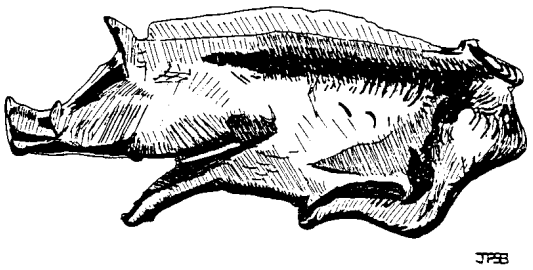
Worthing Archaeological Society

FIELDWORK MANUAL



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Contents

1 Introduction

The aim of this manual is to introduce some of the basic concepts and processes that you will encounter whilst taking part in archaeological field work, whether that be field-walking, surveying, or excavation. The manual will also provide some links and suggestions for further reading in each area of field work, in case you wish to expand your knowledge further.

The Worthing Archaeological Society was established in 1922 to promote archaeological awareness and understanding within the public domain. Our archaeological heritage is very rich within the local area and the Society encourages the proper recording and preservation of all antiquities.

Please note that following the UK government lifting of legal Coronavirus restrictions as of 24 February 2022, WAS will continue to maintain a Covid aware environment for volunteers and any visiting members of the public, taking all necessary and proportionate precautions regarding the risk of infection from Covid 19

WAS retains a number of guidelines in place relating to the prevention of the spread of COVID-19. Instructions to aid compliance with these rules are indicated in *italic text*.

2 The Basics of attending an excavation

2.1 Outline

This section will provide some basic information on preparing to arrive on site, and what to expect when you get there. Arriving on site for the first time can be a daunting prospect. However, all you need is a little preparation, and the right equipment. This section should guide you through what to do before you turn up on site, and what you should bring with you. If there is anything you are not sure of, you can e-mail WorthingArchaeological@gmail.com before you arrive, or just ask at the monthly lectures.

When on-site, you can direct your questions to the site supervisor, although any of your fellow diggers will be happy to help where they can.

2.2 Before you arrive on site

Individuals intending to take part in field work activities should obtain an anti-tetanus injection before commencing work. Please contact your own GP for further information. All wounds should be covered with an adhesive dressing while on site.

Please be aware that gloves need to worn on site at all times when you are moving equipment, excavating or processing finds. While wearing of face masks in general will be left as a personal choice, please bring a face mask as the site supervisor may ask you to wear one for a specific task.

Given the vagaries of the British climate, you should ensure that you have the appropriate clothing. Ensure that you have access to wet weather gear. It is not advisable to wear jeans while on site as they become heavy when wet and take a long time to dry.

Be aware of the risk from the sun. Always wear a high protection factor sun cream and try to reduce exposure to the sun by wearing hat and long sleeved, light clothes.

Please ensure that you avoid dehydration by drinking lots of water. Appropriate on-site clothing should be worn when on any excavation site, particularly protective footwear. Kneeling pads will be provided, but it is recommended that bring some sturdy gardening gloves. *Note that kneeling pads should be wiped with anti-bacterial gel or wipes before use and when being returned. Please bring sufficient quantities of these for your own use throughout the day.*

Field work often takes place some distance from convenient shops or hostelries so you should usually ensure you have sufficient food and drink for the day. *Please bring your own seat and do not borrow from anyone-else. At present WAS spare seating will not be brought to site.*

If you have any pre-existing illnesses, conditions or allergies that could affect you whilst on site, please let the site supervisor on arrival. *Before you arrive on site you will need to sign a Health Indemnity form with these details and the details of an emergency contact for you.* The information will be kept confidential. Please ensure that you bring any medications that you may need with you. The site supervisor will usually have a mobile phone to contact the emergency service in the case of an emergency*. Note that the form includes your signing that you understand COVID-19 risks when attending site.*.

Members are kindly asked not to attend any site/activity if they feel unwell, and more particularly if they are experiencing any of the symptoms associated with Covid 19, and to inform the Site Director if they subsequently contract Covid 19 within 5 days of having visited the site/activity.

2.3 Arrival On-Site

There will be times when access can be difficult to anything but a four-wheel drive vehicle, or indeed where direct access by car may not be possible or permitted. Details of any access issues will be provided prior to each excavation. *Normally, we would always recommend trying to car-share, as this not only helps the environment but sharing is only recommended with another person from your household or from your social bubble.*

Occasionally accessing sites can involve a long, and sometimes steep, walk. Again, details will be provided before the excavation, but if this is an issue for you, please contact us and we can discuss arrangements.

2.4 Health & Safety Information

It is the duty of everyone to take reasonable care for the health and safety of their self and other persons who may be affected by their acts or omissions at work. All personnel taking part in fieldwork must be aware of the inherent risks associated with the activities and minimize these risks by adopting safety precautions. Specifically, you must obey the instructions given by the Project Directors and other supervisory staff.

Although some of the following points have already been made above, they are important enough to be made again here:

1. Be aware of the site Health and Safety Risk Assessment. You may refer to this whenever you need to. It is the responsibility of all individuals to obtain an anti-tetanus injection before commencing work. Please contact your own GP for further information. All wounds should be covered with an adhesive dressing while on site.

