

# Worthing Archaeological Society

**Newsletter**

**February & March 2024**

## WAS Field Unit

### Malthouse

Finds from the dig are being processed, very different from previous years. We aim to return there for the last 2 weeks of July, and first week of August. Dates to be confirmed. There is now a very active Malthouse/Whitehouse Research group set up as a result of our dig, and John Mill's research.

Contact Donna if you would like to be involved. [donna.wiltshire@sky.com](mailto:donna.wiltshire@sky.com)



### Climping - next visit TBC

Winter storms are changing everything.



### Finds Processing

Our next meetings at the Slindon Shed will be on Thursdays 1st and 15th February, 7th and 21st March. We will continue processing finds from our Sompting dig.. Attendance will still be restricted to 14 people. Remember to bring your own drinks and wear or bring extra clothing as the Shed is always cold!

[ggmturner@aol.com](mailto:ggmturner@aol.com)

## The Flint Sessions in Worthing

Museum Education Room, started very successfully on Wednesday January 10th and continue on alternate Wednesdays.

## WAS Lectures

In Worthing Library Lecture Theatre

- 13th February Dr Richard Nevell at 7.30.pm
  - John Pull memorial Lecture Investigating Knepp Castle, geophysical surveys at a 'slighted' site.
- 12th March. AGM at 7.pm.
  - Agenda for the AGM is at the end of the Newsletter followed by
    - Connie Shirley & Bob Turner The EPIC Project at Sompting Brooks.
- 9 h April at 7.30.pm
  - Mark Phillips on 'The Men, the Mission, the Recovery: The search for the B24 and its MIAs



Theresa has produced our Lecture Programme in full, and in full colour.

Look for it on our website: [worthingarchaeological.org](http://worthingarchaeological.org)

## Field Unit Forum

Our next meeting will be at 7.30pm on 6th February in St Botolph's Church rooms, in Heene. BN11 4LY. Entrance on the North side of the Church, from Manor Road. All welcome.

## WAS Walks – save the dates

- Saturday 27th April. Henry Wakeford will lead a walk around Petworth Park.
- Saturday 21st September Simon Stevens will lead a walk around Lewes.



## Study Days

### **Drawing Day Schools**

- Session 2: 24th February 2024. Post-Excavation Plans and Sections. Half Day, Slindon Finds Processing Shed, Slindon.
  - This session will take the on-site plans and section drawings created in Session 1 to a stage where they can be included in the final site report. This will include inking-in and the production of notes.
- Session 3: 13th April 2024. Artefact Drawing. Full Day, Worthing Museum.
  - This session will cover the recording and illustration of pottery, metal, wood, glass, stone, flint, leather, textiles and bone. Illustration recording is drawing 'what you see', so you do not need to be an artistic person to enjoy this discipline. These illustrations will form part of the final site report.

*Cost for Members £20.00 and Non-Members £25.00 for both sessions*

**2nd March. 10am to 4pm Worthing Museum Cancelled**

### **Autumn Study Days Dates to be confirmed.**

- Simon Stevens will give us a Study Day on Post-Medieval Sussex.
- Luke Barber will cover Medieval and Post-Medieval Pottery.

Bursary – WAS has a Bursary which is set up to help Members attend events (WAS or others) which they might find difficult to pay for. Please ask a Committee Member about this if it would help you.

*Please contact Donna Wiltshire if you would like to join any or all of these sessions [donna.wiltshire@sky.com](mailto:donna.wiltshire@sky.com)*

### **WAS New Year Walk 6th January**

Connie led a most enjoyable walk past Harrow Hill and to Cissbury.  
Photo Alex Vincent



### **December Lecture**

John Mills on Old Atherington and the washed-away Coastal Villages of West Sussex.

### **January Lecture:**

David Millum on the Bridge Farm Project.

*A summary of both Lectures is at the end of the Newsletter.*





### Study Day on Medieval Towns of Sussex, given by Simon Stevens on Saturday January 13th.

Simon delivered this fascinating Study Day (from the back of the room) to a very full and interested audience.

He talked about how towns form, and what urban archaeology looks like – it is mainly hidden. He gave us graphic pictures of Archaeologists digging on one building site with a cement lorry waiting for them to finish, and on another with high piles of bricks surrounding them.

A town is difficult to define – apparently it has to have a KFC (a Woolworths in our day!) Having a market isn't enough to define a town, nor having a church, as many villages have churches.

