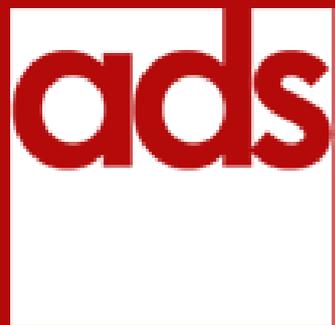




# DEBS: Using digital tools in graveyard recording



ARCHAEOLOGY  
DATA SERVICE



Centre for  
Digital  
Heritage

Society for Historical  
Archaeology, Boston,  
10 January 2020

**Julian Richards**  
with Debbie Maxwell, Toby Pillatt,  
Nicole Smith, Gareth Beale  
& Katie Green

## DEBS: Sept 2017 – Nov 2020

Working with community groups to develop new tools for burial space research and dissemination

- UK national burial space survey recording form - OASIS
- Exploring the digital workflow – mobile app / online form / simple spreadsheet / RTI
- Creating a pilot national database for burial space research
- Suite of online user resources - linked to Harold Mytum's Practical Handbook





Historic England

ChurchCare



16,000 buildings. One resource



digital  
creativity  
labs



Charity no. 1155536

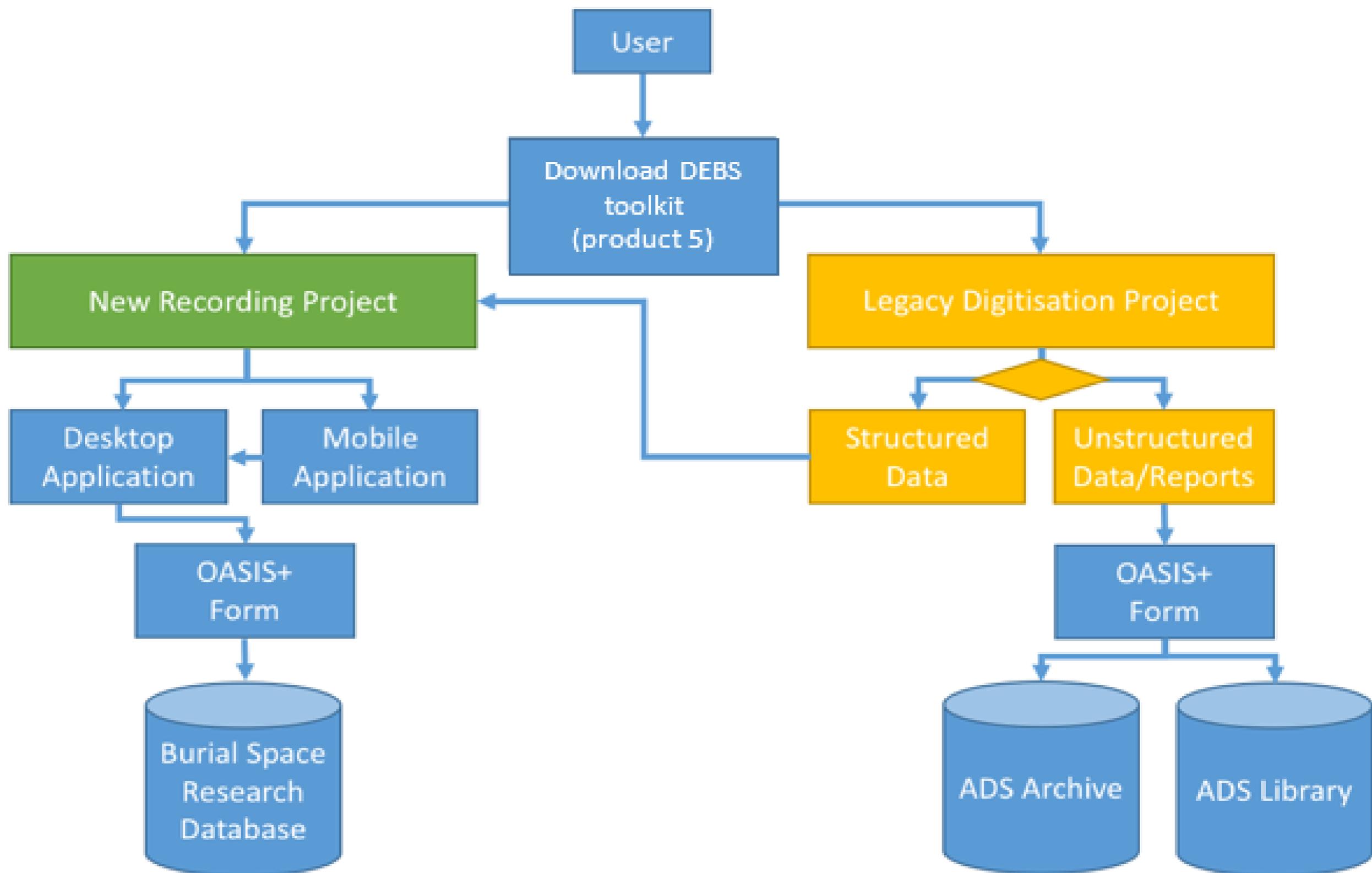


- Ease of processing and analysis
- Ease of access to data
- New questions - Big Data projects
- Skills transmission, e.g. digital skills for older people
- Social inclusion activity (everybody has something to offer - historical research, memory, technical skills, a camera)
- Community building activity



- Technical development
- Level of IT literacy, and resistance to born digital approach
- Data standards
- “Doing it our way”
- Definition of core fields
  - Interoperability
- Data curation
- Sustainability
- Maintaining interest and contacts





## EXPLORE YOUR BURIAL SPACE

1

### Design and fund your research

Surveying burial spaces is a popular activity for community heritage groups. They are a great way to revive and reconnect with under-used and unloved churchyards and cemeteries, and can be funded by small grants from the [National Lottery Heritage Fund](#). DEBS surveys are...

- ✓ Relatively inexpensive
- ✓ Suitable for a range of ages and abilities
- ✓ Easy to set up - they don't require specialist equipment

2

### Record and interpret your burial space

Every burial space is a unique archive, documenting the history of our communities and our families. They are places in which identities are constructed, and widespread social changes marked. Use DEBS resources to...

- ✓ Organise your survey
- ✓ Identify subjects of interest
- ✓ Uncover the stories in your research