2. *The UK government recommends continuing of washing hands and following advice to 'Catch it, Bin it, Kill it'. Those participating in on site activities are asked to continue to maintain good hand hygiene, to use anti bac hand gels and gloves as appropriate, and to consider cleaning down tools/items before sharing.*

3. *If a finds tent or similar enclosed environment is being used, then numbers permitted inside may be limited depending on the circumstances at the time, and the circulation of fresh air will be encouraged at all times.*

4. Be aware of the risk from the sun. Always wear a high protection factor sun cream and try to reduce exposure to the sun by wearing a hat and long sleeved, light clothing. *Please bring an adequate supply of sun-cream for your own use.*

5. When working near water take precautions against catching Weils Disease. Check details at rospa.com/leisure-safety/Water/Advice/Weils-Disease. Avoid going into the water or using it for cleaning or dampening hard ground.

6. When working in grass in summer be aware of the dangers of ticks which can cause Lyme Disease. See nhs.uk/conditions/lyme-disease/ for details.

7. Please ensure that you avoid dehydration by drinking lots of water.

8. Ensure that you have access to wet weather gear. It is not advisable to wear jeans while on site as they become heavy when wet and take a long time to dry.

9. Please take care of your own and other people's safety. Be aware of other people's presence when you are working. Do not lift or swing digging equipment above chest height or throw equipment.

10. All tools should be stored safely when not in use. Any defective piece of equipment must be reported to a supervisor.

11. Do not sit or walk near the edge of trenches: they may collapse without warning. Also, do not store equipment or create spoil heaps within 1m of a trench. Do not enter a trench until instructed it is safe to do so by a Site Director or supervisor. It may require shoring, for example or may need to be drained of water. Always work within sight of a colleague.

12. Wear stout footwear during heavy work, e.g. spade work; wear a hard hat when digging in trenches below one meter deep and in the vicinity of a mechanical excavator. No person should work within 5m of the excavator unless authorized to do so by a Site Director or supervisor and unless within sight of the operator. Anyone working near to a mechanical excavator should wear a hi-visibility jacket.

13. Report any injuries, illnesses, allergic reactions or insect attacks, however slight, to the safety officer or the finds supervisor. First aid kits are

provided. If you notice anything (such as equipment failure, trench subsidence, biological or chemical contamination or slippery surfaces) on or off sites which you think may cause a dangerous situation to develop PLEASE REPORT IT YOURSELF AND STRAIGHT AWAY. Do not leave it to others.

14. Please clear up your rubbish from site and dispose of it properly.

2.5 Tools and Equipment On-Site

2.5.1 Hand Tools

Where practical, wipe tools with anti-bacterial gel before and after use.

All participants will be trained in the correct use of tools to minimize the risk of injury to themselves and others during excavation. Please take care of your own and other people's safety. Be aware of other people's presence when you are working. Do not lift or swing digging equipment above chest height or throw equipment.

The hand tools will consist of picks, mattocks, shovels, spades, trowels and buckets. All tools should be stored safely when not in use. Any defective piece of equipment must be reported to a supervisor.

All tools will be provided by the society; however, many diggers form a close relationship with their individual trowel, so most will tend to purchase their own. Archaeologists can be a funny lot, and turning up with the wrong kind of trowel could cause much laughter and disapproval.

The "standard" trowel is a 4" drop forged pointing trowel, with the favored brands being WHS or Marshalltown. A new trowel tends to cost around £15-£30 and can be bought online from a variety of websites. Cheaper trowels are available, but are a false economy. You should always ensure your trowel is drop forged, as it can be somewhat embarrassing as the head of your riveted trowel snaps off whilst you're cleaning back an area.

2.5.2 Plant & Machinery

Occasionally plant and machinery (such as a JCB) may be used, in particular on the annual two-week summer excavation. When these machines are in use, work will be halted, and individuals will be moved away from the working area of the machine for the duration of its task. Any appointed individuals involved in the direction of such a machine will wear protective headgear and high visibility clothing.

2.6 Insurance

All members of the Worthing Archaeological Society attending excavations will be covered by our Insurance Policy.

A register of site attendance will be kept each day, and you must ensure that you sign in and out whenever you arrive or leave the site.

3 Excavation Techniques

3.1 Personnel on site

Each dig will have an appointed person in charge (the site director or project manager). This person will make the top-level day-to-day decisions on the course

of the excavation. The director is also in charge of the overall interpretation of what is being uncovered, usually taking into account the opinions of the other archaeologists working on the site. Usually this person will have been involved in the initial planning of the excavation to have a full overview of the project, and should also run the post-excavation programme. On large excavations, area supervisors may be appointed to have responsible for specific parts of the site and decide on the order in which features are investigated and how to record them most effectively.

A finds supervisor is usually responsible for ensuring that finds are collected and looked after properly. For larger excavations, there may be a small dedicated team of finds processors. For smaller sites, the director may carry out these roles as well.

A wide variety of specialists (such as people who have excavated similar sites in the past, or pottery, bone or environmental specialists) may be invited to visit the site so that the director can gain from their expertise (a bit of free advice never goes amiss!). It is also usual for WAS to invite the County and/or District archaeologist(s) to visit the site.

