

# EDITORIAL



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This edition of *The Archaeologist (TA)* follows on from TA108 by focusing on climate change, and this time, the ways archaeology and archaeologists can inform and add value to climate adaptation projects such as peatland restoration, woodland creation, wetland reinstatement or building modification.

If we didn't know it already, COP26 in Glasgow emphasised the need for urgent change to almost all aspects of our lives in response to the climate emergency: the way we work, whether and how we travel, where we live, where our food comes from and how the environment around us is managed. Archaeologists will need to make the same adaptations as everyone else, but we also have a unique opportunity to inform and add value through the investigation and understanding of environmental change and human responses to it in the past, a point John Darlington and Hannah Fluck make much more eloquently in these pages.

Other articles in this edition address the need to facilitate climate action and the opportunities climate adaptation projects present for the historic environment. Dr Tom Gardner of Historic Environment Scotland and Professor Ralph Fyfe of the University of Plymouth discuss the potential for archaeologists to work with peatland restoration projects – not just to safeguard heritage assets but to realise their potential to inform the activity of restoration. Jenifer White, a Chartered Landscape Architect at Historic England, picks up a similar theme as she focuses on the need to understand the development of parklands and gardens through conservation management approaches as part of climate adaptation planning. Lawrence Shaw, David Robertson and Ceri Rutter highlight the value of the UK Forestry Standard in aligning

sustainable forestry management with understanding and protecting the historic environment.

What forestry, peatland restoration and land use management all have in common is a rapid scaling-up to meet the demands of the climate agenda. As it does so, the archaeological sector will need to respond on issues of professional practice, government policy and sector skills.

As per the Institute's agreed advocacy objectives, ClfA will continue to contribute to the development of robust policies for agri-environment schemes, forestry, and peatland restoration to ensure that these processes recognise the positive contribution of archaeology and management of heritage assets.

Beyond this, we need to consider the skills archaeologists will need to fulfil demand in these areas of work, to ensure that we are able to respond, inform and add value.

We will also need to consider new ways of doing archaeology and how these might be supported by amended Standards and good practice guidance.

ClfA will be considering these and other questions as part of the implementation of its new Strategic Plan. Of course, the archaeology sector is also thinking about carbon reduction, against the backdrop of net-zero commitments by governments and industry. There is already some good practice but moving beyond climate talk to climate action can seem overwhelming. ClfA's Climate Change Working Group recently published its *Carbon reduction guide* as a first step towards developing greater guidance and resources for archaeological organisations and helping stimulate action to reduce the carbon footprint of the industry.