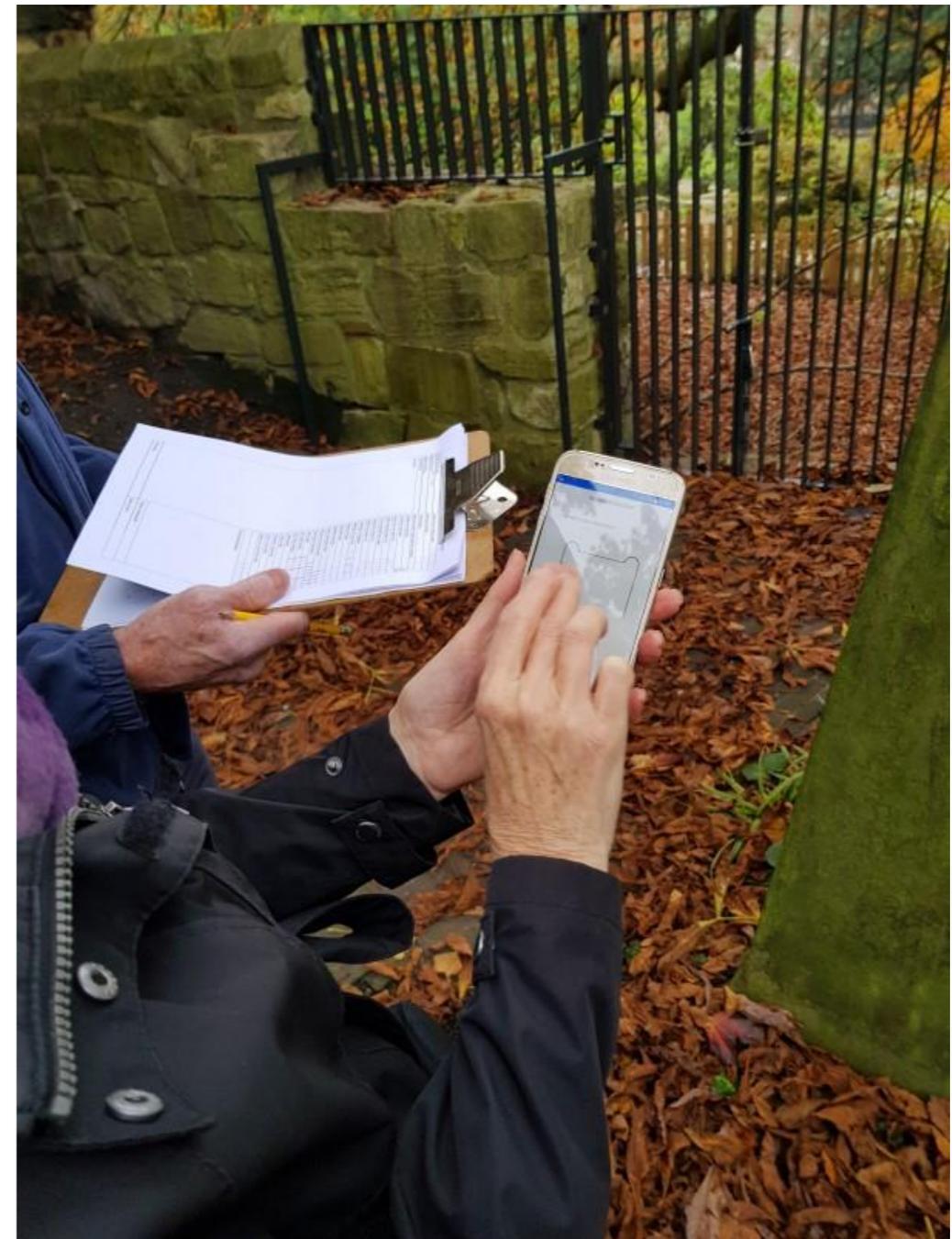
3

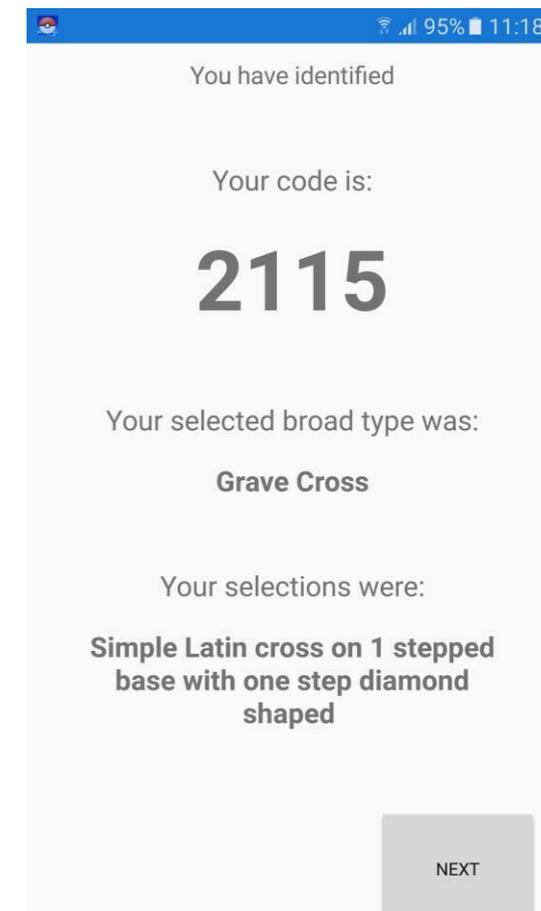
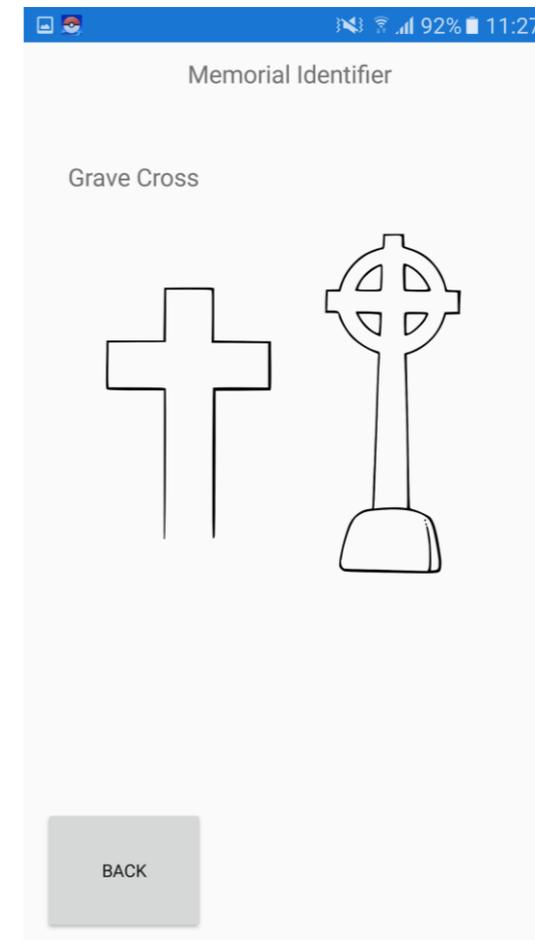
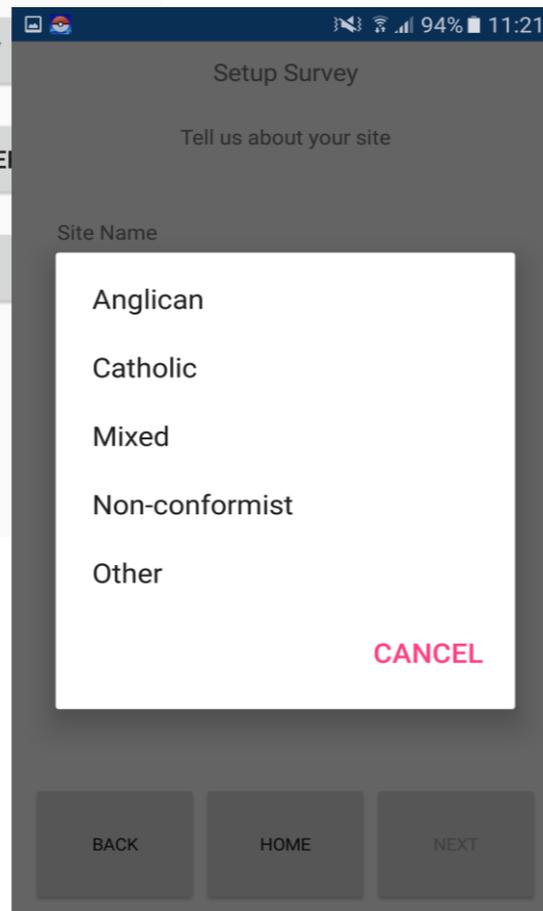
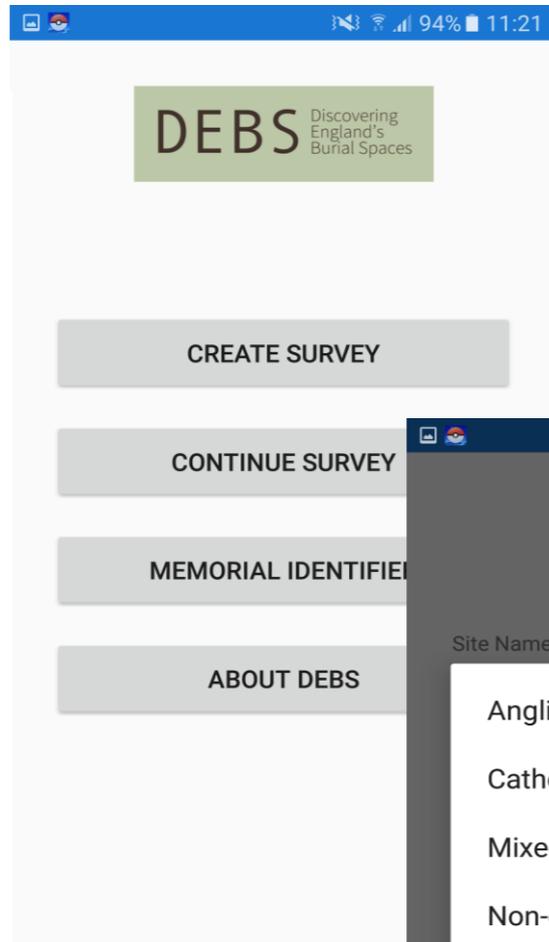
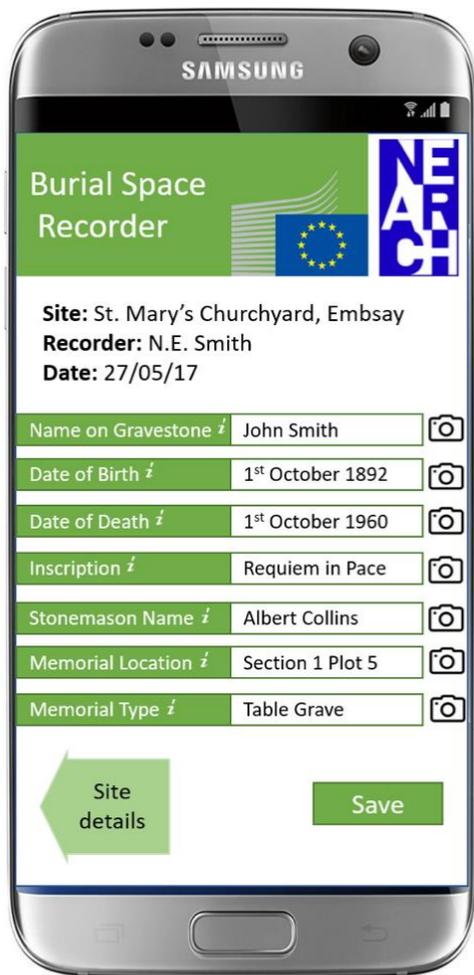
### Share your findings