Individual excavators (often known colloquially as 'diggers') carry out the director's and supervisor's instructions - and do most of the hard-physical work of excavation. However, diggers take continual decisions too. They may not get to decide on the overall strategy of the excavation, but by digging, they work out how deep features such as pits and post-holes are, they define layers and structures, and describe them, either verbally or by writing on-site records. In their own way, these decisions are every bit as important to the outcome of the excavation as the ones taken by people in more senior positions.

A small team of surveyors will have visited the site before excavation starts, and are likely to be on site for the duration of the excavation. The survey team will help plot the exact location of the trench on maps (it is thanks to this detailed work that we are able to reopen a trench season after season). They will also help plot “small finds” (see below) in three dimensions using the Total Station. That way we can tell exactly where each important find was located.

3.2 How to dig

The aim of excavation is usually to remove the most recent deposits downwards to the earliest deposits on the site. Investigating and recording stratigraphy, finds, structures and inter-cutting features are often a highly complex and difficult process. Archaeologists gradually build up skills and experience that help them to distinguish and interpret the mass of buried deposits which they encounter. However, if you’re not sure, never be afraid to ask.

The quickest method of excavation is to remove soil using a machine excavator such as a JCB (also known affectionately as a “big yellow trowel”), can be used to remove large quantities of earth in bulk. Where there is material above the archaeological layers that needs to be removed before any excavation can start these machines are invaluable. In the hands of skilled drivers, with clear direction from a watching archaeologist, machine excavators can be used with reasonable precision to remove individual layers, and can prepare flat surfaces for further investigation. However, when they begin to penetrate archaeological deposits, it is

difficult to keep track of finds discoveries and the top of fragile structures may be damaged.

More usually, archaeologists must remove soil by hand. A variety of tools are used. Spades and mattocks (a flat-edged pick) can be used to remove soil quickly. Hand trowels are perhaps the best-known tool used by excavators, and in experienced hands can be used to separate and clean archaeological layers and features very effectively.

Troweling is used to scrape clean surfaces over areas which sometimes extend to hundreds of square meters, exposing differences in soil coloration and texture which are indicative of ancient structures, pits, ditches or deposits.

On some harder surfaces, brushing is also a useful cleaning technique. However, if the soil is damp, brushing can lead to a “smearing” of archaeological features, so you should always check with the site director or trench supervisor before using a brush.

For precision work, such as exposing the bones of a skeleton or gently removing soil around a fragile artefact, smaller trowels, paintbrushes, spoons and even dental tools are used.

The soil and other material that is removed is called ‘spoil’ and is taken away in buckets and wheelbarrows. Sometimes a proportion of the spoil is wet or dry-sieved for small artefacts which may have been missed by the excavator. This may be up to 100% of the fills of small important features but is usually a smaller percentage of large bulk deposits. Samples of soil may also be taken for environmental processing, dating and geochemical analysis. These are bagged and may be processed on-site or later in a laboratory. The spoil that is left over is put on a 'spoil heap' and may be used to back-fill the excavation trenches when they are finished.

3.3 Contexts

In archaeology, not only the context (physical location) of a discovery is a significant fact, but the formation of the context is as well. An archaeological context is an event in time which has been preserved in the archaeological record.

The cutting of a pit or ditch in the past is a context, whilst the material filling it will be another. Multiple fills, seen as layers in archaeological section would mean multiple contexts. Structural features, natural deposits and inhumations are also contexts. By separating a site into these basic, discrete units, archaeologists are able to create a chronology for activity on a site and describe and interpret it.

Contexts are often recorded by type. There is no standardization but the following are common types:

- Deposit: Any soil deposit be it a; layer, dump or fill, surfaces such as gravel roads are deposits
- Cut: Any feature defined by action of removal of other contexts be it pit, ditch or truncation
- Skeleton: Any human skeleton remains
- Coffin: coffin of any description not masonry in nature
- Masonry: Any masonry structure from steps to walls to stone-lined wells
- Timber: Any wood not part of a deposit with some function that is not exclusively an artifact

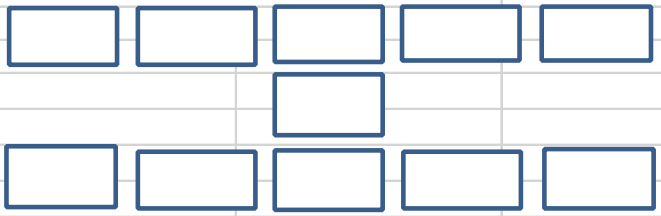
It should therefore be remembered that if you have a pit, you will have at least two contexts, one will be the actual cut of the pit, and the other will be the fill within the pit. If there are defined multiple fill layers (perhaps the pit was filled in little by little over time) then you may need a separate context for each layer of fill.

3.4 Recording a Context

When a new context is first identified, it needs to be allocated a unique context number. The site director or supervisor will assist you in “booking out” a new context number using the Context Register sheet. You should then take a blank Context Sheet and fill the basic information such as the site code, context type and number. Before a context is excavated, it should be drawn on a formal plan (see “Site Recording” below) and the Plan number(s) should be included on the Context Sheet.

You should also draw a rough (but detailed) sketch of the context on page 2 of the Context Sheet, including nearby co-ordinates. These sketch plans can prove invaluable after the excavation, when no one can quite remember what each context looked like. As you excavate the context, you should fill in the Context Sheet as you go. This will help you gain a better understanding of the composition, nature and type of inclusions.

