to search for objects across collections (A1)
- Increase the use of external providers as signposts to our data (A2)
- Introduce exhibits and events to promote our collections (A3)



### VALUE

- Expand use of linked data (B1)
- Improve access and display to images (B2)
- Create engaging collections (B3)



### BALANCE

- Change our workflow to give greater priority to re-use (C1)
- Maintain a modern and relevant website (C2)



### RECOGNITION

- Show an object's preservation pathway on the website (D1)
- Show metadata source and development on the website (D2)
- Increase use of staff subject knowledge (D3)



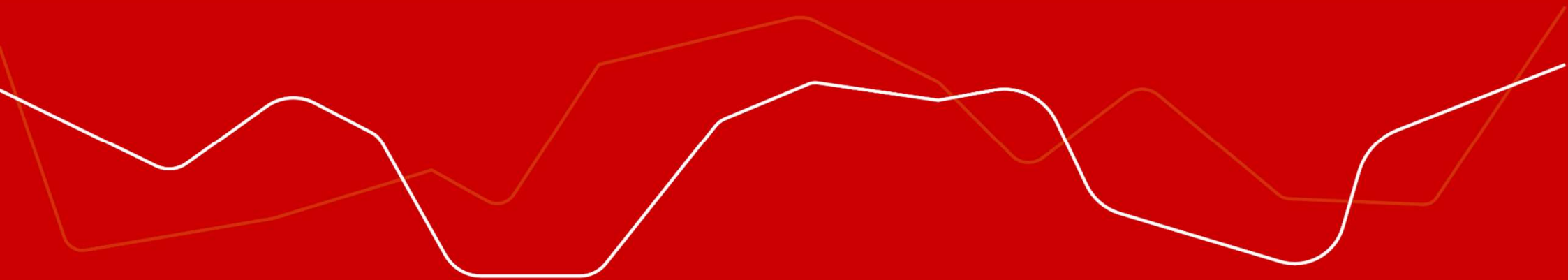
### CHANGE

- Adopt change planning into strategies and task allocation (E1)
- Expand user engagement and interaction (E2)



Icons made by Flat Icons and Eucalypt from [Freemove.com](#)

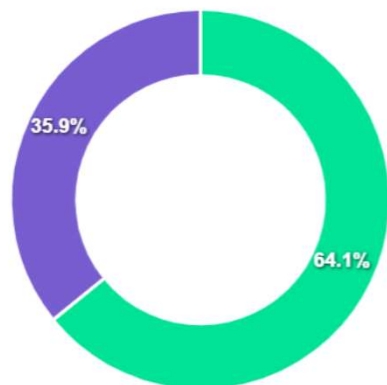
# The ADS now



# The Current Archive

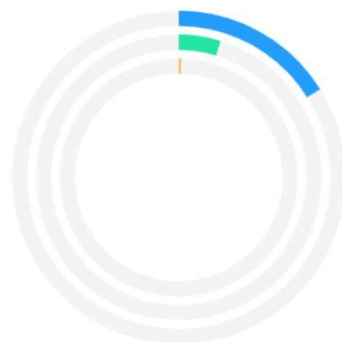
## Collections

<b>Total</b>	5413
<b>Released</b>	<b>3472</b>
<b>Not Released</b>	<b>1941</b>



## Released

<b>Last Year</b>	<b>562</b>
<b>Last Quarter</b>	<b>164</b>
<b>Last Month</b>	<b>6</b>



- At the time of our last annual report:
- 33.3 Tb data
  - 327 file formats
  - 39,374 processes carried out
  - 3,905,936 files
  - 5269 total collections

