

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: A QUICK INTRODUCTION

The historic environment is all around us. It has been shaped by people interacting with the natural environment over thousands of years. It is made up of a landscape of fields, routeways, villages, towns and cities, of buildings and monuments and the objects they contain. It ranges from the mega to the nano scale, from vast river systems to fragments of DNA, and it exists above and below ground and under water.

Archaeology is the approach and processes by which we gather evidence from the historic environment, understand what this evidence means and show how it can be used. It reveals how people have created and reacted to environmental and other changes. It shows how they adapted where and how they lived to meet the opportunities and challenges those changes brought. Some strategies and some places have succeeded; others have not. We can learn from them.

Our environment is also changing rapidly. Environmental change is affecting where and how we live: our cities are growing and the ways we travel and produce energy are being revolutionised through major infrastructure projects. We need our economy to grow, we face pressure for space, we are confronted by technological, cultural and social change and, at the same time, we want to steward our natural and historic environment.

### Archaeology creates value for business and society

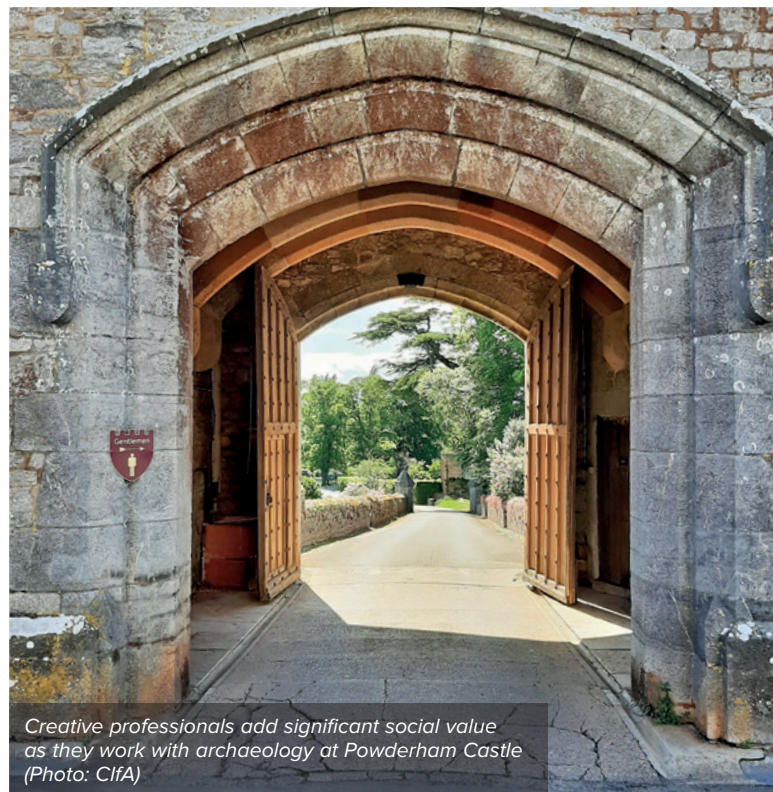
To enable a sustainable future, to create value for business, society and the environment, archaeology needs to be undertaken sustainably. This year's client guide showcases how archaeology is helping clients meet social value outcomes through engaging with new audiences, community participation and through supporting wellbeing and opportunities for learning and skills development.

One study shows how archaeologists helped Transport Scotland create social value for young people, allowing them to learn about the design and construction of roads and archaeological research, and bringing immediate benefits through education and engagement. A second Scottish road project also built a highway from the past to the future, showing how public engagement can be safely managed on major construction projects and how archaeologists can bridge the gap between construction and wider economic, social and environmental benefits. A third, in England, shows how archaeologists helped a development project meet social value targets by involving families from overseas to explore and engage with their new communities, gaining transferable skills en route. The ripple effect shows how partnering with an artist to deliver an innovative, two-year heritage wellbeing project can result in more understanding of an area's history, whilst fostering a sense of community. This is alongside more positive engagement with the experts leading to an understanding of the development work and its benefits.

These four studies show how the development and planning processes increasingly recognise – and require – the social value outcomes that archaeology can deliver when undertaken by creative professionals. Few elements of a project can match the potential of archaeology to do this. They show the breadth of technical and soft skills, knowledge and imagination that can be applied. The archaeologist's input to scheme design enables informed consideration of the opportunities and constraints it presents, maximising the benefits that archaeology brings to the scheme and reducing uncertainty.

