

# SPOTLIGHT ON STANDARDS

## Launching the Toolkit for Specialist Reporting to address quality issues

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A survey undertaken as part of the Historic England-funded project *Review of the Standard of Reporting on Archaeological Artefacts in England* (Cattermole 2017) highlighted considerable variation in the content and quality of specialist finds reports, identifying several areas that required improvement.

Initiated by the ClfA Finds Special Interest Group, this project proposed several recommendations to tackle this issue, including the development of the report checklist that was used during the original survey into criteria that could either be used during the planning and writing of specialist reports, or to assess and monitor their quality. A follow-on project was subsequently funded by Historic England (*Developing a Finds Reporting Standards toolkit for grey literature*) to action this, which led to the development of an online toolkit (soon to be launched) providing resources and guidance to aid in the planning, writing and monitoring of finds reports. The toolkit is predominately for use in association with developer-led archaeological projects and is particularly aimed at the creation of grey literature reports. However, its applicability goes beyond this initial scope with equal relevance to other roles across the historic environment sector, especially project managers, artefact specialists, planning/monitoring archaeologists and those working with archives. The toolkit can also be used to support the training of new specialists, or by students/apprentices, local societies and community groups; in fact, anybody engaged in producing finds reports will find this resource incredibly useful. The toolkit includes definitions and lists

of standard terms (based on the Forum on Information Standards in Heritage (FISH) thesauri for archaeological objects and object materials) and a list of existing specialist standards and guidance for artefacts studies.



Southwick finds. Credit: Duncan Brown