

# IT'S NOT ALL GLAMOROUS – SOME OF US DRINK OUR TEA IN OFFICES, NOT TRENCHES

July 11, 2014 Phil Pollard Buildings, Curation, Day of Archaeology 2014, Education capacity building, Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships, English Heritage, training

I am a cliché. I got into archaeology because of Indiana Jones and because I liked to visit old castles when I was a kid, running round pretending I was a knight or some such.

After undertaking a degree in the subject at University, I quickly learned my image of archaeology was wrong; however the fiery passion that was ignited in my youth, based on intrigue, adventure and imagination stayed with me, and I learnt that the reality of archaeology and heritage could be just as exciting, only in different ways.

I imagine many of today's posts will be about muddy boots, interesting fieldwork using new technologies and amazing finds (or rather mundane finds as is often the case!). There are however a fair amount of us who would describe ourselves as archaeologists that never set foot in the field (basically because we just don't like getting dirty – something else I discovered at university!)

I currently work as a Training Delivery Officer in the Capacity Building Team at English Heritage and our aim is to provide the heritage sector with the knowledge, information and skills needed to better understand, protect and manage our heritage. So whilst I am, for the most part, office-bound, I like to think it is for a worthy cause!

Today I have been working on two separate, but not unrelated, tasks.

Firstly, part of my job involves co-ordinating English Heritage's programme of collaborative PhDs. One of the main schemes we are involved in is the Collaborative Doctoral Partnerships (CDP) scheme and offers a small number of AHRC funded studentships that are jointly supervised by a specialist member of English Heritage (EH) staff and an academic from a UK university.

Offering collaborative doctoral awards gives students the possibility to combine academic work with the acquisition of practical skills and work experience outside the university context. It also provides us with focused research advancing the protection of the historic environment and heritage through the National Heritage Protection Plan (NHPP).

CDP projects we have offered have covered a diverse range of topics, with titles such as: "Defining the Potential of Ploughzone Lithic Scatters for Interpretation of the Final Palaeolithic and Mesolithic Landscape", to "Interpreting loss of data from metal artefact decay (rates, reasons and conservation management implications)" to "Religious Heritage in Transition: Sikh Places of Worship in England".

This morning I have been writing up notes from a meeting I attended yesterday with a Consortium of CDP holding organisations where we discussed, amongst other things, the joint specialist training programme we are running for CDP students across the country, as well as hearing from the AHRC on the future of the scheme.

You can find out about EH's collaborative research opportunities on our website: <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/training-and-skills/work-based-training/collaborativeresearch/>

The bulk of the day so far however has been spent with a colleague in our National Planning and Conservation department designing a training course that is aimed particularly at Heritage Champions and other elected Members in Local Authorities, to really get them to understand some of the key concepts around managing our heritage; and identifying and developing practical exercises for them to get to grips with how these are applied in the real world. This course will form part of the HELM training programme, which is a Capacity Building programme aimed at decision makers in local authorities, regional agencies and national organisations whose actions affect the historic environment. You can find out more about EHs training offer on our website <http://www.english-heritage.org.uk/professional/training-and-skills/>