

ABSTRACTS SELECTED

ENGAGING STAKEHOLDERS?

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Helping hands: The role and value of heritage professionals as Police Support Volunteers in the UK.

Most British police forces now make use of civilian volunteers, known as Police Support Volunteers (PSV's), who undertake a wide range of tasks. The presenters of this paper are PSV's with Kent Police with a specific remit for heritage. As professional archaeologists working for Canterbury Archaeological Trust, they apply their expertise in helping the police in the prevention and investigation of all forms of heritage-related crime and anti-social behaviour.

In this paper they will explore, through the use of case studies, the value that such specialist volunteers can add to the fight against heritage crime, from initial investigation of crime scenes, searches of suspects' properties and interviews of suspects, through to the provision of impact statements for consideration during sentencing of convicted offenders. At all these stages, their training and experience as archaeologists means that they provide skills and knowledge that very few police officers can be expected to possess. At the same time they have learnt much about the investigation and prosecution of crimes and about criminal behaviour, meaning they can now have a role in sharing this experience with others in the heritage sector and beyond. It will be argued that action to tackle criminal and anti-social behaviour that affects heritage will always benefit from the establishment of long-term working relationships between the heritage and law enforcement sectors. It will also be contended that such an approach provides mutual benefit to both and is potentially applicable anywhere, at least where stable heritage and law enforcement sectors co-exist.

Andrew RICHARDSON, Canterbury Archaeological Trust

Andrew joined Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 2008 following six and a half years as Finds Liaison Officer for Kent. It was during his time as FLO, and at the urging of responsible members of the Kentish metal detecting community, that he became involved in a partnership with Kent Police to develop responses to heritage-related crime. An initial focus on illicit metal detecting soon broadened, under the leadership of Chief Inspector Mark Harrison, into a much wider definition of 'heritage crime'. As an accredited Police Support Volunteer, Andrew has been involved in all aspects of the fight against heritage crime, from assisting with training, investigation and enforcement.

Andrew studied Archaeology at Cardiff, completing his doctoral thesis on the Anglo-Saxon cemeteries of Kent in 2000. His primary research interest remains the archaeology and history of the Kingdom of Kent. His other research interests include, in addition to heritage-related crime and anti-social behaviour, aspects of prehistoric and Roman Kent, North Sea and cross-Channel cultural relations, metal small finds, community archaeology and, latterly, the archaeology of Kent's 20th century defences.

Michele JOHNSON, Canterbury Archaeological Trust

After gaining a First in Archaeology at Reading, Michele moved to Bradford to undertake a Masters in Forensic Archaeology. She joined Canterbury Archaeological Trust in 2007, initially as a Field Archaeologist, and since 2008 as a member of the Trust's Finds Department. Her background in forensics and interest in police work led her to become Kent Police's second Police Support Volunteer with a specific heritage remit. Since then she has assisted with training (including providing training in forensic responses to heritage-related crime scenes), taken part in the execution of several search warrants, and assisted with the interview of suspects.