

‘UNLOCKING BUCKINGHAMSHIRE’S PAST’ PROJECT: PROGRESS REPORT

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum

Date: 29th March

Authors: Report by the Sites and Monuments Record Officer

A. PURPOSE OF THE REPORT

1 To report on progress with the Unlocking Buckinghamshire’s Past Project.

B. PROPOSED ACTION

2 The Forum is invited to:

a **NOTE** the progress report

C. RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

3 The ‘Unlocking Buckinghamshire’s Past’ project is funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund with match funding contributions from Buckinghamshire County Council, the Chilterns Conservation Board, Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society and the South Midlands group of the Council for British Archaeology.

D. SUPPORTING INFORMATION

4 Following the grant of funding by the Heritage Lottery Fund in September 2003, the Unlocking Buckinghamshire’s Past project has been underway since March 2004. A progress report was presented to the Forum in September 2004 and this paper reports on subsequent developments.

5 The Sites and Monuments Record database is now available online at www.buckscc.gov.uk/archaeology/unlocking_buckinghamshires_past.htm and is searchable for the records for Aylesbury Vale and Wycombe districts. Map-based searching will be added in the next few months, when the website is transferred to the County Council’s website. Preparation of the records for Chiltern district is well-advanced and these should be loaded onto the website in the summer, to be followed by the records for South Bucks in the autumn. According to a recent survey, the Bucks SMR is one of only 14 English SMRs available on-line, out of a total of about 100.

6 Three education modules, two for schools on Changes to the Landscape and one for local groups and communities on Heritage Resources, have been completed and are also available on the website following piloting in schools and focus groups. Two further schools modules, on Rich and Poor

in the Tudor to Stuart period and in the Victorian period, were piloted in schools over the autumn and will be available on the website later in the spring. A Local History Study module has been prepared in partnership with Waddesdon Junior School and will probably be piloted after Easter, whilst the second of the modules for local groups and communities, Getting Involved in Archaeology, will be tested with focus groups shortly.

- 7 Work is currently ongoing to prepare the next schools modules, on Buckinghamshire in the World Wars, post-medieval Changes in the Landscape and a Virtual Excavation module.
- 8 Over 3,000 aerial photographs, prints and slides have been scanned and many have been linked to the database records and the education modules. The graphics consultants have produced a number of 3D reconstructions of key sites along with an interactive timepod for use by school children, which will added to the website shortly.
- 9 A total of 65 outreach events have been undertaken to date, including illustrated talks, exhibitions and displays, guided walks and activities for children. The sandpit excavations have been particularly popular with children at National Archaeology Day and the County Show.
- 10 Outstanding tasks include the creation of an interactive timeline, illustrated glossaries, further 3D reconstructions and virtual reality graphics and the development of the public access/visitor module.

E. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past Project. Application by County Archaeological Service to Heritage Lottery Fund, December 2002

Unlocking Buckinghamshire's Past Project: Progress Report. Paper presented to Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum, 22nd September 2004.

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