Our fifth study shows how multidisciplinary medical research into excavated human bones, undertaken long after archaeological fieldwork, is informing the study of musculoskeletal disease and its management. The research highlights one of the underpinning purposes of archaeology: we study the past to make sense of the present and prepare for the future.

To most effectively maximise that value and ensure a sustainable project, archaeology needs to be carried out according to professional standards. The best way to ensure this is to use the services of a ClfA-accredited archaeologist or ClfA-Registered Organisation (<https://bit.ly/2RJLL7o>): ClfA accreditation demonstrates professionalism in archaeology. This professional approach assures clients that the work will both meet their needs and be carried out in the public interest.



*Creative professionals add significant social value as they work with archaeology at Powderham Castle (Photo: ClfA)*

## GUIDANCE FOR CLIENTS

**This guide tells you when and how to find to professional archaeologist you can trust.**

**You may be seeking archaeological expertise as**

- a national or international government department or agency
- a private developer or contractor
- a landowner
- a local authority
- a public sector body
- a local community
- any other type of private organisation

**You need a professional archaeologist if**

- you are carrying out investigations before purchasing a development
- you are working within the planning process and you need someone to help you meet a planning condition
- you are developing a project within your local community
- you own a historic site or visitor attraction
- you are developing a programme of research or education

For a fuller discussion of how to integrate archaeology into the construction process and how it contributes directly and indirectly to sustainable development, see CIRIA 799 *Archaeology and construction: good practice guidance* <http://bc-url.com/cifa24p6>. This industry guidance, prepared in collaboration with ClfA and other stakeholders, maps the key points for decision-making at all stages from feasibility to post-construction use and provides practical guidance and checklists at every point.

Developers managing householder or small schemes may wish to refer to ClfA's *Archaeological works: a guide for construction companies and householders*, available at <https://bit.ly/43bcClp>.



Hands-on at Mileham Primary, King's Lynn  
(Photo: Norfolk Archaeology)

# INSTRUMENTATION FOR ARCHAEOLOGY



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## GUIDANCE FOR CLIENTS

### ABOUT THE CHARTERED INSTITUTE FOR ARCHAEOLOGISTS (CIfA)

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists is the leading professional body for archaeologists working in the UK and overseas. CIfA champions professionalism in archaeology. It promotes high professional standards and strong ethics in archaeological practice to maximise the benefits that archaeologists bring to society. Its ethical *Code of conduct* provides a framework which underpins the professional lives of archaeologists. CIfA accredits individuals and organisations who are skilled in the study and care of the historic environment. In 2024, there are 81 CIfA Registered Organisations and 3195 professionally accredited archaeologists.

#### WHAT WE DO

##### Training and development

- we provide access to training, good practice advice and guidance, to support and strengthen entry routes into the profession.

##### Networks

- we provide an active community of professional archaeologists to support and shape our profession.

##### Accreditation

- we recognise and promote the skills and competence of professional archaeologists.

##### Regulation of the profession

- our *Code of conduct*, Standards and supporting guidance define good, ethical practice in archaeology. They provide the benchmarks for self-regulation, allowing the profession to assure the quality of its work, monitor it and hold accredited archaeologists to account.

##### WHO WE WORK WITH

Employers, universities and training providers, governments, trade unions, clients, other sector partners and other professional bodies.

##### WHAT WE ACHIEVE

We improve professional archaeology through

- building competence and knowledge
- raising ethical awareness
- fostering recognition and respect
- developing career pathways and prospects
- increasing diversity and skills
- creating value and public benefit

CIfA-accredited professionals are committed to setting and meeting high standards for learning, competence and ethical practice. They motivate the discipline to help society better recognise the benefits archaeology brings it and inspire the profession to ensure that CIfA-accredited professionals are more trusted and valued by those with whom they engage.



Unearthing a possible Bronze Age cremation at Medmerry  
(Photo: ASE)

## THE HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT: A RESOURCE AND AN OPPORTUNITY

Some elements of the historic environment are protected by statute (some are ‘designated’ as listed buildings or scheduled monuments, for example) and some are not. Both kinds are often described in current legislation and policy as ‘assets’. These assets are generally considered by local and national governments, by experts and by society as a resource capable of producing value.

The need to understand and manage historic environment assets will present challenges and opportunities for your project. There will be a process involved to establish the nature of the resource you are dealing with. Please see ‘Archaeology, planning policy and legislation’ below.