The first town we looked at was Shoreham - 'New' Shoreham was a planned Medieval town. A storm in 1287 may have been the time when the South part of the town was lost, the surviving townscape is 'fossilised'

St Mary de Haura is a beautiful Medieval Church and a monument to Medieval success. The Marliplins is a Medieval survival in the later High Street.



Simon gave us a very full account of the excavations on the Ropetackle site in Shoreham, which started in 2000 and our President, John, was involved.

This site was full of hazards – very smelly and contaminated - chemicals, cess pits, a Victorian Gasworks was there..... But it was a rare opportunity to dig in the centre of a Medieval town. In Medieval times, it had been a prosperous place, later on it was almost a slum.

There was very good preservation on the site, e.g. good faunal remains.

They didn't find Medieval plots, but lots of treasures – stone (coming in as ballast), big chunks of pottery, quern – the Channel was a conduit, imported stuff was easier and cheaper to get rather than from the Weald down rivers.

Despite the nearness to a tidal river, they found wells with pure water – they had been dug deep enough to reach the underlying chalk.

One of the best finds, and evidence of real wealth, was an almost complete ceramic aquamanile, a water carrier, in Scarborough ware, reflecting trade by coast with Yorkshire.

(Read a report on this excavation in SAC No 147, from 2011.)

Crawley – early archaeology done in Crawley is recorded in Surrey Archaeological Collections, as it used to be part of Surrey.

Crawley was an early market town, its High Street was cigar-shaped, with a market in the middle. Simon described several excavations in and around High Street. Property boundaries were at right angles to the High Street, but not evenly spaced.

Crawley is there because of siderite, iron carbonate, which outcrops locally. There has been iron-working there since the Iron Age. Crawley grew up to service the industry, which was mostly carried on in back gardens – using the bloomery process, which doesn't need very much water.



After the 1987 storm, there was pottery seen poking out from under fallen trees, which contributed to Crawley being one of the most dug Medieval towns in Sussex.

Lewes was a burgh in Anglo-Saxon times. There is no evidence of Roman occupation, but there is possible Iron Age occupation. The town was built on a grid pattern, half of which was destroyed when the Norman castle was built on it. Also, after the Conquest, the burgh ditch was filled in and the town expanded.

There was a dig on a site in St Nicholas Lane. Medieval houses were fronting on to the site and, later, a print works built on top. Many buildings had cellars so archaeology had been lost. Ditches tended to be dry, as they had chalk below. A hoard of Anglo-Saxon coins was found, halfway down a cess pit. – 16 silver pennies – now in the Barbican.

In St Nicholas Lane there had been a Medieval Hospital and when the site was dug in 1994 over 100 individuals were excavated. There was very little pathology on the bodies because the diseases that killed them hadn't reached their bones. One skeleton had a manacle round his foot – we don't know why.

Simon also talked about the restoration project on the former Cluniac Priory. The railway was built through it in the 19th Century. It had been a very well-endowed Church. Now it is a very pleasant area with many information boards.

New Winchelsea was a planned Medieval town of the 1290s. (Old Winchelsea had been in decline for some time, and was destroyed by a storm in 1280)

New Winchelsea was a walled town, there was a castle and it had 3 Churches.

It went into decline as the sea and the river moved away, and there was a catastrophic French and Spanish raid in 1359.

3 of the town gates survive, but there is very little surviving wall. Very little archaeology has been done because there has been little development and it's a scheduled Ancient Monument. There are surviving cellars.

Spike Milligan's grave is there.

Rye Royal was walled but only one of its 4 gates survive. Some bits of wall survive, the town is much altered. There was a ditch over 3m deep outside the walls. All rubbish ended up in the town ditch, as shown by a dig at the walls. There was Prehistoric evidence, and a Post-Medieval pond.

Seaford – was a very important port, though nothing old is visible. The Medieval pattern has been swallowed up, so the story can't be told.

Rye, Winchelsea and Seaford are all very difficult because the only possible archaeology is 'keyhole.'

The best known urban excavation is East Gate, Chichester – not yet published.

In all this, what's missing is the people. There's an ethical question – should they be dug up? It can also be very expensive, especially if looking at DNA.

Simon cited York as an example of an historic place where there is a huge data-set published and very tough Planning control. Here we mostly have threat-led archaeology. Jorvik is a place which can enthuse people. Do we need a Sussex Jorvik?