# Broader Community

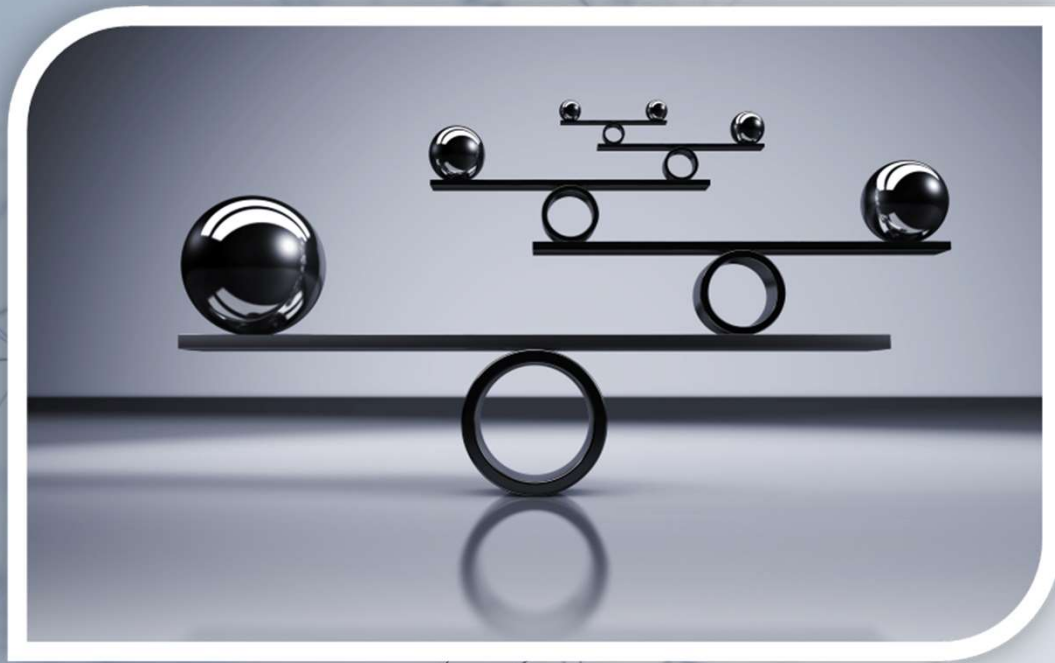


From Archaeological  
Professionals and  
Academics...

To...







## Our Procedures

- File Structure
- Filenames
- Version Control
- Discard policy
- Backup
- Security
- Documentation

# A Standard Archive

ADS Main Website Back to Archives Search


## Images from a Trial Trench Evaluation at The Smithies, Athersley, Barnsley, 2022.

York Archaeology, 2023. <https://doi.org/10.5284/1108965>. [How to cite using this DOI](#)

[Introduction](#)  
[Downloads](#)  
[Metadata](#)  
[Usage Statistics](#)

Data copyright © York Archaeology unless otherwise stated

This work is licensed under a Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License.




---

**York Archaeology**

---

**Primary contact**  
York Archaeology  
47 Aldwark  
York  
YO1 7BX  
England  
Tel: 01904 663000  
Fax: 01904 663024

[Send e-mail enquiry](#)

---

**Resource identifiers**  
ADS Collection: 5325  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5284/1108965>  
How to cite using this DOI






**Downloads**

[Reports | Images](#)

**Documentation**

<b>Title:</b> Image Metadata <b>Filename:</b> 3548_Smithies_Barnsley_ADS_raster_metadat...v2.csv (7 kB)	CSV	<a href="#">Info</a> <a href="#">Download</a>
--	-----	--

**Files**

	<b>Title:</b> General shot of Trench 1, looking northeast <b>Filename:</b> 3548_021.jpg (5 MB)	JPG	<a href="#">Info</a> <a href="#">Download</a>
	<b>Title:</b> General shot of Trench 1, looking southwest <b>Filename:</b> 3548_022.jpg (5 MB)	JPG	<a href="#">Info</a> <a href="#">Download</a>
	<b>Title:</b> General shot of Trench 2, looking north <b>Filename:</b> 3548_008.jpg (5 MB)	JPG	<a href="#">Info</a> <a href="#">Download</a>
	<b>Title:</b> General shot of Trench 3, looking east <b>Filename:</b> 3548_013.jpg (5 MB)	JPG	<a href="#">Info</a> <a href="#">Download</a>
	<b>Title:</b> General shot of Trench 3, looking west	JPG	<a href="#">Info</a>

- Appraise data and documentation (metadata)
- Accession data into file store
- Add collection-level metadata into Collections Management System
- Add file-level metadata into Object Management System
- Define Data Types
- Create preservation copies (normalised to stable formats)
- Create dissemination copies (normalised to web accessible formats)
- Create web pages using database-driven web page templates
- Ensure any image/video/3D model previews are working correctly
- Mint DOI and release web pages
- Copy to long-term backup

# Current Resources

- **One** Director (Julian Richards)
- **One** Deputy Director
- **Three** Managers.
- **Four** Application Developers.
- **Eight** Digital Archivists.
- **One** Internet Archaeology Editor.
- **One** Financial Administrator.
- A cost centre, hosted by the Department of Archaeology at the University of York.