If archaeology is to be part of your project, you need to know what you are dealing with so you can plan your project with sound knowledge of any cost or time implications.

You will need professional advice to help you

- understand the nature and significance of the assets you are responsible for before you submit any application or start your project
- inform planning decisions and avoid planning refusal, prosecution, delays and costs or community distrust
- understand the level of legal protection afforded to assets within your project
- decide whether to avoid damaging assets and how to use them to enhance your project
- understand how managing archaeological assets will affect your costs and programme

Working with a professional archaeologist enables you to

- enhance the significance of the assets you are working with
- contribute to our knowledge
- create distinctive, attractive places
- support education through the involvement of local communities and schools and the potential of your work to contribute to university research
- develop better community relations through sharing information
- get beneficial publicity for your project, particularly for controversial development schemes
- contribute to the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals and meet other social value, environmental and corporate social responsibility targets

*A Tudor merchant’s house in Tenby is an asset – a resource considered to produce value (Photo: ClfA)*

## GUIDANCE FOR CLIENTS

### REALISING ECONOMIC AND PUBLIC BENEFITS THROUGH ARCHAEOLOGY

In the UK and elsewhere, the emphasis of planning policy is on sustainable development that benefits the economy, society and the environment. It requires, among other things, the protection and enhancement of the historic environment. For projects in the developing world, banks and development agencies increasingly require cultural assets to be looked after and to be incorporated into new development.

Proper understanding and enlisting of historic environment resources carries benefits across all three areas of sustainability – economy, society and environment. It is the responsibility of archaeologists to help you understand how to realise this potential.

#### ARCHAEOLOGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFIT

An archaeologist can help you understand the significance and value of the historic environment and the benefits it can offer alongside the natural environment. Environmental benefit can be secured through retaining and enhancing the historic landscape and protecting our most valued monuments and traditional villages, towns and cities. The appearance of a new development can sometimes be improved by the conservation and reuse of buildings and spaces. This can make a place more desirable to live in and can also have valuable knock-on benefits for other aspects of the environment, such as energy efficiency. Early engagement with archaeologists brings many benefits, including the opportunity to reduce the carbon footprint of construction by eliminating unnecessary processes.

Enhancement of the historic environment often takes place hand in hand with ecological and landscape conservation, providing more green space and biodiversity, both desirable for sustainable development.



Archaeologists on a development site recording timber beams from a Roman building (Photo: MOLLA)

## ARCHAEOLOGY AND ECONOMIC BENEFIT

The regeneration of historic places can drive economic growth, often leading to revitalisation of surrounding communities and neighbourhoods. Reinforcing historic character, reusing historic fabric and maintaining locally distinctive patterns of development can all play a significant role in the recovery of declining towns and cities.

Archaeology can contribute substantially to placemaking. It can enhance the image of a place, making it somewhere people want to live and so increasing the potential income it can realise. The World Bank positively encourages development that looks to preserve cultural heritage. It sees that understanding and enhancement of cultural significance or 'cultural capital' has a positive effect on the value of projects and assets. Historic buildings and places can also provide the opportunity for types of commercial activity that might not otherwise be possible, providing additional economic activity and new employment opportunities for local people.

The historic environment plays an important role in tourism, providing focal points and venues for visitors, creating jobs and supporting business on a local and national scale. It helps to stimulate small and medium-sized enterprises, developing new markets and encouraging inward investment.

An archaeologist can tell you what it is about your city or community that makes it historically interesting and distinct, its contemporary cultural importance and where the potential lies for development and enhancement of the historic fabric.



*The regenerative economic value lies at an EGP site (Photo: Headland)*

## GUIDANCE FOR CLIENTS

### ARCHAEOLOGY AND SOCIAL VALUE

Social benefits can be closely linked to the historic environment, in particular benefits for individuals through learning and development and the opportunity to acquire new skills (such as volunteering). Community strength and cultural identity can be enhanced by contact with the historic environment through community heritage projects. These projects can engage diverse groups of people – from refugee groups to homeless people, young offenders and injured service personnel – offering new skills, confidence, the opportunity to become an active citizen and to connect with a shared human past. Engaging with the historic environment can make a significant contribution to community wellbeing and promote social and human capital, leading to improvement in health, wealth and education. A professional archaeologist can tell you how to approach the investigation of the historic environment to bring the widest public benefit. Examples of projects showcasing a range of ways in which public benefit can be delivered are on our website at <https://bit.ly/3v9pttq>.