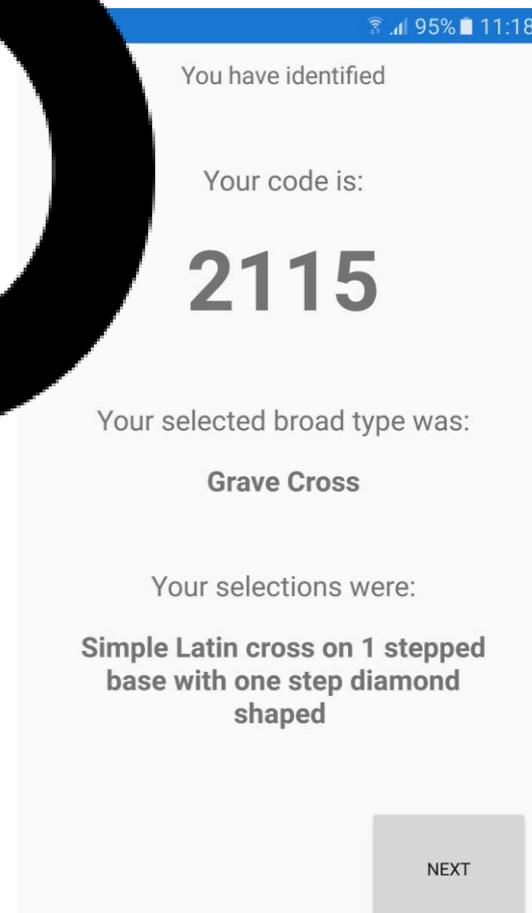
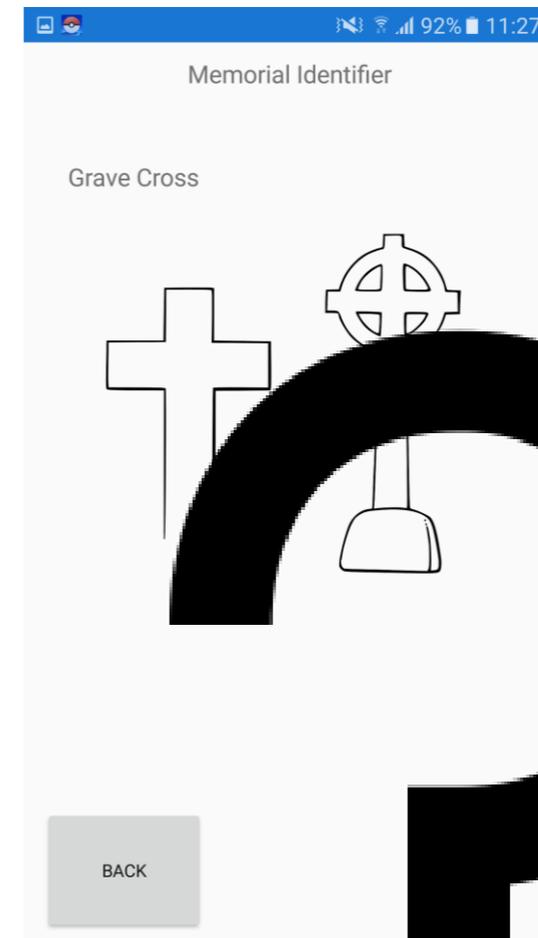
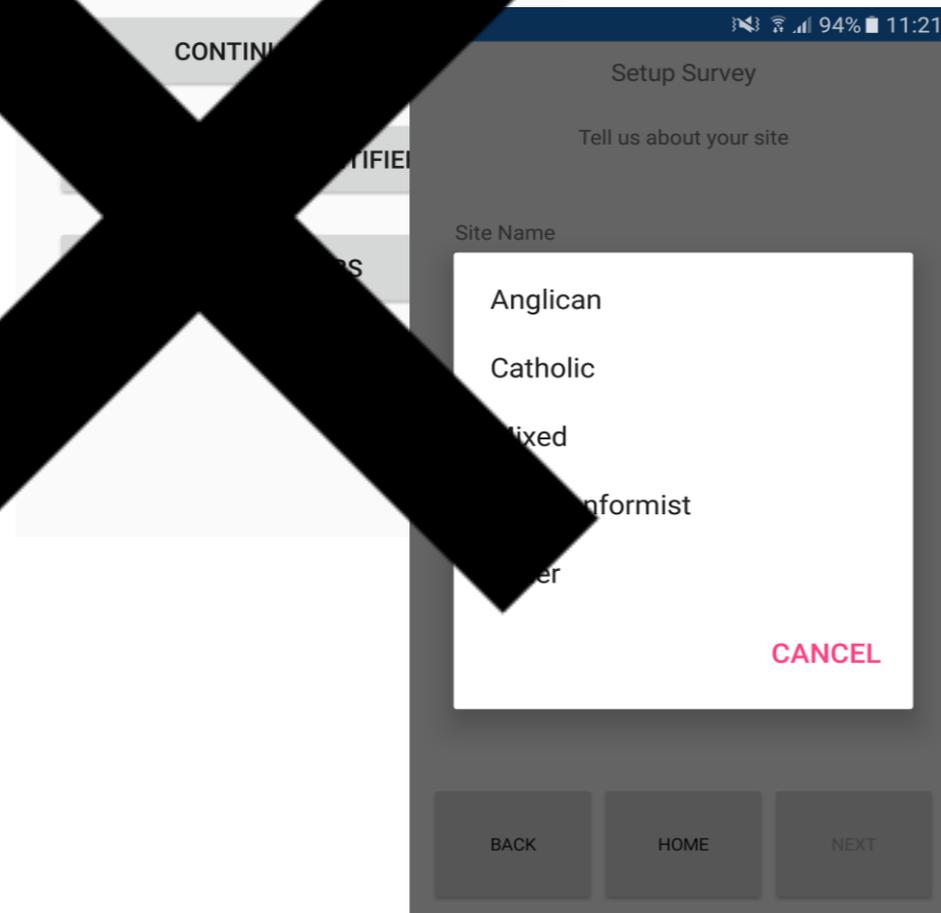
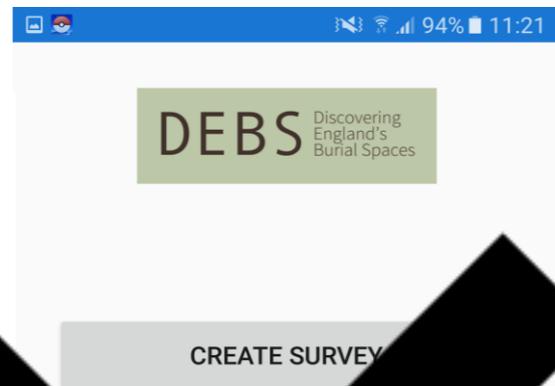
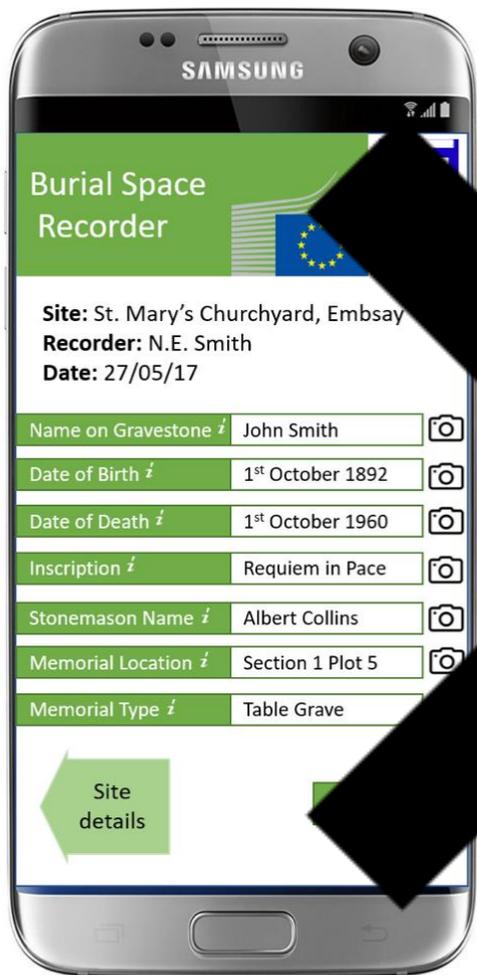
While burial spaces are important records of local history, they can also be set within fascinating national trends concerning commemoration and attitudes to death. In the past, this kind of research has been hindered by disparate methodologies and archive practices. Use DEBS resources to...