### **Worthing Heritage Festival – June 8th – 23rd**

WAS will have a stall in the Museum on Saturday June 15th, from 10.30. to 3pm. Feel free to volunteer to help with this.

### **Sussex Archaeological Society – Sussex Archaeology: a 175-Year Heritage Saturday 17th February (9.45 – 17.00)**

Speakers include, Sue Hamilton, Richard Bradley, Martin Hayes, Miles Russell, Judie English, Matt Pope, James Sainsbury and more. This will be at the University in Falmer. £30 to include lunch and refreshments.

### **CBA Archaeology Day & AGM Saturday 10th February (10.00-15.00)**

A free event both 'in person' and bookable online. Details and booking from:

<https://www.archaeologyuk.org/get-involved/events-and-activities/event-calendar/cba-archaeology-day-agm.htm>

### **Sussex School of Archaeology and History (in association with the Roman Studies Group of Surrey Archaeological Society – Disposal of the dead in Iron Age and Roman South East England Venue: Kings Church, Lewes Saturday 23rd March (10.00-17.00)**

A 'live' event with an 'online' option. It will be reviewing the evidence for burial practices in the South East (and beyond) in this period and will also consider the fate of the 'missing millions'

Confirmed speakers include Professor Tim Champion, Professor Mike Fulford and Professor Tony King.

Details and booking from: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/781428502687>

### **Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society—Back in the Unitarian Church New Road, Brighton Friday 9th February**

James Sainsbury on Saxons & Highdown Hill. Non-members £4

### **Saturday 10th February – Dr Mike Allen – An Introduction to Environmental Archaeology – Venue Patcham Community Centre, time 10-00 am to 4-00pm**

(you will need a parking permit from the library, to be returned to the library at the end of the session) Bring your own refreshments, but there is hot water. The day school will be in rooms 4 and 5 upstairs.

Details from: [http://www.brightonarch.org.uk/6\\_1.htm](http://www.brightonarch.org.uk/6_1.htm)

### **University of Sussex Archaeological Society Wednesday 21st February 2024 (19.30)**

Early prehistoric occupation at Wogan Cavern. This online talk by Dr Rob Dinnis discusses recent excavations at Wogan Cavern, Pembroke which has revealed evidence for several early prehistoric occupations.

Fee: £3. Details and booking from: <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/781423868827> [www.usas.org.uk](http://www.usas.org.uk)

### **Sussex Archaeological Society – The Inaugural Long Man Lecture Wednesday 28th February (19.30)**

This is the first of a new annual fundraising lecture series and the inaugural speaker will be Oxford University and BBC historian Dr Janina Ramirez. Venue: Attenborough Centre for the Creative Arts, University of Sussex. Fee: £35 or £20 for students. Details

and booking from: <https://sussexpast.co.uk/event/the-inaugural-long-man-lecture-dr-janina-ramirez/>

### **Horsham and District Archaeology Group**

Day school led by Simon Stevens (Senior Archaeologist at Archaeology South-East, UCL) on archaeological techniques.

Saturday 24th February: Archaeological Techniques - Digging a Bit Deeper (How to record sites and at look at finds)

To be held from 10am to 4pm at Colgate Village Hall, (corner of Forest Rd/Blackhouse Rd), Colgate, W Sussex, RH12 4BB

Details from: [horshamarch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:horshamarch@hotmail.co.uk)

### **Brighton & Hove Archaeological Society – Life, Death and Times in the Bronze Age Friday 8th March 2024 (19.30)**

Prof. Parker Pearson (UCL) will talk about his excavations in the Western Isles of Scotland and how they have helped to transform our knowledge of the treatment of the dead and how people lived in roundhouses.

Venue: Unitarian Church, New Road, Brighton. Fee: £4 non-members

Details from: [http://www.brightonarch.org.uk/6\\_1.htm](http://www.brightonarch.org.uk/6_1.htm)

### **Events at Arundel Museum.** (Includes coffee, tea and biscuits.)

On 21 February join the High Sheriff for West Sussex, Andy Bliss, for a lively account of the history of the ancient role of High Sheriff in Sussex. From the Anglo-Saxon period to the present day, which draws on a wealth of fascinating archive material as well as picture and archaeological evidence to bring the account to life. £8 member / £10 non member.