A partridge in a pear tree. Picture: Getty



# Collaborating

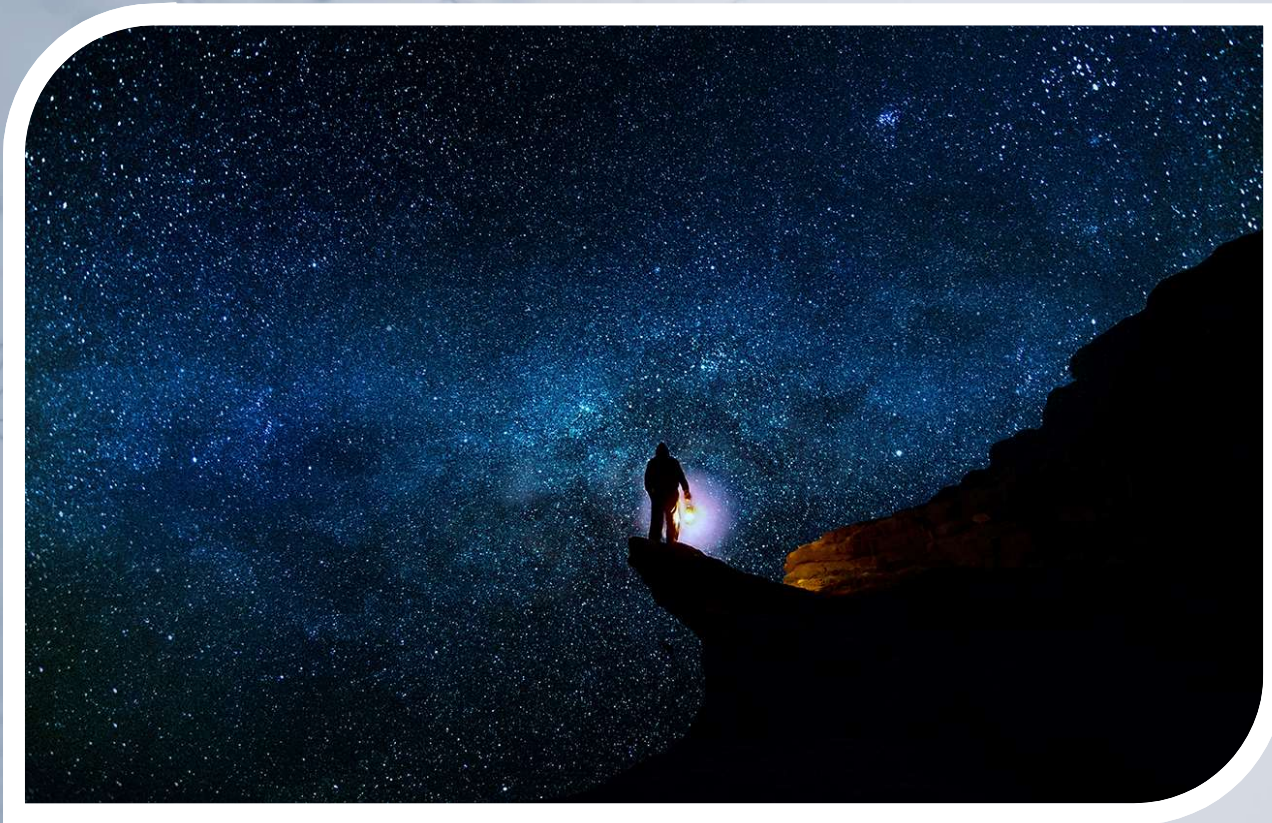
- Quarterly exec meetings
- Monthly team meetings
- Monthly project/strategy meetings
- Fortnightly individual catch-ups
- Weekly all-staff check-in meetings

# The Plans!

- Effective Description and Presentation
- Mapping
- Collections Care
- Curated Collections
- More efficient data deposit
- External catalogues



Credit: Melinda Sue Gordon  
Copyright: © 2007 Warner Bros. Entertainment Inc. U.S., Canada, Bahamas & Bermuda.  
© 2007 Village Roads