Remember that once you have excavated out a context, it is gone forever, and it’s almost impossible to answer the questions on the Context Sheet accurately. If you have any small finds in the context, make sure these are also noted on the Context Sheet. Additionally, if you are asked to take any environmental samples from your context, these must also be noted.

WORTHING ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY			
SITE & CODE:			**CONTEXT No.**
Area No.	**Feature No.**	**Context Type:**	
Drawing Nos.	**Same as:**	**Filled by:**	**Within:**
Stratigraphic Relationships:			**Root Penetration:**
			**Bioturbation?:**
			Sealed? (Y/N):
Deposit /Fill:			
Colour (Munsell)			
Texture			
Composition (Sand/Silt/Clay)			
Inclusions			
Finds			
SF Nos.			
Cut:			
Shape in Plan (Sketch on reverse page)			
Corners			
Dimensions/Depth			
Break of Slope top			
Break of Slope bottom			
Base			
Context Description:			
Interpretation:			
Prepared by:			**Date:**
Checked by:			**Date:**

Include a Sketch Plan (Plan and Section if appropriate) on the reverse showing relationship to other features.

3.4.1 Guide to Completing the WAS Context Sheet

- **Site Code:-** This is usually a three letter, two number code, allocated uniquely to each site. The site director or supervisor will be able to confirm the code for you.
- **Context Type**:- All contexts can be categorized as a deposit, a fill, a cut or a structure.
- **Context Number**:- This is the unique number assigned when you signed out the context number from the context register.
- **Deposit/Fill:-** If your feature is a deposit or fill, you should describe:
    - The dimensions of the structure (use metric measurements, usually the length and width of the context, possibly the diameter. Once the context has been excavated, you can also note the depth.
    - The consistency of the soil - is it coarse, medium or fine-grained soil?
    - The color of the soil - you should record the color when the soil is both wet and dry, as it will appear to change.
    - The Wet Munsell number - The site director will have a specialist "Munsell" color chart, which enables you to classify the color.
    - The composition of the soil, using the flow chart on the context recording aide memoir (see Page 10)
    - The type and size of any inclusions.
    - How the context is to be excavated.
- **Cut**: If your feature is a cut, you should describe the shape and size of the items detailed in the "cut" section of the context sheet.
- The remainder of the context sheet should be fairly self-explanatory, but if you are not sure, on any particular section, then just ask the supervisor/site director.

3.5 The Drawn Record

The drawn record may be the only place that a context survives- after a context has been drawn, it could then be excavated away. The drawings onsite are made on Permatrace waterproof polyester "paper".

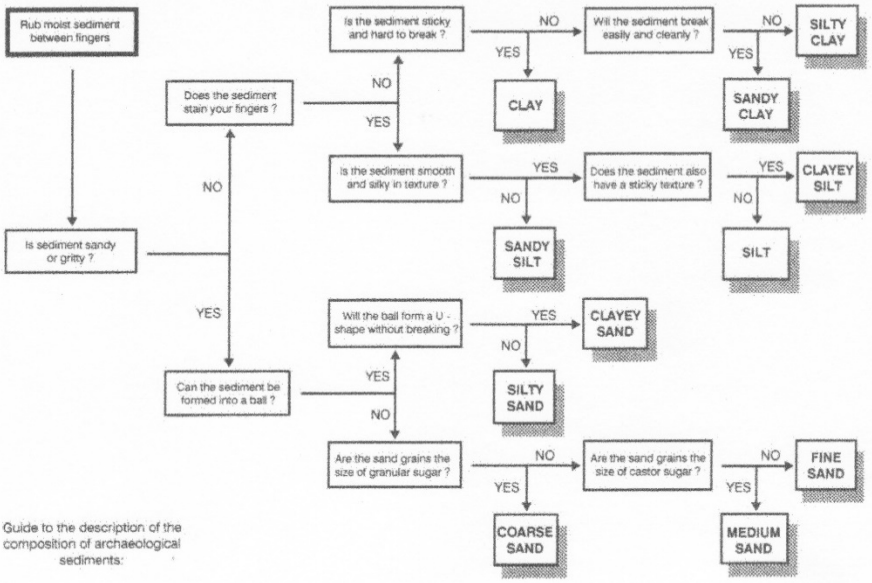
There are two types of drawing:

- The "plan" - drawn from directly above
- The "section" - a section is a view in part of the archaeological sequence showing it in the vertical plane, as a cross section, and thereby illustrating its profile and stratigraphy.

Each sheet of Permatrace allows an area of 5m x 5m to be drawn. If the trench is larger than this, then multiple sheets should be used to ensure the entire area is recorded.

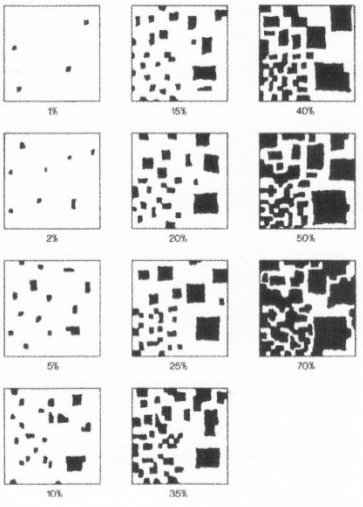
For each 5m x 5m grid, a drawing number should be booked out using the "Drawing Register" sheet.