Educating young enthusiasts on-site  
(Photo: Oxford Archaeology)

Engaging with professional archaeologists offers the opportunity for such organisations to demonstrate

- the value they place on ethics and integrity – professional archaeologists are bound by a code of conduct
- their respect for the environment – professional archaeologists know what is best for the historic environment
- responsible business conduct – many professional archaeological organisations are local and small businesses
- a contribution to training and capacity building – professional archaeologists have a strong training ethos and commitment to workplace learning

The preceding pages indicate how professional archaeologists can help clients meet many of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), notably

- **SDG3** Good health and well-being
- **SDG4** Inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning
- **SDG5** Gender equality and empowerment for all women and girls
- **SDG8** Sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment for all
- **SDG9** Resilient infrastructure, innovation
- **SDG11** Inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable cities and settlements
- **SDG12** Sustainable consumption and production
- **SDG13** Climate action





## ARCHAEOLOGY, PLANNING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Governments recognise the historic environment is a fragile resource and have adopted policies for understanding its significance and for ensuring its appropriate management.

The interests of different parties involved in the management of the historic environment are not always aligned. In many parts of the world, the planning systems and legislation relating to heritage provide a framework for mediation of those interests.

They recognise that landowners have rights to do as they wish with their property, but that those rights may need to be constrained if changes planned to benefit the owner will have particularly damaging effects on resources that are important to society at large. This concept of balancing conflicting needs involves weighing benefits with potential impoverishment of society's resources for future use. Where the demand for development is found to outweigh the need for preservation of the historic environment, destruction of assets can be permitted, provided that their loss is offset by an improved understanding of what happened in the past, which we gain through excavation or other types of investigation.

All historic environment assets, whether designated or not, are material considerations. The spatial planning processes in the UK, for example, involve a regularly used series of steps or phases to manage change in the historic environment. Any professional archaeologist you appoint will be familiar with these steps, although they may only have experience of a particular step themselves and may need to pass you on to a different expert as the project progresses.

Legislation and policy relating to archaeology and the historic environment are complex and frequently change. If you need to understand the legal context for the archaeological work you are doing, an appropriately skilled professional archaeologist can advise you.

*In planning policy, all historic environment assets are material considerations. (Photo: Wessex)*

## GUIDANCE FOR CLIENTS

### GOOD PRACTICE GUIDANCE

CIfA-Registered Organisations and CIfA-accredited archaeologists are committed to working ethically, in accordance with our *Code of conduct*. That ethical code is underpinned by CIfA Standards for all stages of the process and by guidance on good practice in meeting those standards. In the UK, it is highly likely that planning authorities will require any archaeological work to be carried out to CIfA Standards. The *CIfA Standards and guidance* can be found on our website at <https://bit.ly/3gq34Tt>. You can refer to any of these documents to ensure you are receiving a service that meets professional standards.

Steps taken within the spatial planning process in the UK can include

- communication with a local or national authority to discuss historic environment assets and their value or legal protection
- desk-based assessment of the resource, its significance and the potential impact of the scheme on that significance (to support outline or detailed planning applications)
- field evaluations such as those described in this client guide; if the significance of archaeological remains cannot be adequately defined from existing sources, geophysical survey, targeted trench or pit excavation, or limited building investigation might be used
- reporting to the planning authority on the results of investigations or production of an environmental impact assessment chapter
- granting planning permission by the local authority, with or without an archaeological condition
- recording or conservation work in advance of or during development, in accordance with the terms of a planning condition, if significant remains are present
- community or public engagement, if appropriate
- analysis and interpretation of results
- publication of findings of all stages
- archiving of documentation, digital data, research material and finds

Enlisting the help of professionally accredited archaeologists at the start of your project will benefit all stages of a development. A professional archaeologist will guide you through the planning process from start to finish. For more detailed guidance on managing archaeology within construction projects, we recommend the recently updated CIRIA archaeology guide, *Archaeology and construction: good practice guidance* (<https://bit.ly/43068M6>), which provides technical advice and good practice examples.

### WORKING ON PROJECTS OUTSIDE THE UK

The Chartered Institute for Archaeologists requires that our *Code of conduct* and Standards must be adhered to wherever a CIfA-accredited professional or CIfA Registered Organisation is working. If you are looking for an archaeologist to help you with a project based outside the UK, you will need to select an archaeologist with experience of working with different types and levels of legislation and guidance and in different cultural contexts. Internationally, legislation and policy vary in scope and focus. International conventions and charters need to be interpreted and applied by experts for each case as it arises.