- ✓ Standardise your recording methods
- ✓ Share your findings within a publicly accessible database
- ✓ Archive your research with the [Archaeology Data Service](#)
- ✓ Notify local and national heritage bodies of your survey

- St Mary the Virgin Embsay, North Yorkshire
- Eastby Churchyard Survey Team
- All Saints' Church, Slingsby, North Yorkshire
- Leavesden Hospital History Association
- Friends of St Matthew's Churchyard, Lightcliffe, West Yorkshire
- Caring for God's Acre Beautiful Burial Grounds: Birmingham cemeteries project







## Materials used in memorial

Materials vary from region to region but common types include: Slate, Marble, Limestone, Granite, Sandstone, Ceramic, Brick, Tile, Terracotta, Iron, Brass, Concrete and Conglomerate. If you're not sure then use 'Other'

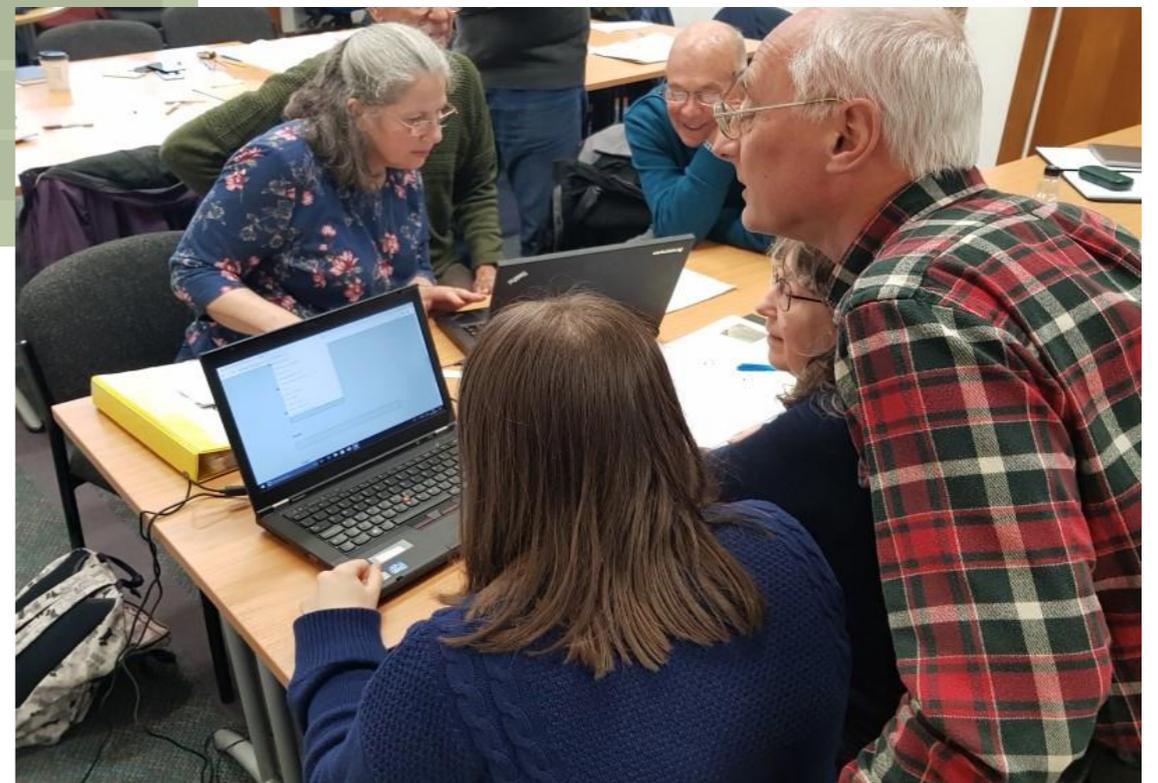
	Material 1	Material 2	Material 3	Material 4	Material 5
Materials	40 Sandstone				

## Repairs to memorial

- 0 No repairs
- 1 Repairs
- 2 Iron clamps
- 3 Copper alloy clamps
- 4 Lead clamps
- 5 Mortar/concrete/adhesive

## Qualtrics form

- Provides data validation
- Interaction valuable
- Can be done inside later



**Materials used in memorial**  
Materials vary from region to region but common types include: Slate, Marble, Limestone, Granite, Sandstone, Ceramic, Brick, Tile, Terracotta, Iron, Brass, Concrete and Conglomerate. If you're not sure then use 'Other'

