

**Institution:** University of Southampton

**Unit of Assessment:** 17A Archaeology

**a. Context**

The research impacts of Archaeology at Southampton (UoA 17A) demonstrate an international reach across Europe, Asia, Africa and the Americas. In the public sphere, our main user-groups include governmental heritage and planning bodies (primary examples: Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali (Italy), Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici di Roma (Italy), Directorate of Sharjah (UAE), Abu Dhabi Tourism and Culture Authority (UAE), Consejería de Cultura y Deporte of the Junta de Andalucía (Spain), English Heritage, Historic Scotland, Department of Culture, Media and Sport, Serious Organised Crime Agency), non-governmental heritage organisations and charitable trusts, museums and art galleries (primary examples: UNESCO, Louvre, British Museum, National Maritime Museum, British Library, National Trust, British Academy, Crafts Council). In the private sector, our primary user groups include industry, commercial developers and archaeological consultancy firms (primary examples: Channel Tunnel Rail Link (CTRL), London Array Ltd, EDF, Rambol, METOC, Highways Agency, EMU Ltd). National and international heritage tourists as well as heritage managers and planning bodies are the ultimate beneficiaries of our work. Specifically, community groups are a key user-group because it is here that we provide significant impacts on perceptions of heritage (primary examples: residents of Wessex, East Anglia, Southern Scotland, southern Italy, southern Spain, Crete, Egypt and the UAE). Since these are key beneficiaries that are primarily in the public sphere, industry and the economic sector, we have been well-placed to bring about significant impact that is measurable in terms of policies, opportunities, perspectives and practices.

The research of our UoA delivers three principal types of impact:

1. *Cultural and social:* impacts range from the reaffirmation and creation of local and national identities to the benefits of object-centred knowledge for global citizenship. Beneficiaries here include all those stakeholders with an interest in the landscapes and material residues of the past. These stakeholders vary in scale - from the individual to the nation and the village to the metropolitan centre - and are crosscut by communities of ethnicity, age, gender, faith and education. Key examples include the local communities who have benefitted from our projects in Avebury, Kilmartin and Crete. These projects have changed community perceptions of historic identities by involving various 'publics' in their investigations. Specifically, by undertaking local training through fieldwork project participation, our work has changed practice in the discipline through non-professional capacity building within archaeology. The work of our Centre for Applied Humans Origins Research on the Ebbsfleet Elephant site in Kent has likewise enriched local appreciation of the early past through primary school engagement, exemplified through the adoption of an elephant as the prize-winning symbol of the local school in its Olympic torch as judged by LOCOG 2012.
2. *Policy:* Research conducted by the UoA has influenced policy and practice in heritage protection, management and planning at both the international and national level. Impacts derive from plans for the protection and conservation of sites, carried out in association with relevant government departments and local authorities and which have informed curatorial frameworks of research priority and policy development. Impacts can be identified in both governmental strategic plans and major infrastructure projects such as the location of new towns, river crossings and high-speed rail links. The beneficiaries of these changed policies and practices have been; (a) policy makers tasked by international bodies (UNESCO) and various government departments with protecting and enhancing heritage assets to increase the benefits from economic impact, and (b) archaeological practitioners working within NGOs and third stream funded bodies who implement those policies and so deliver on the first impact. Key examples include our consultancy and funded research for English Heritage, which have had a major impact on site management policy and procedures for site assessment (e.g. Avebury World Heritage Site Research Agenda), and strategies for heritage presentation (e.g. the English Heritage funded Visualisation in Archaeology Project). Consultancy for industry has also informed government planning regulations (e.g. Aggregates Levy Sustainability Fund), as has contract work for developer-funded archaeology (e.g. Wessex Archaeology, Oxford Archaeology Unit). The UoA also has had an impact upon heritage

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policy, by staff serving on, and influencing the policies of key national heritage advisory boards; e.g. British Museum, English Heritage (National Heritage Protection Plan; Research Advisory Panel), Advisory Committee on Historic Shipwrecks, Department of Culture Media and Sport and Archaeology Data Service.

3. *Economic impacts:* Members of national and local urban and rural communities have been enriched through the opportunities and economic benefits generated by our research. We run consultancies that build upon our research projects and research results, and through these we have delivered economic benefit through our involvement in environmental impact assessment and mitigation work on some of Europe's largest current infrastructure projects (e.g. Britned cable, GLO1 telecommunications cable to Nigeria, London Array, nuclear plant redevelopment). The broader public has also benefitted from the economic opportunities that have arisen from our enhancement of the understanding of major heritage attractions such as Avebury.

**b. Approach to impact**

Research-led impact is deeply embedded in our research culture and we have a clear process for bringing it to fruition. Work carried out pre-2008 ensured successful implementation of this strategy because it defined interaction with a wide range of user groups and communities as fundamental to the research process. Specifically, we redefined the nature of the outreach relationship in archaeology by publishing models for public engagement (e.g. Moser et al *World Archaeology* 2002 [returned RAE2008]). Since the 1990s we have been concerned with moving beyond uni-linear models of 'outreach', where academics are seen to be 'giving' or dispensing knowledge to source communities, in order to achieve a two-way knowledge exchange between researchers and audiences. Our approach to impact centres on the premise that community involvement in archaeology is not an obligatory 'add on', but functions as an integral part of framing research questions and interpreting data. Accordingly, substantive efforts are made to ensure that community participation is embedded in research designs enabling maximum possible impacts on source communities (e.g. the MAST project: discussed below). Since RAE2008 our approach to impact has evolved to exploit economic and policy-based impact and the community building potential of social media (evidenced by the eMob project which links indigenous stakeholders to museums).