Before the plan is started, you should ensure that all the required details on the Permatrace are completed, including the site name, site code, date, scale, plan number etc. Plans are normally drawn at a scale of 1:20, sections at a scale of 1:10. However, where a drawing is of a very small area such as a 1x1m test pit exposing a flint, pottery or glass scatter, the recorder may choose a more suitable scale.



Guide to the description of the composition of archaeological sediments.

SEDIMENT TYPE	STRENGTH TERM	DEFINITION
Coarse-grained sediments	Indurated	Broken only with sharp pick blow, even when soaked.
	Strongly cemented	Cannot be broken with hands.
	Weakly cemented	Pick removes sediment in lumps, which can be broken with hands.
	Compact	Requires mattock for excavation.
	Loose	Can be excavated with hoe or trowel.
Fine-grained sediments	Hard	Brittle or very tough.
	Stiff	Cannot be moulded with fingers.
	Firm	Moulded only by strong finger pressure.
	Soft	Easily moulded with fingers.
	Very soft	Exudes between fingers when squeezed.
	Friable	Non-plastic, crumbles in fingers.
Peat	Firm	Fibres compressed together.
	Spongy	Very compressible and open structure.
	Plastic	Can be moulded in hands and smeared between fingers.



11 Chart for estimating percentage composition or inclusions (Each quadrant equals the percentage) (redrawn after Hodgson 1974).

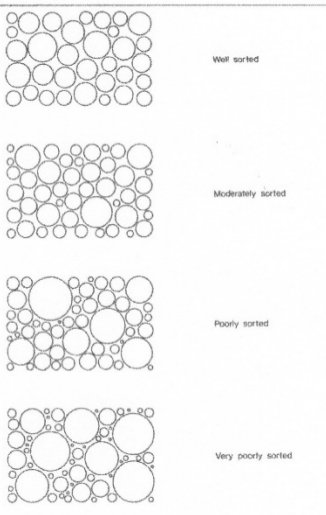
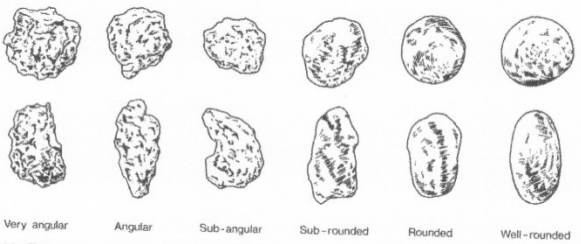


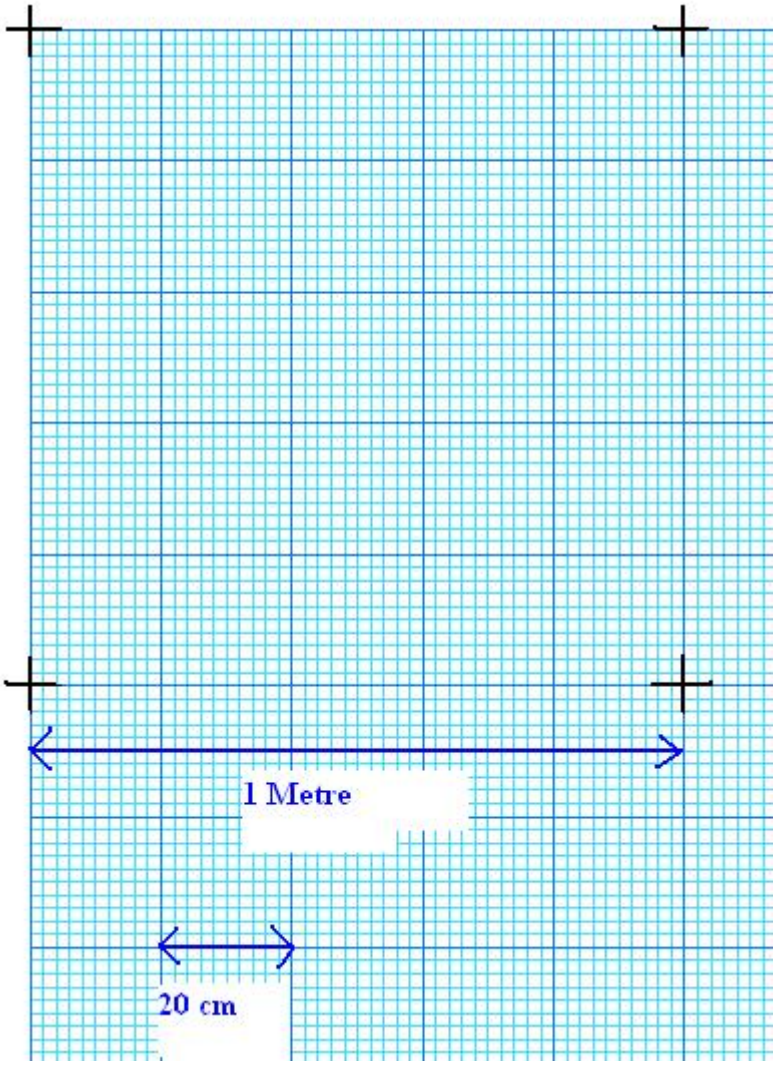
Chart for estimating degree of sorting (redrawn after Folk 1988).