	Material 1	Material 2	Material 3	Material 4	Material 5
Materials	40 Sandstone				

**Repairs to memorial**

0 No repairs

1 Repairs

2 Iron clamps

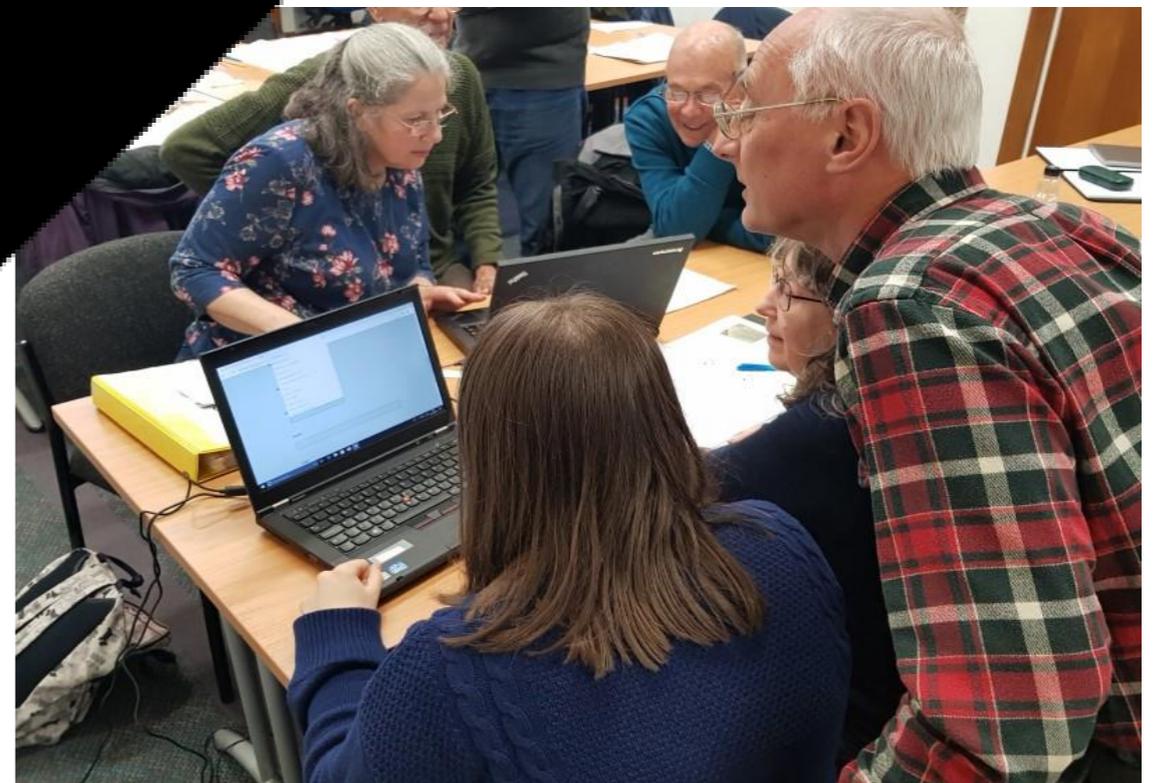
3 Copper alloy clamps

4 Lead clamps

5 Mortar/concrete/adhesive

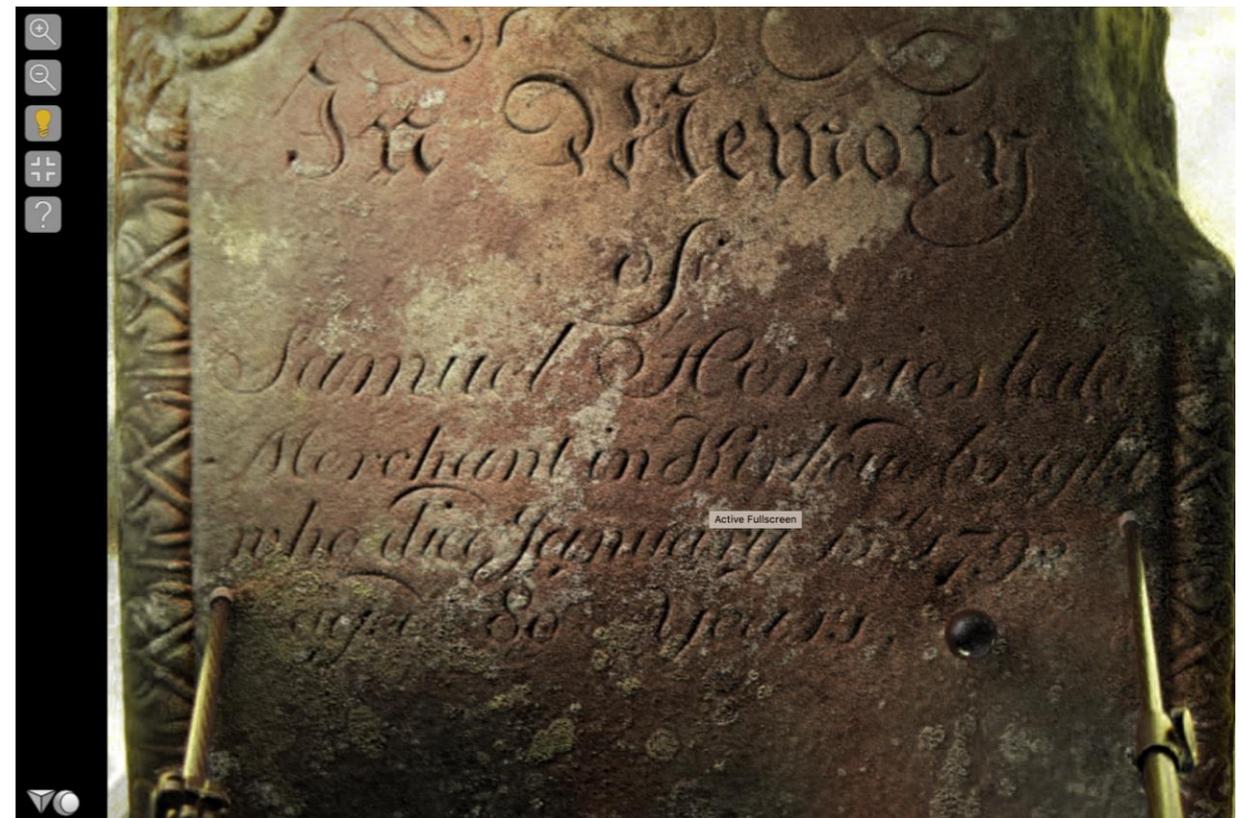
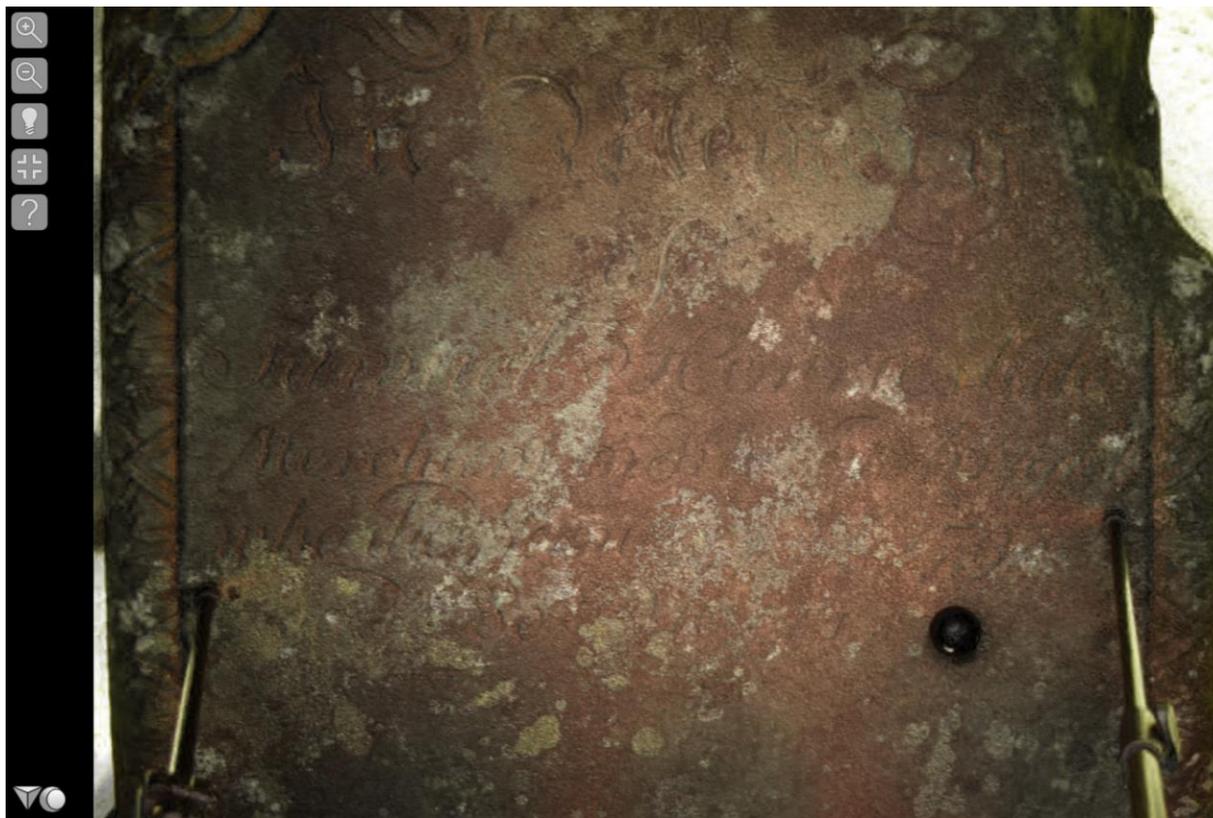
## Qualtrics form

- Provides data via
- Interaction valuable
- Can be done inside later





Digital tools for  
deciphering inscriptions



- No register of burial space surveys
- Problems of accessing data
- Duplication of effort
- Lack of credit for work
- Records languish in Record offices..
- ... or remain in private hands ...and are lost
- **Therefore, use UK national OASIS burial survey recording form**





# Graveyard Survey at York, Leeds

view mode

## Burial Spaces

Edit page

Previous page

Next page

### Burial Spaces

Principal denomination

Choose from the list

Type of Burial Space

Choose from the list

Associations

Please select

Add

Association type

Association info

Beautiful Burial Grounds / NBN Atlas link/survey number

fgdfg

Survey Type(s)

Survey Type

Burials or Inscriptions (people)

Condition (safety)

Includes Plan?

Choose from the list

Includes Photos of Memorials?