**The Dreams!**

# To find out more...

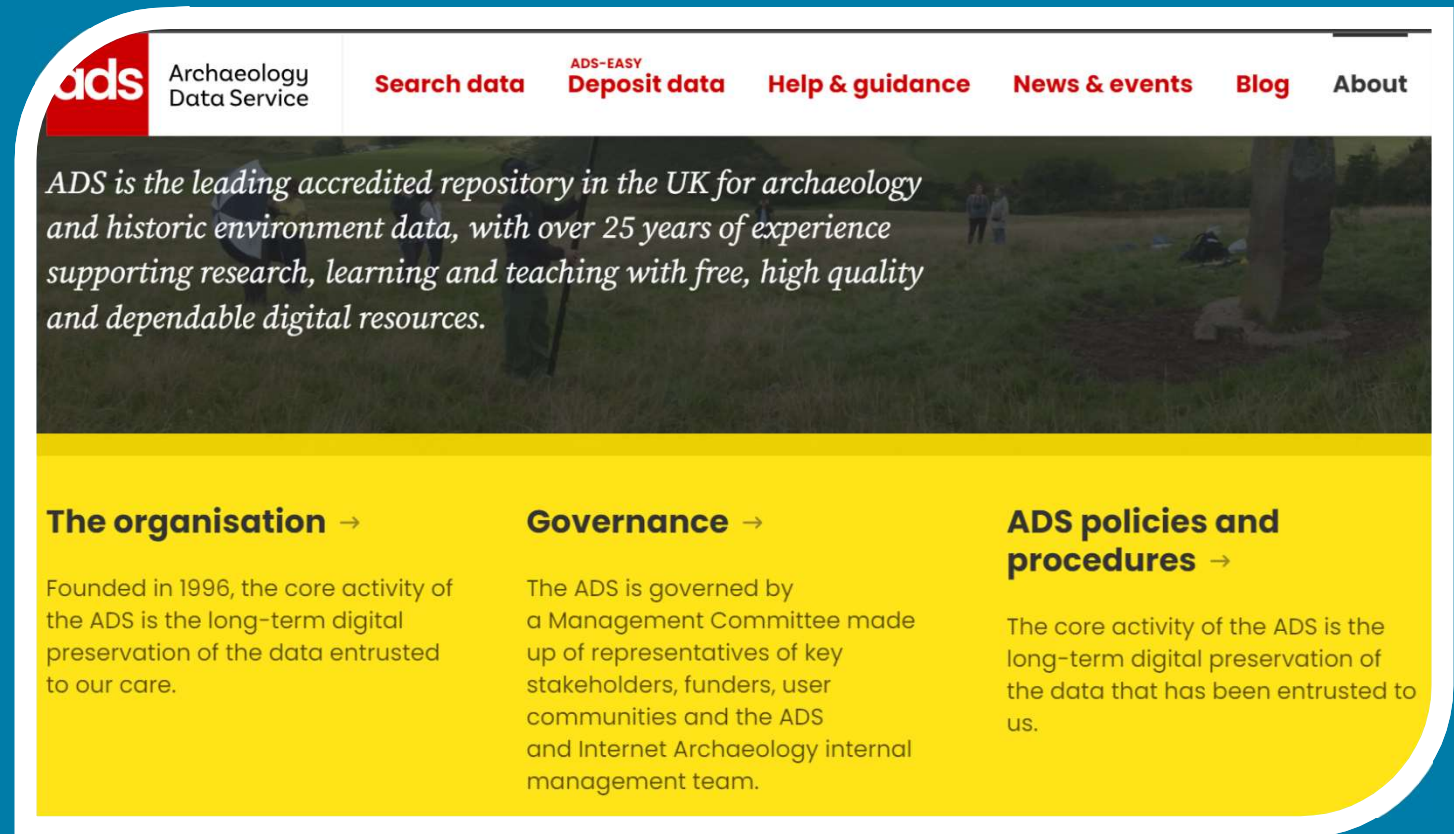


Blog via the ADS website  
archaeologydataservice.ac.uk

About Pages

Help & Guidance for Data Management advice

Guides to Good Practice



The screenshot shows the ADS website homepage. At the top left is the ADS logo (a red square with 'ads' in white) and the text 'Archaeology Data Service'. To the right is a navigation menu with links: 'Search data', 'Deposit data' (with 'ADS-EASY' above it), 'Help & guidance', 'News & events', 'Blog', and 'About'. Below the navigation is a large banner image of an archaeological site with a stone monolith. Overlaid on the banner is the text: 'ADS is the leading accredited repository in the UK for archaeology and historic environment data, with over 25 years of experience supporting research, learning and teaching with free, high quality and dependable digital resources.' Below the banner is a yellow section with three columns of text, each with a heading and a right-pointing arrow: 'The organisation →', 'Governance →', and 'ADS policies and procedures →'. Each column contains a short paragraph of text.

**ads** Archaeology Data Service

[Search data](#) [Deposit data](#) ADS-EASY [Help & guidance](#) [News & events](#) [Blog](#) [About](#)

*ADS is the leading accredited repository in the UK for archaeology and historic environment data, with over 25 years of experience supporting research, learning and teaching with free, high quality and dependable digital resources.*

**The organisation →**

Founded in 1996, the core activity of the ADS is the long-term digital preservation of the data entrusted to our care.

**Governance →**

The ADS is governed by a Management Committee made up of representatives of key stakeholders, funders, user communities and the ADS and Internet Archaeology internal management team.

**ADS policies and procedures →**

The core activity of the ADS is the long-term digital preservation of the data that has been entrusted to us.



Archaeology  
Data Service



**Thank you**



**Archaeology Data Service**  
Department of Archaeology  
University of York  
The King's Manor  
Exhibition Square  
York, YO1 7EP



**[www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk](http://www.archaeologydataservice.ac.uk)**



**[help@archaeologydataservice.ac.uk](mailto:help@archaeologydataservice.ac.uk)**