An accredited archaeologist will be able to help you interpret

- environmental and social impact assessment legislation, requirements and standards
- policies and environmental and social standards of international banks and lending institutions for projects receiving funding support (which are also applied widely even where a specific bank is not involved as a lender)
- the cultural heritage requirements of investors and lenders such as the World Bank, the International Finance Corporation, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Investment Bank
- relevant local legislation and guidelines
- the Burra Charter

A professional archaeologist can advise on using professional standards and when to use the appropriate guidance or methodologies from other jurisdictions.



CPD with CIfA in Germany: accreditation requires members to follow appropriate guidance and methodologies wherever they work. (Photo: CIfA Deutschland group)

## THE ROLE OF THE PROFESSIONAL ARCHAEOLOGIST

Archaeologists are used to working in multi-disciplinary teams on projects that affect the historic environment. Whether you are putting together an environmental or design team for a development project or a panel of experts for a community heritage or research project, there should be a place for an archaeologist on it. The earlier you appoint an archaeologist, the greater chance you have of realising the benefits that professional archaeology can bring.

The sort of archaeologist you engage at project level will normally be an archaeological consultant. They may work for a specialist archaeological organisation that offers consulting services or for a larger consultancy organisation that employs archaeological specialists. You might receive initial advice from your archaeologist through a meeting, a design or community workshop, or through a more formal type of written advice.

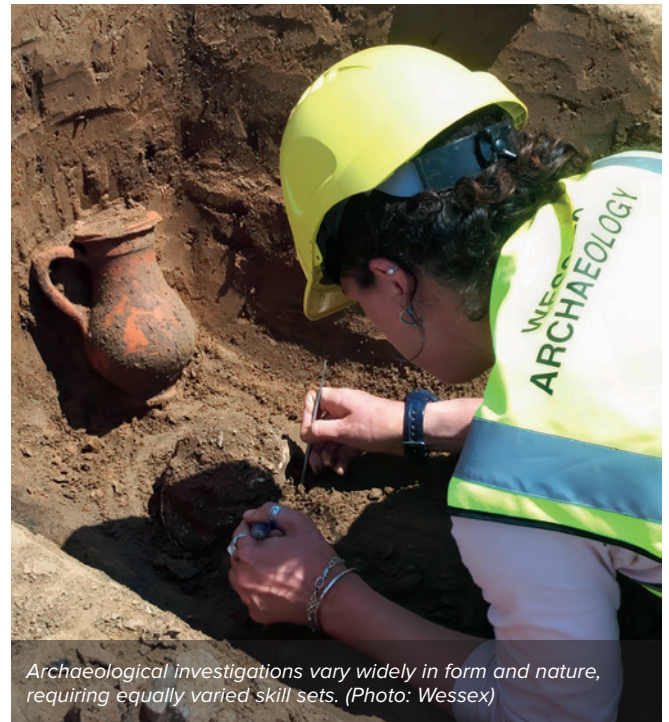
However you engage with an archaeologist, they should be able to

- interpret the requirements of your project
- liaise with stakeholders, including planning authorities, national agencies and landowners
- specify how and through what process archaeology will add to your project's success
- identify specialist areas of archaeological expertise that may be required
- provide an estimate of the cost of archaeological work on your project
- carry out archaeological investigations or procure specialists to carry out specific types of investigation in accordance with industry standards
- liaise with your project team to ensure that archaeological work is fully integrated into the design and delivery of the project
- guide you on meeting United Nations (UN) sustainable development goals
- ensure that public relations and public benefit from archaeology on the project are maximised

## PROJECT TYPES

The sorts of projects you might find an archaeologist working on could be

- development, transport and minerals plans
- local economic development plans
- environmental impact assessments
- appraisals, desk-based assessments or field evaluations in support of applications for planning permission, listed building consent and scheduled monument consent
- urban design
- landscape design
- infrastructure design
- architectural design
- archaeological research undertaken before, during and after construction to offset changes to heritage assets, often required as a condition of permissions and consents or in response to managed environmental change
- research that is not in response to a proposed or anticipated change
- heritage management or conservation plans
- tourism strategies
- education strategies
- school projects
- community projects
- PR or media projects
- film and television programme writing
- forensic investigation



*Archaeological investigations vary widely in form and nature, requiring equally varied skill sets. (Photo: Wessex)*

## GUIDANCE FOR CLIENTS

### WORKING WITH ACCREDITED ARCHAEOLOGISTS AND REGISTERED ORGANISATIONS

#### INDIVIDUAL ACCREDITATION

Archaeologists can be professional (accredited) or non-professional (not accredited). An accredited archaeologist, like any professional person, is bound by an ethical code, has demonstrated necessary technical and ethical competence, and is subject to the oversight of their peers. A professional archaeologist can be trusted to carry out work to high professional standards and in the public interest. A professional archaeologist will not sell you services you do not need and will help you to carry out your obligations in a way that is beneficial to you and to others. Using accredited archaeologists assures clients that the work will meet their needs and the needs of the public.