13 Diagram to show degrees of roundness in the shape of pebbles (redrawn after Powers 1953).

3.6 Drawing a Plan

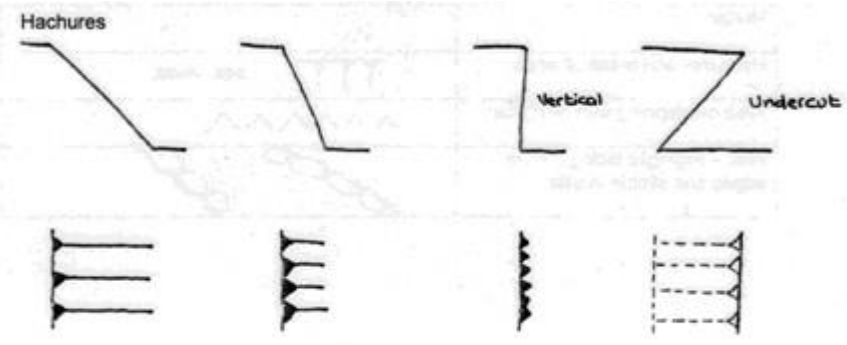
You should write the co-ordinates in each corner of the grid (eastings first, then northings). The surveyor can assist with these details using the total station. When drawing the plan, a planning frame is used.



The frame has 20cm squares which, when using the standard scale of 1:20, relate to one of the large blue boxes on the paper (see left).

You should then draw exactly what you see on the ground. Remember that you are drawing what is on the ground now, NOT what might have been there in the past. The drawing conventions for planning are shown below.

For slopes or vertical drops, hachures should be used, as shown below.



Spot heights should be taken at various points across the plan, with the assistance of the surveyors.

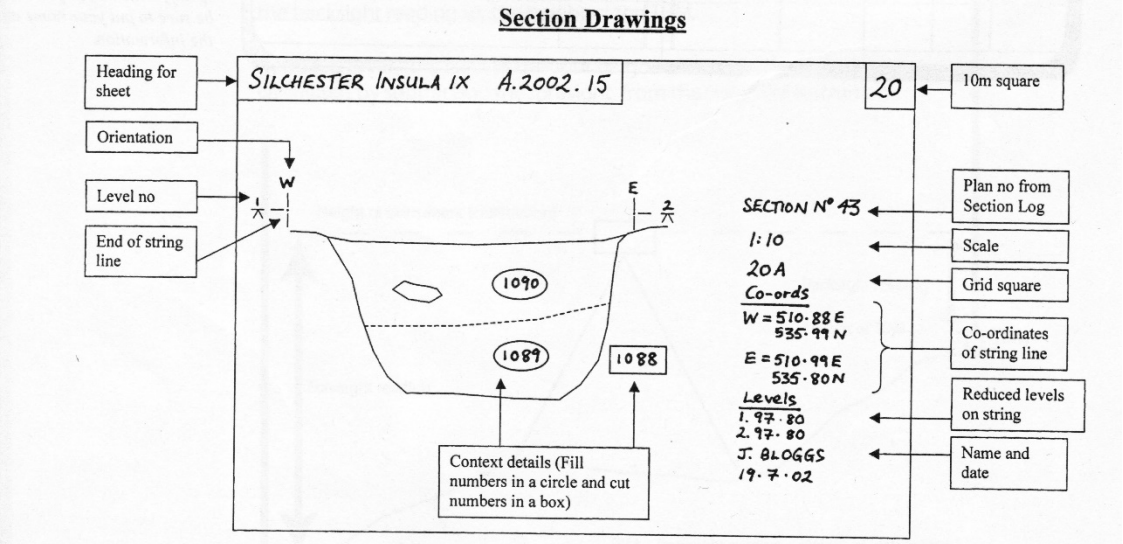
CONVENTIONS FOR PLANNING

Plan Index Information	North arrow Site Code Plan Number Scale Initials Date
Excavation Limit (edge of baulk)	
Outline of context	
Uncertain outline of context	
Intrusion (i.e. modern disturbance, or last years trench)	
Section line showing section number	SECTION NUMBER ON OPEN SIDE
Grid Point with co-ordinate	20.01 E 56.79 N
Spot height and level number	
Cut Number	011
Context number	071
Stone	S
Flint – Identify with "F" only when isolated	OR F
Bone	B
Large Ceramic tile	CT
Small Ceramic tile	
Pottery sherd	P
Chalk lump	C
Charcoal	
Clay	LARGE AREA = CLAY SMALL AREA =
Gravel	
Mortar	
Hachures and break of slope	SEE OVER
Area overlapping with next Plan	
Wall – Highlight facing stones edges and stipple mortar	

3.7 Drawing a Section

Sections may be drawn on uncut Permatrace, as they are drawn at a larger scale (1:10).

The drawing conventions for sections are shown below.



Example of how a section drawing should be laid out and correctly labelled. Ideally, all the written information should be kept neatly together as this may be one of several on the same sheet

CONVENTIONS FOR SECTION DRAWINGS

Section Index Information	Site Code Section Number Scale Initials Date
Excavation Limit (edge of baulk)	
Outline of context	
Uncertain outline of context	
Intrusion (i.e. modern disturbance, or last years trench)	
Section Nail with co-ordinate	20.01E 56.79N — 20.11E 56.78N
Spot height and level number	
Cut Number	011
Context number	071
Stone	S
Flint – Identify with "F" only when isolated	OR F
Bone	B
Large Ceramic tile	CT
Small Ceramic tile	
Pottery sherd	P
Chalk lump	C
Charcoal	
Clay	
Gravel	
Mortar	

4 Identifying Sites

This section will look at how a potential site is identified, and what work is undertaken before excavation starts.