Our staff have built relationships with user-groups by investing in establishing long-term partnerships with the leading external organisations and communities to whom our research relates. For example, we have maintained important relationships with influential heritage bodies and institutions responsible for presenting archaeological knowledge to the public, primarily English Heritage and the British Museum. Our staff have also strengthened relationships with our primary user-groups by exploiting new research-driven consulting initiatives that have delivered changes in policy, economic benefit and broader opportunities. Key UK-based examples are our Archaeology/NOC consultancies and the Archaeological Prospection Services at Southampton (APSS), both of which actively seek to contribute to the development of government cultural heritage policies and collaborate with regional government and local community representatives (e.g. Avebury Area Heritage Research Group).

The significant relationships that we enjoy with influential user-groups is attested by our partnerships with major international and national heritage bodies. The key collaborations we have fostered are with the Ministero per i Beni e le Attività Culturali, Italy (Portus Project), the Soprintendenza per i Beni Archeologici di Roma, Italy (Portus Project), English Heritage and the National Trust (Avebury, Stonehenge and Visualisation in Archaeology Projects), and Historic Scotland (Kilmartin). Close links with museums and heritage organisations have been strengthened by collaborative doctoral awards (e.g. British Museum) and membership on important advisory committees (e.g. English Heritage, British Museum; Institut Català d'Arqueologia Clàssica). Our relationships with national and international industry have been enhanced by our establishment of dedicated enterprise units, such as the APSS, and our work on major consultancies.

Our UoA has strengthened the impact of our research by applying for collaborative grants with primary heritage user-groups. In-house expertise and resources have enabled staff to invest in new media for enhancing impact and more recently the UoA has been at the heart of developing

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new media sites focused on engaging broader communities (e.g. Archaeological Computing Research blog <http://acrg.soton.ac.uk/>). The CAA2012 conference in Southampton attracted unprecedented social media activity (c13000 tweets and several thousand video views; 2032 views on Vimeo), reaching more than 60 countries. It is now forming the basis of a multi-institution project, working with digital ethics researchers at Oxford University.

We have also made extensive use of University resources to help us maximize the impact of our research. Staff have worked closely with Research and Innovation Services to identify new opportunities as part of a Pathway to Impact Award in Management. Other examples include the EPSRC Pathway to Impact Project, our application for EPSRC Bridging the Gap funding from the University and our application for Digital Equipment and Database Enhancement for Impact funding from the AHRC. Staff have also maximised the potential of University collaborations, including the National Oceanography Centre, the mu-Vis CT facility, the Iridis3 Supercomputer and the Web Science DTC. We follow the University policy on consultancy which is “committed to support external engagements that facilitate knowledge and technology transfer contributing to economic and social impact.” We also work closely with the University Press Office, regularly submitting material for press releases (25 press releases from 2008-13) and providing expert comment to media outlets (major examples: BBC *Oceans*, BBC and Discovery film featuring Portus).

**c. Strategy and plans**

Our impact strategy incorporates research, teaching and enterprise components, all of which draw on our long-standing international reputation for studying the social/political impacts of disciplinary practice. First, our Research Committee ensures that proposed research projects specify potential impacts and benefits at the cultural, policy and economic levels. Second, we embed the issue of impact into our student training programme. This began in the 1980s when Southampton played a leading role in demonstrating connections between archaeological research and society, particularly ‘source’ or indigenous communities, and has broadened out across all of our research activities subsequently. Public engagement has thus featured as a key topic in our curriculum since 1985 (e.g. the compulsory 2<sup>nd</sup> year course ‘Archaeology and Society’ initiated in 1985), and continues to do so. Third, we have invested in research led-enterprises that focus upon impact. A key example is our Maritime Archaeology Stewardship Trust (MAST) initiative, which centres on devising a business model for research-driven educational initiatives and capacity building, particularly in the Arab world. Also central to our research-led impact strategy is our investment in digital humanities enterprise (e.g. IP licencing, liaison with facilities such as mu-Vis and KTP with bodies such as Microsoft Research). Our dedicated enterprise staff also contribute to this agenda, undertaking research-led contracts that have significant impacts on policy.

**d. Relationship to case studies**

Our three case studies exemplify the broad-based approach to impact supported by our UoA and have helped shape our strategy to maximise the significance and reach of the impact of our research. The Maritime ICS outlines how our research programmes provide the basis for a series of linked educational and capacity-building initiatives, which inform government policies for heritage protection and management in the UK and overseas. The Portus ICS indicates how this major international research initiative led by the University of Southampton focused in its initial phases upon identifying potential impact user-groups in Italy, the UK and elsewhere in Europe. These groups, including Italian government heritage management bodies, media and computer software companies and the general public, have been influenced by and benefitted financially from the findings and practices of the Portus Project. Our success here can be measured in terms of new collaborative initiatives, sources of funding and related research initiatives, as well as KTP with heritage organisations and industry, growing public interest and in-depth media coverage. Similarly, our third ICS at the world heritage site of Avebury, is recognised as a state-of-the-art project that demonstrates the substantial public interest that can be generated from archaeological research, as well as the ways in which it can help change high level policies through membership of advisory groups and contributions to the World Heritage Site Strategic Plan, and bring economic benefits to the Avebury region.