

ARCHAEOLOGY IN MILTON KEYNES

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum

Date: September 2011

Author: Senior Archaeological Officer, Conservation and Archaeology, Milton Keynes Council

A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform the Committee of recent archaeological matters in Milton Keynes.

B. FIELDWORK PROJECTS

1. Attached is a list of fieldwork projects (Events) undertaken in the Milton Keynes area between January and June 2011. Highlights included:
 - Two open area excavations revealing late Iron Age and Romano-British settlement on the Western Expansion Area, Shenley Church End parish.
 - Continuing excavation and monitoring at Manor Farm quarry, Wolverton. Work this season has revealed later prehistoric brushwood trackways and in situ Mesolithic flint scatters.
2. An update on progress with key post-excavation / publication projects is appended.

C. PLANNING

1. Between 1st January and 30th June 2011 there were 142 consultations in respect of archaeological matters as a direct result of planning applications, pre-development enquiries, and schemes by statutory undertakers and other agencies.

D. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

1. The Historic Environment Record was consulted by external researchers or consultants 23 times between January and June 2011.
2. The Senior Archaeological Officer completed a review of the 2006 HER audit in May and is currently working on an action plan for the development of the HER over the next 3 years. A key component of the action plan is likely to be the procurement of a replacement database to achieve better compliance with the appropriate national

heritage data standards and to provide a more sustainable platform for the future.

E. STAFF

1. The vacant post of Archaeological Officer has been deleted following a programme of restructuring. Senior Conservation Officer Paul Affleck has also left the team, taking voluntary redundancy as part of this process after over 30 years service with MKDC and then MK Council.
2. The restructured Conservation & Archaeology Team has been reduced by 33% and in addition to the Senior Archaeological Officer now comprises The Conservation & Archaeology Manager (Simon Peart) plus 2 Conservation Officers.

F. OUTREACH

1. The Senior Archaeological Officer gave a talk on recent archaeological work in Milton Keynes to the members of the Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society at their AGM in May.
2. Planning for Archaeology Day 2011 is underway; the popular open day will be held in MK Central Library on Saturday 12th November. This year's event will include Dr Helen Geake speaking on the Staffordshire Hoard and Ros Tyrrell of the Portable Antiquities Scheme on finds in Milton Keynes. A range of poster displays and artefacts from both professional and amateur archaeologists will feature on the day and also in the run up to the event.
3. In March and June two well-attended open days were organised with the cooperation of the developer and contracting archaeologists on excavations in Shenley Church End parish in advance of the Western Expansion Area (see above B).

G. PROPOSED ACTION

1. The Committee is asked to note this report.