4.1 First Steps

Before any excavation can be started, we first have to identify and examine potential sites. Often, we are asked to look at particular sites because the land owner has noted particular finds (such as pottery or tile) in a specific area, sometimes we are asked to see if we can provide archaeological backup to documentary evidence, or sometimes possible sites can be identified through visual clues in the landscape. Once a potential site has been identified, the first steps should be to undertake documentary research.

4.2 Documentary Research

Documentary research can provide a great deal of background information that will help us understand what to expect in an area. The research can take many forms such as investigating maps, title deeds, and census records.

Great places to start any documentary research include local libraries and the records office. Online resources for documentary research include:

- westsussex.gov.uk/leisure-recreation-and-community/history-and-heritage/west-sussex-record-office/search-record-office-catalogue-online/
- british-history.ac.uk/
- new.archaeologyuk.org/
- ads.ahds.ac.uk/index.html
- maps.nls.uk/
- envf.port.ac.uk/geo/research/historical/webmap/sussexmap/

Good documentary research can really help target a potential site, and give you a clear idea of what you might find. In some cases, the documents can also give an incredible level of detail, for example some old wills list all the belongings of the resident of a house, and can even tell you which room they were located in.

Obviously, there will be sites where documentary research will be limited - pre-historic and roman sites for example; there is still research that can be done. Details of past archaeological work, and chance finds are often logged with the local Heritage Environment Record (HER), and this can be accessed by prior arrangement at the local council.

4.3 Field Walking

Depending on the type of site, the next stage may well be to undertake a field walk. A field walk is undertaken to collect material from an area in a methodical manner. This enables us to map the spread and possible location of a potential site.

A detailed guide to field-walking can be obtained as a .pdf from British Archaeological Jobs and Resources at:
bajr.org/BAJRGuides/15. Field Survey - Land Survey Fieldwalking and Metal Detecting/ShortGuidetoFieldSurvey.pdf

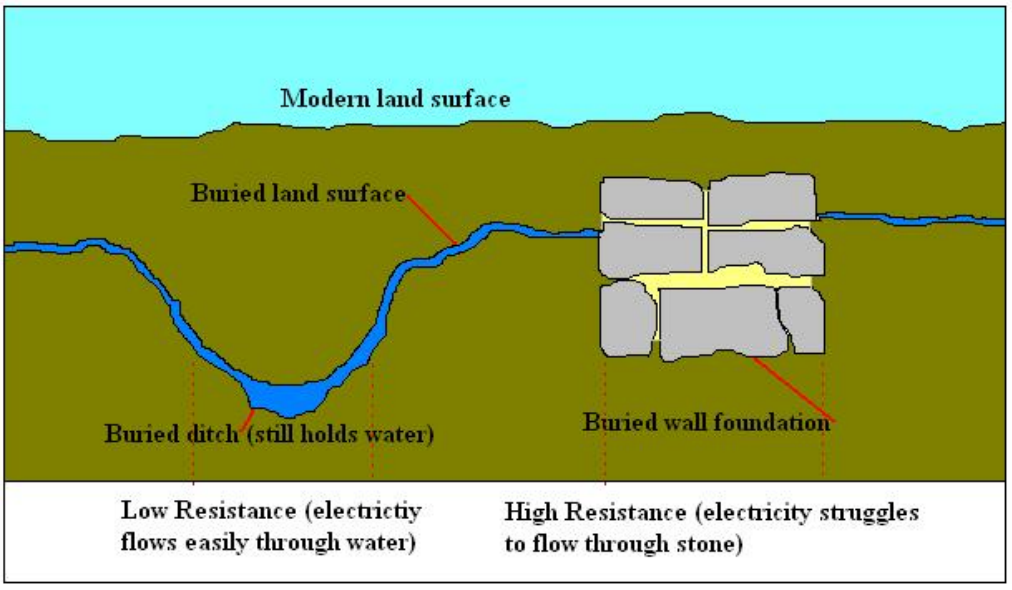
4.4 Geophysics

The next step is often to undertake a geophysical survey. This helps to take a look at what is under the ground without having to start digging. The main type of geophysics undertaken by the society is resistivity (the one on the Time Team that looks like you're using a Zimmer frame).