To book your talk, get in touch with the Museum ([office@arundelmuseum.org](mailto:office@arundelmuseum.org) / 01903 885866) or pop in



## Other Societies / Groups



Based in Pulborough, the Society has a variety of walks and talks which might well be interesting. Email: [enquiries@southdownssociety.org.uk](mailto:enquiries@southdownssociety.org.uk)



**Chichester District Archaeology Society (CDAS)** have made their talks available free on their YouTube channel see: [www.CDAS.info](http://www.CDAS.info)



[www.lissarchaeology.uk](http://www.lissarchaeology.uk)  
Or email [lissarchaeology@gmail.com](mailto:lissarchaeology@gmail.com)



**Worthing Heritage Alliance** of which WAS is part of this group which has a very useful Calendar of all events in the area of an Historic nature. [www.worthingheritagealliance.org.uk](http://www.worthingheritagealliance.org.uk)



**Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society** has a variety of events see [landscape-events@hantsfieldclub.org.uk](mailto:landscape-events@hantsfieldclub.org.uk)



**Butser Ancient Farm** has launched ButserPlus: a way to enter the world of ButserAncient Farm online with professional video content. Details here: [www.butserancientfarm.co.uk/butser-plus](http://www.butserancientfarm.co.uk/butser-plus)



**Sussex Archaeological Society**  
<https://sussexpast.co.uk>



**Horsham and District Archaeology Group**  
[horshamarch@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:horshamarch@hotmail.co.uk) or 01903 872309



WEALDEN BUILDINGS  
STUDY GROUP

**Wealden Buildings Study Group**  
[www.wealdenbuildings.org.uk](http://www.wealdenbuildings.org.uk)



**Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society** <http://www.brightonarch.org.uk>

Back in the Unitarian Church New Road, Brighton- Start time 7-30 pm. The BHAS lectures will be **live** and not on Zoom.



# Worthing rchaeological Society

## UK GDPR: UK General Data Protection Regulation

Please can you refresh your memories by reviewing this document, which can be found on the Society's website under Documents / Policy / Privacy Notice.

If any of your contact details have changed since you completed your WAS Membership Application Form, please advise the Membership Secretary, Liz Lane.

Many thanks Donna



If you are already on Facebook and would like to join our closed WAS Facebook group, just ask to join on the Worthing Archaeological Society page

### Easy Fundraising

If you shop online, do consider using Easyfundraising to make donations to WAS. Retailers give part of every amount spent to WAS, if you nominate us as your charity  
<https://new.easyfundraising.org.uk>

### Photo Archive

WAS is developing an archive of photos, accessible via the website. Past digs are already well covered, but if you have photos you can share, please send them to Theresa and Richard on [theresa\\_in\\_brighton@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:theresa_in_brighton@yahoo.co.uk)  
If they are not recent ones, could give us names of people and sites included. There are some on our website which we haven't been able to identify – if you know when and where they were taken, please let us know.

### WAS Archive

Connie is currently Curator of our Archive. We have a good collection of Sussex Archaeological Collections, starting from

### And finally a reminder

Subs for 2024 were due on January 1st - £25 for ordinary members, £10 for full-time students. . Feel free to pay by standing order or BACs (details on request)

Please send to: Liz Lane, Membership Secretary. 5 Smugglers' Walk, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex. BN12 4DP. Membership forms can also be downloaded from the WAS website:  
[www.worthingarchaeological.org](http://www.worthingarchaeological.org)

**The Worthing Archaeological Society is a registered Charity (291431)**

Please note: our email address is: [worthingarchaeological@gmail.com](mailto:worthingarchaeological@gmail.com)

Items for next News sheet please to  
Liz, as above, or  
[liz.13lane@gmail.com](mailto:liz.13lane@gmail.com)





## Report on the WAS December Lecture: 'Old Atherington and the Washed-Away Coastal Villages of West Sussex' by John Mills

The December WAS lecture was given by our President, John Mills on “Old Atherington and the Washed-Away Coastal Villages of West Sussex”. His professional engagement of 30 years with the West Sussex' County Archaeology team give him particular knowledge of this aspect of the county's history.

Many members will be familiar with the remnants of Old Atherington (particularly the wells), that are being progressively eroded on Climping beach. It was perhaps surprising to discover that this fate befell many of Sussex' coastal villages. John covered the demise of: Atherington, Charlton, Church Norton, East Thorney, Kingston, Meldmerry, Middleton, Old Bracklesham, Pende, Rumbridge, Wardour and Wythering.