NO

jensdigg1-500189

Summary

Event type

Location

HER/Admin areas

Work undertaken

Report details

People

Keywords

Research frameworks

Archives

Additional info

ADS Library summary

Burial Spaces

Geophysical Survey

WHAT Non Intrusive Event 

KEYWORD graveyard 

RESET QUERY

KEYWORD

21 Total results.

graveyard

SEARCH

◀◀ 1 2 3 ▶▶

▼ WHAT

- ▶  Event 21
  - ▶  Intrusive Event 3
  - ▶  Non Intrusive Event 21
- ▶  Evidence 1
- ▶  Monument Types 20
- ▶  Object Types 4

▼ WHERE

- ▶  England 20
- ▶  Scotland 1

▼ WHEN

- ▶  Later Prehistoric 1
- ▶  Roman 3
- ▶  Early Medieval 1
- ▶  Medieval 5
- ▶  Post Medieval 8
- ▶  Modern 3

▼ RESOURCE

- Historic England NRHE  
Excavation Index  
16
- Yorkshire Dales National Park  
HER  
4

**ACCORD with the Ardnamurchan Community Archaeology Group**

 **ACCORD with the Ardnamurchan Community Archaeology Group**

ACCORD was an AHRC funded research project that took place from October 2013 to March 2015 and was a collaboration between the Digital Design Studio at the Glasgow School of Art, the University of Manchester, the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland and Archaeology Scotland. In the summer of 2014 the ACCORD project worked together with communities across Scotland to co-design and co-produce 3-Dimensional digital models of heritage places and monuments. We explored how forms of community-based social value associated with sites and places can be addressed and transformed through engagement with 3D digital technologies. The ...

**ALL SAINTS CHURCH WILLIAN**

 **Historic England NRHE Excavation Index for England**

 Radar survey carried out in advance of proposed graveyard extension works. Information from OASIS Online Form.

HERTFORDSHIRE

**BETHEL CHAPEL ROBINSON ROAD**

 **Historic England NRHE Excavation Index for England**

 Project No: 1112. Archaeological interpretative survey of the post-medieval chapel and graveyard in advance of proposed works.

WEST SUSSEX

**BURBOURYS SANDS GRAVEYARD**

## ACCORD with the Kirkcudbright History Society

ACCORD project, 2017

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[Overview](#)

[Downloads](#)

[Metadata](#)

[Usage Statistics](#)

[ACCORD: Archaeology Community  
Co-production of Research Data](#)

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---

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---

### Resource identifiers

**ADS Collection:** 2153  
**DOI:** <https://doi.org/10.5284/1042730>

### Introduction

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Full project details including references to methodology are available from the main [ACCORD programme pages](#).

This archive contains the outputs from the eighth co-production project. The ACCORD team worked with The Kirkcudbright History Society on the 4th and 5th of October 2014. Together in the Kirkcudbright Kirkyard we modelled and recorded the inscriptions of two grave monuments using photogrammetry and the technique of Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI). The three grave monuments included one dedicated to the traveller Billy Marshall who died in 1792; an 18th Century gravestone with one face completely occupied by raised lettering; and an ornate tablestone grave dedicated to Samuel Herries who died in 1793. For more information on this technology please see the ACCORD project overview page.



George Wishart of the Kirkcudbright History Society taking photographs of the tablestone grave dedicated to Samuel Herries, 1713 to 1793, Kirkcudbright Kirkyard. Photograph taken by Helen Bowick (Kirkcudbright History Society).

# ACCORD with the Kirkcudbright History Society

ACCORD project, 2017

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## ACCORD: Archaeology Community Co-production of Research Data

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---

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### Downloads

[Documents](#) | 
 [Production Images](#) | 
 [Photogrammetry](#) | 
 [RTI](#) | 
 [Additional Files](#)

#### Documentation (all files)

Kirkcudbright Metadata	XLSX	60 Kb
------------------------	------	-------

#### RTI Files

Please select an RTI file from the table below.

	<a href="#">SamuelHerries</a>
	<a href="#">RobertMcIellan</a>

## ACCORD with the Kirkcudbright History Society

ACCORD project, 2017

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How to cite using this DOI

### Downloads

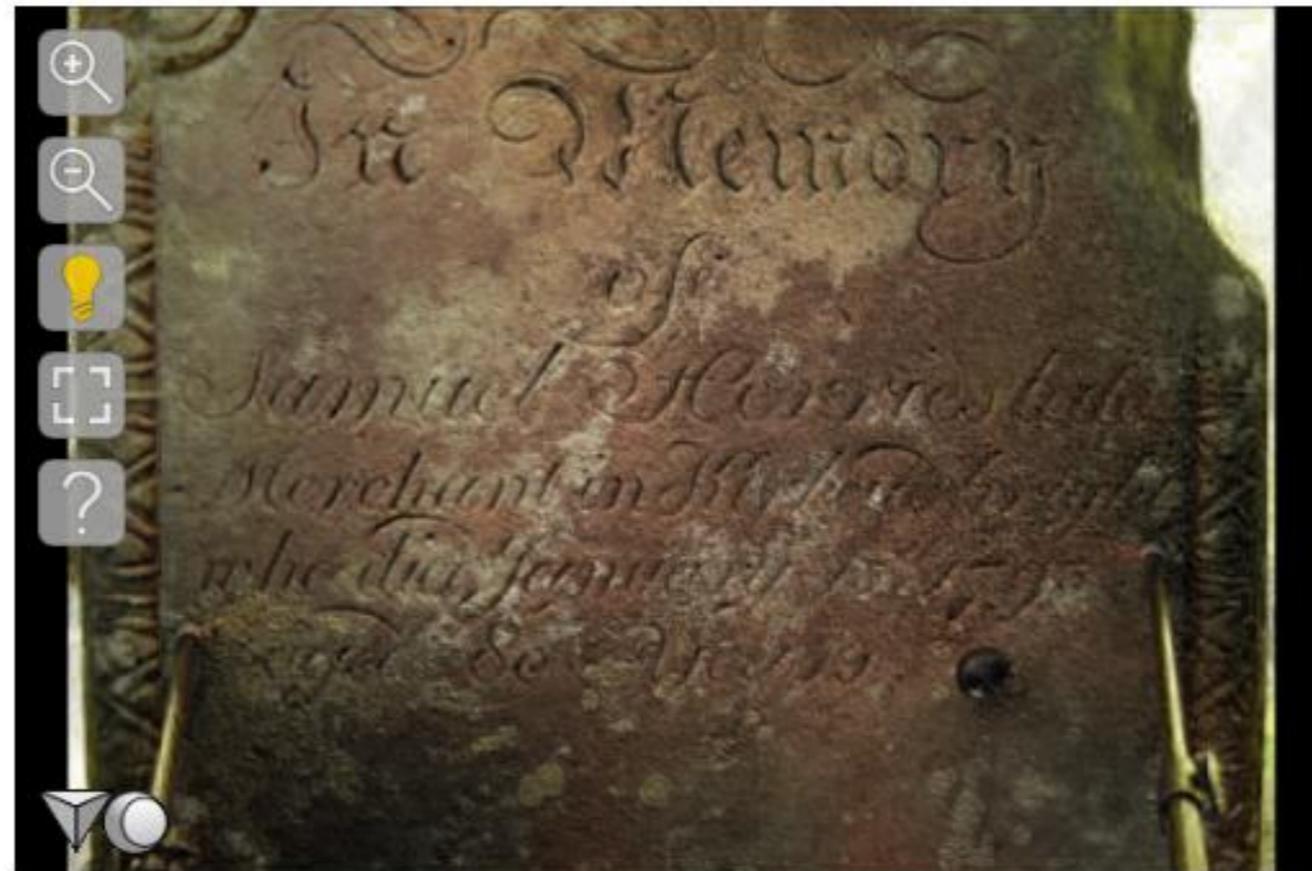
[Documents](#) | [Production Images](#) | [Photogrammetry](#) | [RTI](#) | [Additional Files](#)

#### Documentation (all files)

Kirkcudbright Metadata	XLSX	60 Kb
------------------------	------	-------

#### Downloads - Kirkcud RTI SamuelHerries

Select another RTI file



#### RTI files

(Using multi-volume ZIP files)