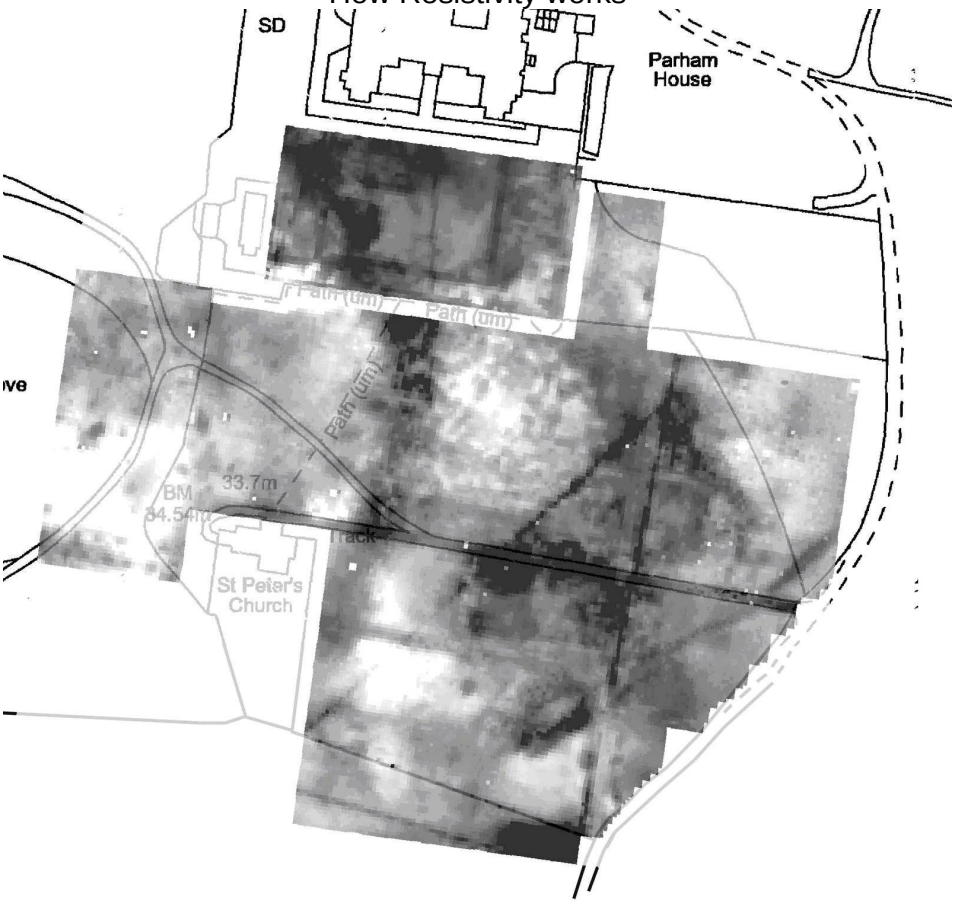
Resistivity is a form of geophysical survey where a weak electrical current is passed through the ground at regular points on a grid. Electrical resistance in the soil varies, and is affected by the presence of archaeological features. The patterns of resistance in the soil is recorded, plotted and interpreted. The metal probes on the machine are lightly inserted into the soil at every half or one meter (depending on the level of detail required) and an electrical current is passed between them; the level of electrical resistance (measured in ohms) is recorded on a data-logger; these readings are later downloaded onto a computer which uses a graphics programmed to produce a map or plot of the resistance patterns across the survey area.

Buried archaeological features have varying moisture content such as ditches and pits (usually higher moisture) and stone walls (usually lower moisture) and so stand out compared to the soil around. Once the patterns of resistance are

plotted, it is often very clear where walls or ditches exist, even though they are invisible from above ground. This information can be used to target the location of excavation.



How Resistivity works



Geophysics results from Parham House, 2008

5 Site Reports

This section will look at the reports required before and after the excavation.

5.1 Project Design

After the site has been identified and investigated as far as possible, and before excavation can begin, a project design will be drawn up. The project design is used to set out details of the excavation, and in particular the reason for the dig.

We should never dig a site just because we can! The project design is usually provided to the landowner to explain about the work we wish to undertake, and copies should be provided to all the volunteers working on the site so they can understand what we are doing there, and how we should be doing it.

The project design will usually contain the following information:

1. Introduction - a paragraph with some basic detail on the site, when the proposed work will take place, and who has asked us to investigate the site.
2. Site Location and Geology - the Ordnance Survey grid reference, height above Ordnance Datum (height above “sea level”) and a brief line about the geology of the area.
3. Archaeological Background - details of desktop research, geophysics and any previous fieldwork.
4. Field Methodology
5. Objectives - What are we trying to achieve with the excavation.
6. Excavation Approach - How many trenches do we intend to excavate, where will they be located, what is each trench specifically looking to prove/disprove?
7. Site Records - Details of how contexts will be recorded, how will the trenches be drawn/photographed, how will the artefacts be treated?
8. Environmental Material - Will environmental samples be taken, what will happen to them?
9. Metal Detecting - Will metal detectors be used on site?
10. Timetable - What dates is the excavation expected to take place?
11. Post-Excavation Analysis - How will post-excavation analysis be undertaken, who will do it?
12. Written Report - When will a written report be produced of the results of the excavation, who will copies be provided to?
13. Deposition of Archive and Finds - Where will all the site records and the finds be deposited?
14. Other - This section will cover insurance, health & safety, funding and will give an idea of the number of archaeologists needed on site.
15. Estimate of Cost - An estimate of the cost of the excavation, taking into account consumables such as Permatrace, finds boxes, paper and printing for post excavation reports, any travel or hire expenses etc.

5.2 Post Excavation Report

After the excavation has been completed, one of the most important pieces of work takes place, the writing of the post excavation report. This is where we publish details of what we found (both in terms of features and artefacts (finds).

The report will also include the interpretation of the site. Ideally, the post excavation report should then be made public so others are able to read your results and use the information in their own research.