There have been changes in sea level over millennia, with a number of notable period of warming in Britain. John listed these together with the date of their tidal maxima:

- Later Bronze Age Transgression: 1500 BC onwards. Tidal maximum c. 1000 BC?
- Romano-British Transgression: 300-600 AD. Tidal maximum c. 400 AD
- Mid-Saxon Warm Period: 700-800 AD. Tidal maximum c. 800 AD
- Medieval Warm Period: 1200-1450 AD. Tidal maximum 1433 AD

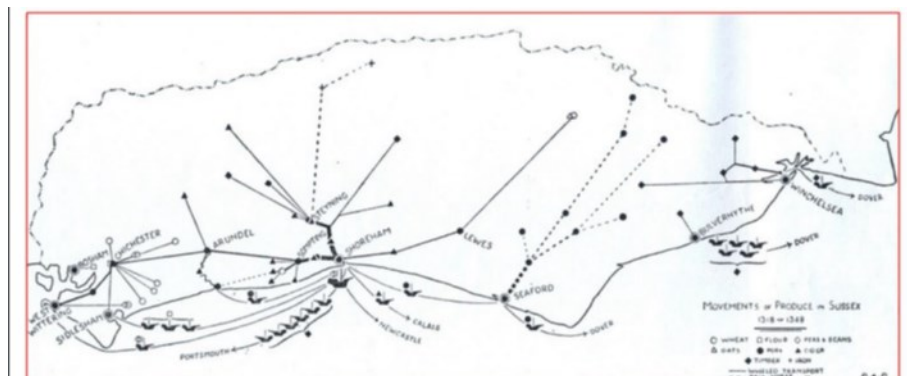
These would have been the periods when significant inundation and loss of land to the sea would have occurred. John described the location of each of the lost habitations listed using historical maps, notably Yeakell & Gardner's 18<sup>th</sup> century map of southern Sussex. An interesting example was Pagham Harbour and the lost settlements of Wardour and Wythering. In the middle-ages, these were owned by, respectively the Archbishopric of Canterbury and the local Bishopric. There was some rivalry, indicated by a recorded event when a ship loaded with wool docking in Wardour was seized by the the Archbishopric. The sailors escaped with their ship. Eventually it returned, this time to Wythering where it got a much better reception.



The extent of medieval trade from the Sussex ports was surprising. This was illustrated by the schematic below. Shoreham was the major port, trading along the coast with other British ports (surprisingly including Newcastle) and also France .

*Source: Old Sussex Mapped – Portsmouth University Dept. of Geography*

*Source: R A Pelham – Movements of Produce in Sussex, 1318-1348*





In the image below, a historical map of Atherington in 1606 has been overlayed with a contemporary aerial photograph marked with the location of the wells found on the beach. The top two thirds of the map are now in the sea.



*Atherington in 1606, still extant wells marked*

Another interesting map that John displayed, of Kingston Gorse, projected extant street lines into the sea to suggest the location of the drowned chapel .

There was discussion of the remains of wells on Climping beach and the function the extant timber frames would have provided. They appear to have been placed at the bottom of the wells and the ground has eroded down to that point.

They may have served to keep the bottom of the well clear from pollution by surrounding material, but this is speculative.

This was just a sample of the wealth of material that John provided.

Report by Richard Griffiths

## January Lecture David Millum Lecture on Bridge Farm 2018 – 2024

David is Research Director of Culver Archaeological Project.

Bridge Farm is a Romano-British settlement about 3 km North of Lewes on a wide bend in the River Ouse, and was probably adjacent to a ford. This is hard to prove as the Ouse was canalised in the 18<sup>th</sup> Century, and flood defences were established in the 1970s.

Initially they went across the Ouse from Culver to find Margary's Roman Road, and found the Bridge Farm enclosure. Extensive Geo-physics was done, and magnetometry, mainly by David Staveley.

The earliest part of the site is from the end half of the 1<sup>st</sup> Century – dated by pottery. The large enclosure dates from about 200AD.

Since 2018 work has concentrated on the middle of the large enclosure, and from 2021, on the more Northern part.

A big D-shaped anomaly shows up in the middle of the settlement – they expected to find buildings, but none so far.

