

A Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales - Minutes

Research Framework Meeting
22nd January 2010
RCAHMW, Aberystwyth

Present: Gwilym Hughes, Fiona Gale, Ian Brooks, Nancy Edwards, Jenny Hall, Peter Wakelin, Deanna Groom, Emily Bateman, Astrid Caseldine, Elizabeth Walker, Jeff Davies, John Latham, Stephen Hughes, Ken Murphy, Emily Bateman

- 1) **Apologies:** Sian Rees, Bill Britnell, George Nash, Emma Plunkett Dillon, Chris Martin, Dave Maynard, John Roberts, Kate Geary, Andy Marvell, Stephen Briggs, David Austin, Gary Robinson
- 2) **Minutes:** Minutes of the previous meeting were accepted
- 3) **Review Process:** GH gave a quick recap of why we are doing this and how. The impetus for the review is being supported by the Action Plan of the Heritage Minister. The Research Framework Steering group is a subgroup of the IfA Wales/Cymru group with an open and flexible membership.
EB questioned how wide the involvement in the Research Framework actually was and where the power lay. Some members of staff of the Welsh Archaeological Trusts felt they had no way of being involved and no power within the process. Without naming names it was hard to take this forward addressing particular instances but the point raised was addressed throughout the rest of the meeting.

The Chairs of the themes/periods were asked to give a brief update on progress

Palaeoenvironmental, Astrid Caseldine. Astrid has been in contact with various people and has had varying levels of response. She has specifically asked for suggestions for amendments to the research questions and for any comments about the use of the research framework but has had no replies to these requests so far. However, because of preparing the 2nd edition of Environmental Archaeology in Wales she thinks that she is aware of most, if not all, of the published relevant recent palaeoenvironmental/environmental archaeology research in Wales and is in the process of revising research questions for that publication. She aims to draft a document in March which will be circulated for comment and finalised in April.

Palaeolithic and Mesolithic (250,000BC – 4000BC), Elizabeth Walker. She has invited eight people to work with her and responses are gradually coming through with Prof. Martin Bell, Dr Rick Schulting and Dr Martin Bates, Prof Nick Barton, Dr Andrew David, Dr Beccy Scott and Dr Ian Brooks currently signed up – so the original national working group, with some new faces. They have been asked to look at the five question sin the brief and respond by the end of February.

Neolithic and Early Bronze Age (4000BC – 1500BC), Gwilym Hughes. 'A workshop/seminar is being organised, to be held in Senate Room at National Museum

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A Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales - Minutes

in conjunction with the Later Bronze Age and Iron Age theme has been organized for the 23rd April, the day before the Bronze Age conference in Cardiff (24th & 25th April) with invited people having round table discussion. However, after consideration, Gwilym Hughes intends to step down as Chair of this theme as he feels that he has not been active enough in the field within the recent past, he has a lack of time and there may also be possible conflicts of interests. He will approach someone to take on the role.

Later Bronze Age and Iron Age (1500BC - AD43), Fiona Gale. A senate session in conjunction with the Neolithic and Early Bronze Age theme has been organized for the 23rd April, the day before the Bronze Age conference in Cardiff (24th & 25th April), with invited people having a round table discussion. Fiona also intends to contact other people and will do this shortly.

Roman (AD43 – AD410), Jeff Davies. He has contacted 15 people at the beginning of January and so far has had 4 replies, two of which are substantial. He is concerned to pick up people from outside of Wales who have been doing research within Wales. He hopes to take this forward next month and has contacted individuals within the WATs .

Early Medieval (AD410 – AD1100), Nancy Edwards. Nancy Edwards, Alan Lane and Mark Redknap met on 9th December to discuss the way forward with this and mapped out information that would be needed. The HERs were contacted. Ken Murphy responded on behalf of DAT.

Medieval (AD1100 – AD1539), David Austin. David was unable to come to the meeting. He hadn't made progress to date. GH would contact David to update him on today's discussions and discuss further.

Post Medieval Wales (AD1539 – AD1750), Stephen Briggs. Stephen was unable to come to the meeting. He hadn't made progress to date. GH would contact Stephen to update him on today's discussions and discuss further.

Industrial and Modern Wales (AD1750 – Present) Stephen Hughes. David Gwyn is looking at Transport corridors sub-theme, Judith Alfrey, the Building Stock and Stephen Hughes Wales and the Wider World. They are going to meet and draft notes in the next few weeks. They are then going to circulate to 40 or so people – those on the Industrial Archaeology panel.

Maritime, Sian Rees. Sian was unable to come to the meeting but Deanna Groom attended to in her place. Not much progress has been made to date but possibility of a workshop has been talked about.

Infrastructure – This theme was discussed. Various discussions had taken place during the initial development of the Research Framework. Other areas of interest to explore were scientific methodologies, history of the subject and how we got to where
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we are, education and outreach and Upland Archaeology. It was resolved to have a session in the conference on methodologies in general picking up on all these points.

- 4) **Conference.** There was discussion about how the conference should be structured. It was agreed that there would be short plenary sessions in the morning covering the 10 main period/themes plus a session on Methodologies with afternoon workshops run in parallel for fuller discussions relating to each period/theme. The CAA grant will cover a conference pack, a flyer advertising CAA to be included. Costings need to be worked out for all aspects of the conference. A title for the conference was discussed and “Renewing the Research Framework for the Archaeology of Wales was proposed. It was noted that thought needed to be given to simultaneous translation facilities for the conference. Chairs for the plenary sessions needed to be found. Peter Wakelin and Gwilym Hughes were suggested.
- 5) **Website** – It was agreed that some form of feedback forum/message board should be re-instated on the website and that some version of on-line booking for the conference should be looked at. Jenny Hall to take this forward.

Date of next meeting - 18th March 11am

Minutes Approved: 18th March 2010

Jenny Hall
Chair IfA Wales/Cymru