

ARCHAEOLOGY IN MILTON KEYNES

To: Buckinghamshire Historic Environment Forum

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A. PURPOSE OF REPORT

1. To inform the Forum 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 July 2013 and June 2014.

2. Particular highlights included:

- Excavations on the Western Expansion Area, Calverton where 2 isolated Iron Age wells yielded finds including hazelnuts and a roughly trimmed Field Maple branch.
- Further excavations at the Calverton extension to Passenham quarry revealed a second Romano-British stone revetted mausoleum containing a primary cremation and associated inhumations.

3. In July Oxford Archaeology published 'Broughton, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire: The Evolution of a South Midlands Landscape'. Lavishly illustrated in colour, it takes an in-depth look at the various archaeological finds from the Brooklands and Broughton Gate developments. The extensive excavations across a 200 hectare area adjacent to the village of Broughton revealed the fluctuating fortunes of neighbouring settlements from the Iron Age to the medieval period. Of particular interest were the richly furnished Iron Age and early Roman period cremation cemeteries.

C. PLANNING

1. Between 1st July 2013 and 30th June 2014 there were 292 consultations in respect of archaeological matters as a direct result of planning applications, pre-application enquiries, and schemes by statutory undertakers and other agencies.

D. HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT RECORD

1. During March 2014 Calli Rouse of ASC Ltd was contracted in to clear the backlog of HER events and OASIS validation.

E. OUTREACH

1. In September the Senior Archaeological Officer conducted a group guided walk of historic and archaeological sites in the Ouzel valley as part of Heritage Open Days.
2. Milton Keynes Archaeology Day – see **Appendix 1** for full report.

This year's event will be held on Saturday 8th November in the Central Library and will feature talks by John Gater of Time Team farm on geophysical survey techniques and Sadie Watson of MoLA on the Bloomberg Site.

F. CONSERVATION MATTERS

1. Three parish councils (Loughton, Willen and Woughton-on-the-Green) are currently reviewing their respective Conservation Areas. The draft Loughton Conservation Area review will be out for public consultation via Milton Keynes Council's portal in November.
2. The Conservation & Archaeology team are currently in discussions with AVDC with regard to delivering further Conservation Area Reviews.
3. In July the former Bus Station in Central Milton Keynes was listed at Grade II, joining the Shopping Building (thecentre:mk) and 7-23 Silver Street, Stony Stratford (terraced housing and covered entrance to Cofferridge Close) as designated early examples of MKDC architecture. A proposal to demolish much of Cofferridge Close to construct a larger supermarket was dismissed as the result of a public enquiry held in March, predominantly on heritage grounds.
4. The proposed New Town Local Heritage List is on the Council's Forward Plan and will be going to Cabinet in October.

G. PROPOSED ACTION

1. The Forum is asked to note this report.

Appendix 1:

Milton Keynes Archaeology Day 2013

Post-Event Report

Introduction

On Saturday 9th November 2013 over 400 people of all ages came through the doors of the Central Library to enjoy a range of activities and talks at the 7th annual Milton Keynes Archaeology Day. Organised by the Conservation & Archaeology Team the event began in 2007 as a low-key conference featuring speakers on recent archaeological work in the borough. Since then the event has grown year on year in scope and appeal and is now held across the Central Library with talks in Local Studies and interactive displays, activities and workshops from the library foyer and upstairs to the Children's Library. Despite this expansion the budget for the event remains modest, with expenditure principally covering the printing of posters, refreshments for the contributors and travel expenses for the speakers.

Talks, Displays and Activities

For the second year running tables in the IT area next to the Children's Library were taken over by a hands-on archaeology workshop. Hosted this year by local firm Archaeological Services & Consultancy Ltd, this activity for young people was particularly popular with the under 10s and gave a practical insight into the varied methods and skills used by modern archaeologists. Many of the participants in the workshop stopped by after attending an archaeology themed 'Story Time' in the Children's Library.



Another very popular aspect of the event is the displays in the foyer and on the half-landing from active local fieldwork groups and societies. This year we welcomed along a team from the Wing Heritage Project, a study group established to improve knowledge of the village's heritage prior to the production of a neighbourhood plan.



Other displays included Northamptonshire's Community Landscape and Archaeology Survey Project (CLASP) and the Upper Neve Archaeological Society (UNAS) plus Archaeology Day regulars Magiovinium Metal Detecting club whose wide-ranging collections of artefacts proved as popular as ever. Also present in the foyer were Ros

Tyrrell and Julie Cassidy, Finds Liaison Officers from the Portable Antiquities Scheme for Bucks and Northants who were on hand to identify any treasures brought in by the public.

As in previous years the biggest draws of the day were the two lectures held



in the Local Studies Library with each attracting capacity crowds of over 50. In the morning local archaeologist and resident pottery specialist on television's 'Time Team', Paul Blinkhorn presented his new talk 'Carry On Trowelling'. This proved a highly entertaining and at times hilarious romp through the history of archaeology in the media, highlighting and debunking many myths in the process including the Mummy's

Curse! Paul rounded off his talk with a question and answer session in which he provided fascinating insights into the making of Time Team.

The afternoon saw a real change of gear as Cecily Cropper of MFL Archaeology spoke on the subject of Forensic Archaeology, charting its development and use in criminal and post-conflict situations both in the UK and abroad. Cecily used some well-known criminal cases from the past as examples as well as touching on her own work with the United Nations in worldwide post-conflict situations.

Also of note and running alongside the event from November to January was a new exhibition of recent archaeological work from across the borough. Compiled by the Conservation & Archaeology Team with information from 7 external contributors, the exhibition was in the Discover MK showcase in the upstairs lending library and has now transferred to Westcroft library. The exhibition featured both development related projects and community archaeology such as the Bury Field geophysical survey. It was accompanied by 3 cases of finds from the Wolverton Anglo-Saxon and Broughton Gate Iron Age and Roman cemeteries.



A new exhibition at Westcroft Library



23rd January – 27th March 2014

Westcroft Library, Westcroft District Centre, Milton Keynes MK4 4DD

Milton Keynes borough and particularly the area of the New Town have been subject to numerous archaeological investigations, many of which were carried out by the Milton Keynes Archaeological Unit between 1971 and 1991. Since 1997 archaeological work has continued apace under the coordination of the Council's Conservation and Archaeology Team. This new exhibition displays some of the highlights from just the last 7 years of archaeological work across the borough.



Statistics and Audience Feedback

Figures from the automatic door count for the day indicate an additional 400 people came through the doors of the library. Helpers, those running workshops, speaking or manning stands and displays on the day numbered 26 not including the library staff.

Feedback was collected from 37 respondents who gave an overwhelmingly positive 4 or 5 (out of 5) rating for the talks and activities. The feedback also showed a strong age bias in relation to the talks with most of the respondents who attended one or both falling in to the 41 years plus age groups. A number of useful suggestions and comments were also received which give a good impression of the event and will also inform its future development. The postcodes collected show attendees from all the surrounding counties and also Greater London, in itself an endorsement of the free national publicity via British Archaeology magazine.

Contact:

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External Links

ASC	http://www.archaeological-services.co.uk/
CLASP	http://claspweb.org.uk/
Cotswold Archaeology	http://www.cotswoldarchaeology.co.uk/
Discover MK	http://www.discovermiltonkeynes.co.uk/
Festival of Archaeology	http://www.archaeologyfestival.org.uk/
MFL Archaeology	http://www.mflarchaeology.co.uk/
UNAS	http://unas.org.uk/
Paul Blinkhorn	http://postromanpotteryspecialist.weebly.com/
Wing Heritage Project	http://wingheritageproject.wordpress.com/