Kirkcud RTI SamuelHerries	ZIP 001	100 Mb
	ZIP 002	29 Mb

# ACCORD with the Kirkcudbright History Society

ACCORD project, 2017

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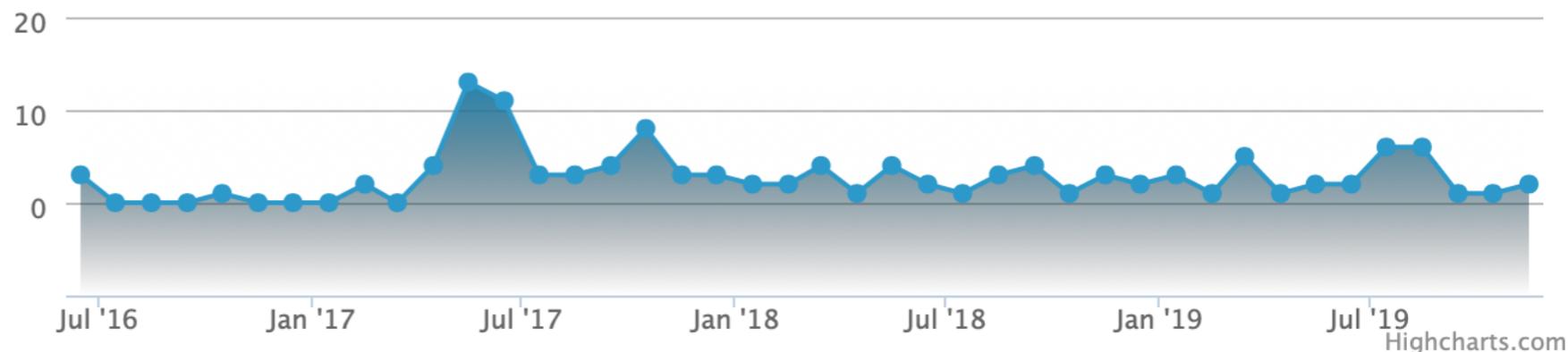
[Send e-mail enquiry](#)

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[How to cite using this DOI](#)

## Visits to the archive

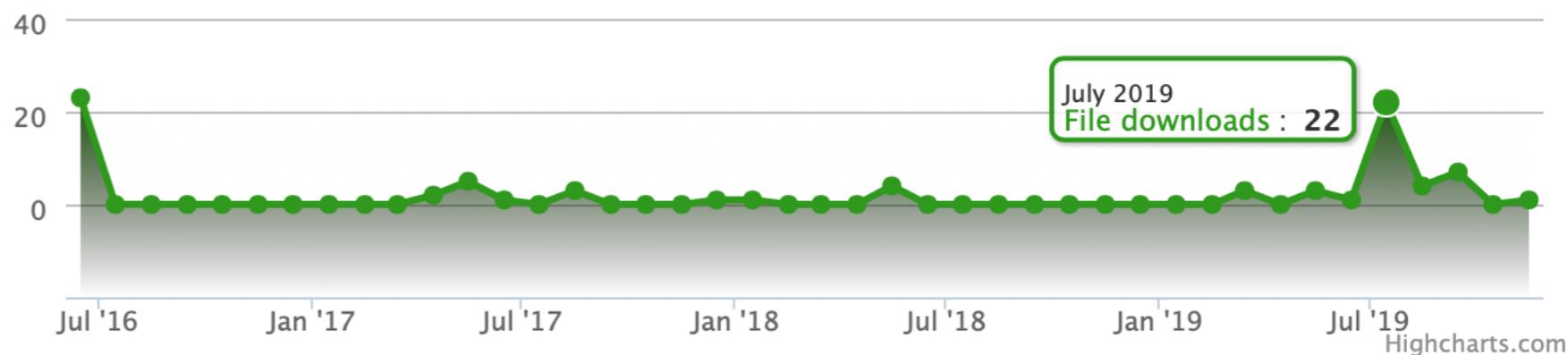
Click and drag in the plot area to zoom in



If a visitor comes to the website for the first time, or if they visit a page (or download a file) more than 30 minutes after their last page view, this will be recorded as a new visit. A unique visitor making multiple visits per day will register as several visits.

## File downloads

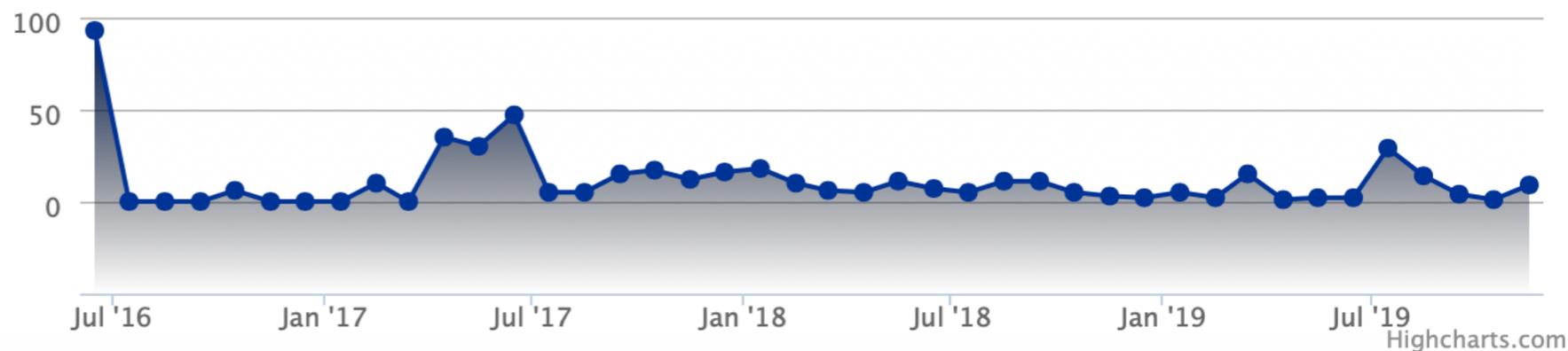
Click and drag in the plot area to zoom in



A download is a click on a link to something other than a web page, file extensions include: csv, doc, docx, gif, jar, jpg, jpeg, mp3, mp4, mov, odb, odt, pdf, png, ppt, pptx, txt, wav, wma, wmv, wpd, xls, xlsx, xml, zip but this is not an exhaustive list.

## Page views within the archive

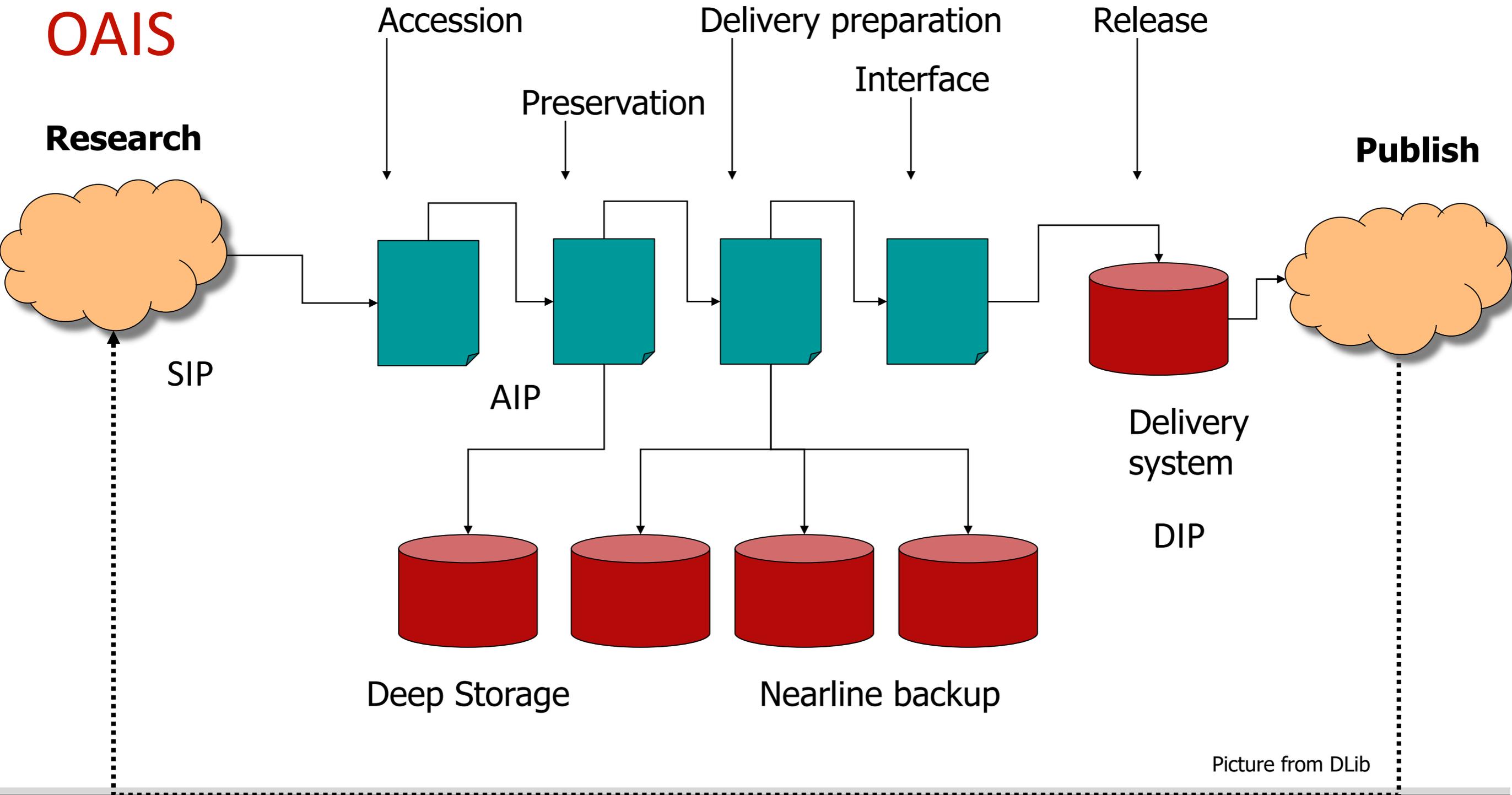
Click and drag in the plot area to zoom in