Due to ploughing, the East – West Roman road lies about 8" below the current surface, and is too shallow to survive. They have found a hard-packed base in one corner. In 2021 they went deeper and found evidence of a camber and flint remains.

Between 2018 and 2023 in the top NE corner, they were finding 20mm cubes cut out of tile, amphora and stone. 5600 of them, which would cover an area of about 2m<sup>2</sup>. Tesserae? Is this a storage dump or an area of manufacture? (There is a tessellated floor in the Aisled building at Barcombe Villa.)

They also found 693 fineware sherds, the majority of white fineware beakers – from the Meon Valley? (Here David mentioned just how much Malcolm Line is missed)

Are these rusticated beakers? There were more fineware sherds than coarseware, which was totally unexpected.

There was a feature nearby with burnt clay and daub, surrounded by chalk – unusual for this site - ?lime-burning.

There are many pits, one with many layers of very red burnt earth and charcoal.

One had a deposit of cattle mandibles, very degraded.

The water table and river gravels are about 1m down in dry weather.

In 2023 the Site Manager went into one pit with a water pump and got down to a timber frame, probably square. There are plans to get down to the complete frame in 2024.







They are 100% sampling and floting everything coming out.

There is a 'perplexing plethora of finds.'

There is no evidence for rubbish pits/cess pits.

There are lots of postholes, but very few line up. Some are hefty posts in 1m postholes. There is a large amount of chunks of chalk as post-packing – up to 2023, posts were always packed with flint.

Everything was recorded in 5m grids, with section drawings, etc.

There were so many Finds they have had to rent a unit. Up to 5000 sherds of pottery, from the current site (112,000 from the complete site). Still to be seen by a Specialist. They have cooking pots, beakers – including one with a hunting scene design - mortaria, flask rims...

Was this a service station – eat, drink, change horses for boats?

There is a lot of Samian, much of it decorated so origin and date can be found. Almost all is from the 2<sup>nd</sup> Century, from Central Gaul.

They also have jewellery, rings, bronze and bone and jet pins. 26 fibula brooches some from the 1st/2nd Centuries. An intaglio with possible military connections. Any explanation for this site has to allow for possible military connections.

There have been about 600 coins, so far more from the mid and late 2nd Century – Antonine.

The dig featured on 'Digging for Britain' in 2019.

A Roman road from London goes through Bridge Farm and crosses the Greensand Way. The river was tidal in Roman times, and navigable. Maybe the reason for the settlement was ironworking?

In the 3rd and 4th Centuries there was a breakdown in officialdom, and ironworking declined as agriculture took over. Historically this is agricultural land.

For more information: [www.culverproject.co.uk](http://www.culverproject.co.uk)

Liz Lane

# Worthing Archaeological Society

Registered Charity No. 291431

## Notice of Annual General Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Society will be held at 7pm on  
Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> March 2024 in Worthing Library Lecture Theatre, Richmond Road, Worthing,  
BN11 1HD

### Agenda

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Minutes of the last AGM
3. Chairman's Annual Report
4. Treasurer's Report
5. Election of the Independent Examiner
6. Field Unit Report
7. GDPR
8. Election of Officers and Committee listed below
9. Any other business

### **The Officers and Committee members are standing for re-election.**

|               |                |
|---------------|----------------|
| President     | John Mills     |
| Chairman      | Keith Bolton   |
| Hon Secretary | Elizabeth Lane |

### **Committee members:**

Roy Plummer (Life Vice President), Connie Shirley (Life Vice President and Excavations), Gill Turner (Life Vice-President and Finds Officer), Cheryl Hutchins (Life Vice President and Journal Editor), Liz Lane (Hon Secretary & Membership Secretary), Theresa Griffiths (Lecture Organiser & Website Lead), Alan Beazley (Charity Commission), Patricia Leming, Amie Friend (Schools Liaison), Vicky Lillywhite (Assistant Field Unit lead) and Jennie Williamson (Assistant Finds Officer), Donna Wiltshire (Study Days)

Sarah Brewer is nominated to be on the Committee.

Nigel Rumble retires from the Committee this evening.

Alan Beazley to be elected to take over Treasurer from Patricia Leming.

A full set of finance accounts and the minutes from last year's AGM will be submitted as a PDF to the membership. If you would like a printed copy, please let Mrs Lane know by email - [liz.13lane@gmail.com](mailto:liz.13lane@gmail.com)