CIfA has three progressive levels of accreditation. CIfA Members (MCIfA) are accredited professionals with the highest level of understanding of the sector and its requirements, able to take full responsibility and be accountable for their own work and to deal with complex issues. Individuals can also be accredited as Associates (ACIfA) and Practitioners (PCIfA). All levels of accreditation demonstrate a commitment to professional practice and recognition of a certain level of knowledge and experience, but archaeological projects should be led by a Member.

#### CIfA REGISTERED ORGANISATIONS

Registered Organisations are businesses and suppliers of archaeological services that are also accredited by CIfA. Our Registered Organisations scheme is a unique quality assurance scheme for the historic environment. It is a badge of commitment to professional ethics, standards, competence and accountability.

CIfA Registered Organisations have demonstrated they have the skills to provide informed and reliable advice, and execute schemes of work appropriate to the circumstances, minimising uncertainty, delay and cost.

Your project needs will determine the type of accredited archaeologist you want. Usually, a consultant archaeologist can point you in the right direction, but it is worth knowing that different consultants and specialists are used to working for different types of clients and on different types of projects. All these archaeologists are professional experts in their own field, but virtually none is an expert in all. Be clear on the nature of your project when you approach archaeologists to tender for work or to provide advice.



*Employing accredited professionals minimises uncertainty, delay and cost. (Photo: WYAS)*

## PROCUREMENT

You may wish to procure your archaeologist through direct appointment, competitive tender or other means. It is important that you are clear in any invitation to tender how offers for archaeological services will be judged (fee only, quality only, quality and fee, fee and initial project design), bearing in mind that offers which do not specify exactly how the work will be delivered could exclude major components and thereby present a risk to your project.

If you need archaeological work to be carried out, ClfA strongly recommends the use of a ClfA Registered Organisation and ideally a ClfA-accredited archaeologist. Access our online Professional Registers here <https://bit.ly/2RJLL7o> and see more information on page 18 of this guide.

Check that the archaeologist or organisation you approach has worked

- at the local/regional/national/international level – whichever is appropriate to your project
- on projects that deliver similar archaeological conditions and outcomes to your project
- in a multi-disciplinary design team, if required for your project
- at project level and can report to a project team in a way that will be understood
- to professional standards across their portfolio
- within project communication and reporting structures that are similar to yours

Check that the archaeologist or organisation you approach

- is professionally accredited by ClfA
- has a safety regime and up-to-date health and safety training and certification
- has a track record of publishing results and depositing archives
- has understood the historic environment in the relevant region(s)
- can provide personnel with appropriate professional accreditation
- has a business infrastructure and insurances appropriate to the type and scale of work

Tell the archaeologist or organisation

- whether you already have a brief for their work or if developing the brief is part of the commission
- what outcomes you are looking for from archaeology on your project
- what your budget is likely to be
- what the constraints are on archaeological work
- whether there are any risks you foresee

## REGULATION AND PROFESSIONAL CONDUCT PROCEDURES

If a ClfA-accredited archaeologist or Registered Organisation does not meet the standards set, we have a professional conduct process in place. This process and its sanctions underpin ClfA's primary function of public and consumer protection.

Anyone may raise a professional conduct allegation if they believe that a ClfA-accredited archaeologist or a Registered Organisation has failed to comply with the ClfA *Code of conduct* or regulations of the Institute, identifying the relevant principle(s) and rule(s) that they believe to have been breached.

All cases need supporting evidence to proceed. ClfA will not get involved in contractual or professional disputes other than allegations of misconduct, except where parties have agreed to be subject to its arbitration scheme.

You can find further guidance about regulation and professional conduct on our website at <https://bit.ly/35d8RGx>.



*Human bone analysis at Wessex: successful outcomes depend on finding appropriate specialists. (Photo: Wessex)*