- Digital data are fragile
- They are often still archived as objects rather than computerised information
- Digital data standards
- What are the significant properties of our data?
- Data licensing – Creative Commons framework
- Privacy issues



# Trusted Digital Repositories: NASA - Open Archival Information System



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HOME SEARCH DEPOSIT RESEARCH ADVICE ABOUT HELP

## Discovering England's Burial Spaces (DEBS)

University of York, Historic England, 2018

Introduction

Overview

Search:

- Memorial
- Person
- Memorial Broad Type (Image)
- Text Panel Type (Image)

Site List

Metadata

Usage Statistics

### Overview

Burial spaces offer a unique opportunity to study named individuals and the communities to which they belonged. In addition, burial space research can shed light on changes in fashion, society, economy, attitudes to death and commemoration.

Almost every graveyard contains a wide variety of monument types, and yet there is also a degree of standardisation. This means that gravestones offer a fascinating opportunity for classification. By analysing the adoption of particular monument forms and styles, it is possible to identify regional and national trends. More general changes over time are cross-cut by the particular preferences and predilections for memorialisation developed in relation to different social, religious and familial identities, the practicalities of paying for and sourcing materials, and the skills and stylistic leanings of individual masons.



Surveys submitted to the Burial Space Research Database have been standardised to a format agreed with representatives from community groups, Historic England and Churchcare during the DEBS project, and the system described in the Council for British Archaeology handbook Recording and Analysing Graveyards has been updated by Harold Mytum and will be available for use by community groups and heritage professionals, together with advice documentation. This ordering of data allows fine-grained comparisons within and between datasets, enabling exciting new burial space research that transcends individual sites and surveys.

### Resource identifiers

ADS Collection: 3302



**DEBS** Discovering  
England's  
Burial Spaces

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Search:

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- Person
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- Text Panel Type (Image)

Site List

Metadata

Usage Statistics

### Search by Memorial Broad Type

Select from the options below.

	<b>Ledger, Low Monument or Kerb-set</b> Including railings and horizontal plaques
	<b>Tomb</b> Including chest tombs, table tombs and pedestal tombs.
	<b>Grave Cross</b>
(No Image)	<b>Grave Sculpture</b>
	<b>Headstone</b>



### Resource identifiers

ADS Collection: 3302



**DEBS** Discovering  
England's  
Burial Spaces

## Discovering England's Burial Spaces (DEBS)

University of York, Historic England, 2018

[Introduction](#)

[Overview](#)

**Search:**

- [Memorial](#)
- [Person](#)
- [Memorial Broad Type \(Image\)](#)
- [Text Panel Type \(Image\)](#)

[Site List](#)

[Metadata](#)

[Usage Statistics](#)

Search the database

Memorial	
Year	Start: <input type="text"/> End: <input type="text"/>
Associated historical event	Select from list <input type="button" value="v"/>
ID	<input type="text"/>
Material	<input type="text"/>
Broad Type	Select from list <input type="button" value="v"/>
Detailed Type	<input type="text"/>
Memorial Code	<input type="text"/>
Decoration (keyword)	<input type="text"/>
Decoration (ID)	<input type="text"/>
Epitaph Text	<input type="text"/>
Epitaph Quote Type	Select from list <input type="button" value="v"/>
Footstone Description	<input type="text"/>
Bodystone Description	<input type="text"/>
Kerb Description	<input type="text"/>
Infill Description	<input type="text"/>
Element Code	<input type="text"/>
Mason Name	<input type="text"/>
Mason Mark	<input type="text"/>
Site	
Region	<input type="text"/>

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University of York, Historic England, 2018

[Introduction](#)

[Overview](#)

**Search:**

- [Memorial](#)
- [Person](#)
- [Memorial Broad Type \(Image\)](#)
- [Text Panel Type \(Image\)](#)

[Site List](#)

[Metadata](#)

[Usage Statistics](#)



Resource identifiers

ADS Collection: 3302



DEBS Discovering England's Burial Spaces

Results

Records 1 - 25 of 2340

Pages: 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | > >>

DEBS ID	Survey	Memorial Year	Surname	Broad Type
2	Bulmer, North Yorkshire, Burial Space Survey. May 2005	1860	KIRKBY	Headstone
3	Bulmer, North Yorkshire, Burial Space Survey. May 2005	1877	PEACOCK	Headstone
4	Bulmer, North Yorkshire, Burial Space Survey. May 2005			Headstone
5	Bulmer, North Yorkshire, Burial Space Survey. May 2005	1831	SMITH	Headstone
6	Bulmer, North Yorkshire, Burial Space Survey. May 2005	1824	STYRING	Headstone
7	Bulmer, North Yorkshire, Burial Space Survey. May 2005	1859	W	Headstone
8	Bulmer, North Yorkshire, Burial Space Survey. May 2005	1856	W	Headstone
9	Bulmer 2005	Memorial Details		
10	Bulmer 2005	IDs	Local Memorial ID: [68] Legacy ID: [68] DEBS Memorial ID: [6]	
11	Bulmer 2005	Memorial Year	1824 <i>Inferred date from first mentioned individual</i>	
12	Bulmer 2005	Start - End Years		
		Comments		
		Plot ID		
		Number of people commemorated		
		Original Position		
		Tooling		
		Repairs		
		Orientation (degrees)	78	
		Elements		
		Condition & Notes	Sound.	
		Panel: Shape [code] Definition	Rectangle, vertical - Semicircular central feature - Concave shoulders/corners [8270] Incised design	
		Memorial Type: Broad Type: Detailed Type [code] Description	Headstone: Flat top with semicircular central feature, Concave shoulders [5107]	
		Decorative Motifs: Type [code] (location) Interpretation		
		Material(s)	Sandstone	
		Measurements: GFNFRAI	Height: 1242 Width: 743 Thickness: 92 Height: 1242	



Resource identifiers

ADS Collection: 3302



DEBS Discovering England's Burial Spaces

## RESOURCES

for your burial space research.

---



### OASIS+

Report your graveyard survey to your local Heritage Environment Record and national heritage bodies.

[Read more about OASIS+](#)



### Handbook and Worksheets

Download the latest worksheets and guidance.

Coming Soon



### Data Entry

Use our online data entry system to prepare your data for archiving.

Coming Soon



### Reflectance Transformation Imaging (RTI)

Difficult to read gravestones? Download our guides for this specialist photographic technique.



### Database

Explore our database of burial space research.

[Read more about the database](#)



### Links

Check out our links to other resources and organisations that can support your burial space research.

Coming Soon

1. Need to mentor community groups within a professional framework to ensure long term value of their work
2. Community groups value being embraced within academic research projects
3. Difficulties of maintaining enthusiasm and momentum
4. Difficulties of ensuring standards – just like professionals!
5. Value of IT approaches in this regard



# Thank you!

<https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/>

<https://debs.ac.uk>



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Befriend us on Facebook:  
**<http://www.facebook.com/archaeology.data.service>**