

THE PROFESSIONAL BODY FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS

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Peter Hinton, Commercial Archaeology, Day of Archaeology 2011
Academia, archaeologist, Archaeology, Association of Archaeological Illustrators and Surveyors, British professional bodies, Chief Executive, IfA, Institute for Archaeologists, Museology, Peter Hinton, Profession, Scottish government, United Kingdom, Woking Palace, www.archaeologists.net, www.woking-palace.org/index.htm

This may seem a million miles away from what you'd expect an archaeologist to be doing, but it is essential to ensure that the profession continues to develop and can provide a (yet) better service to the public and developers. And that's the job of the Institute for Archaeologists . So far today I have prepared a short statement welcoming the release of a planning advice note from Scottish Government. This is an update of a 17-year old document setting out the roles and responsibilities of developers and local authorities when it comes to archaeology. I was involved on behalf of the Institute for Archaeologists in an advisory/drafting panel convened by Scottish Government, and it's very reassuring to see that nearly all of our recommendations have been included. It's a big improvement over the earlier draft because it now makes clear that the work developers pay for should be done to quality standards, and there's the biggest steer possible short of actually saying it (governments are always cautious about this) that work should be done by IfA Registered Organisations. So we're moving away from simple compliance to a concern about quality.

Meanwhile, in England, I have been preparing comments on the consultation draft of the new National Planning Policy Framework, released with a fanfare (and an IfA soundbite in media release) on Monday. This document replaces all the existing government documentation about developer archaeology is secured. Again we have had lots of official and unofficial input into the process, but you can never be quite sure if the document to be released looks like the last official draft, the last official leaked draft, the last unofficially leaked draft or nothing you've seen before. In fact, it's got most of the good bits in that we wanted, but with colleagues I've spotted some areas that need to be strengthened. And we'll need other documents to explain how it's to be

interpreted – we've started already – in order to ensure, once again, that archaeological work is undertaken whenever its necessary (and never when it isn't), as is of good quality every time.

And I've attended a meeting of our specialist group responsible for illustration and survey. They'll be making sure that we provide all the services that are needed for these critically important parts of our discipline, and that we continue the good work of the Association of Archaeological Illustrators and Surveyors, which voted to merge with IfA last month.

And this evening I shall be doing what so many paid archaeologists do – no, not downing beers in the pub (though I might), but preparing to be a volunteer archaeologist at the weekend, guiding visitors to the archaeological excavation at Woking Palace, on behalf of the Friends of Woking Palace, as part of the Festival of British Archaeology. Why not visit?

Peter Hinton, Chief Executive, IfA