

<b>Institution:</b> University of Leicester
<b>Unit of Assessment:</b> 17: Geography, Environmental Studies and Archaeology
<b>Title of case study:</b>  The King in the Car park: The remains of the last Plantagenet king of England generate global interest, leading to diverse impacts at local, regional and national scale.
<b>1. Summary of the impact</b> (indicative maximum 100 words)  In September 2012, the announcement that human remains discovered under a Leicester car park could be those of King Richard III (d. 1485) generated worldwide interest which grew to a frenzy when identification was confirmed in February 2013. This case-study illustrates the role played by the UoA in realising and maximising the impacts that arose from this remarkable discovery, namely: <b>1.</b> direct economic benefits; <b>2.</b> boosting local identities and sense of place; <b>3.</b> changes in local and regional heritage and tourism; <b>4.</b> stimulating public debate about the past, the ethics of dealing with a dead king, and the value of archaeology to contemporary society; <b>5.</b> impact on schools and curricula; <b>6.</b> impact on the perception of Richard III (e.g. in the theatrical profession and amongst disability campaigners); <b>7.</b> stimulating partnerships across political and geographical boundaries.
<b>2. Underpinning research</b> (indicative maximum 500 words)  Richard III (who reigned between 1483-85) is perhaps England's most familiar medieval king. Portrayed by Shakespeare and others as an infamous villain, yet also championed by many, since his death he has remained a highly controversial figure within the realms of both history and drama. Richard was killed at the Battle of Bosworth on August 22 <sup>nd</sup> 1485, an event that effectively ended the Wars of the Roses. The victorious Henry VII brought Richard's corpse to Leicester for public display and on the 25 <sup>th</sup> of August the body was laid to rest with a minimum of ceremony in the medieval church of the convent of the Friars Minor (Greyfriars). Ten years later Henry VII had an alabaster tomb erected over the grave. The friary was dissolved in 1538 and probably largely demolished; the location of Richard's last resting place was lost in the process, though a legend developed that his bones had been recovered and thrown into the River Soar during the demolition. If Richard's grave had effectively disappeared, he lived on vividly in the public imagination, in large part thanks to the work of Shakespeare (c.1592). However, the extent to which Shakespeare's famous play mirrored reality as opposed to Tudor propaganda has remained a subject of intense and sustained debate.  The stimulus for the research came from the Richard III Society, an amateur group who were interested in determining the true fate of Richard's remains. In January 2011 the secretary of the Scottish branch of the Society contacted the UoA with the idea of searching for the burial place of Richard III on the Greyfriars site in Leicester. They commissioned an archaeological desk-based assessment (2011) from University of Leicester Archaeological Services (ULAS) to review the evidence for Greyfriars from documentary sources, the city Historic Environment Record and historic maps.  This revealed that most of the precinct of the Franciscan friary was built over, leaving just three areas potentially accessible for investigation: two operational car parks and a former school playground. Permission was granted by Leicester City Council, which owned one of the car parks, for exploratory works in that area. A Ground Penetrating Radar survey was undertaken in August 2011 which revealed some anomalies and service trenches, but no clear wall lines. As a result the decision was taken to locate two overlapping north-south 30m trenches through the car park on the basis that they might pick up the east-west walls of the church and other friary buildings. Three weeks of excavation of the trenches took place during Aug-Sept 2012, led by Richard Buckley (ULAS), which aimed to discover the lost layout and buildings of the Greyfriars precinct founded by about 1230, and if possible the grave of Richard III. UoA academic staff Appleby (Lecturer in Archaeology, 2012-present, specialising in osteoarchaeology), O'Sullivan (Lecturer in Archaeology, 1986-present, specialising in medieval friaries) and King (a specialist in DNA with a joint

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appointment between Archaeology and Genetics, 2012-present) all took part in the research at the excavation stage. In-depth post-excavation analysis included the archaeology of the site and the finds, the skeleton, genealogical investigations, genetic research and the historical texts. Working closely with Buckley, Morris and other staff in ULAS, Appleby and King played major roles. Other staff in the School (Thomas, Whitbread, Foxhall), in other University departments (Engineering, History, English, Forensic Pathology, Physics, History of Art), and external partners (Royal Armouries, British Geological Survey, and the universities of York, Glasgow, Oxford, Toulouse, Dundee, Cambridge, Loughborough) were also involved.

The excavation revealed the east end of the friary church, the chapter house and part of a cloister walkway, permitting a basic understanding of the friary plan. Crucially, at the east end of the church, the choir (with footings for choir stalls) and the presbytery could be distinguished by a difference in levels (a step up to the presbytery from the choir) and flooring. The excavated burial was located in the choir, where the 1486 text of John Rous indicated the grave of Richard III had been placed, in the SW area. The grave appeared to have been hastily dug and was too small at the bottom to fit the corpse properly. The skeleton was initially identified in the field as that of a man, aged mid-twenties to mid-thirties, with two serious head wounds consistent with injuries in battle and likely to have been fatal. Further peri-mortem injuries were later identified including some which could be characterised as ‘humiliation’ injuries. He suffered from severe idiopathic adolescent-onset scoliosis, a medical condition resulting in a severely curved spinal column. The remains yielded a modelled radiocarbon date of 1455-1540 (95%). The mitochondrial DNA (mtDNA) of the skeleton, which is maternally inherited, is a rare type in European populations and matched the mtDNA of two independent and genealogically verified modern matrilineal descendants of Richard III’s sister, Anne of York.

### 3. References to the research (indicative maximum of six references)

#### Publications:

1. Buckley, R., Morris, M., Appleby, J, King, T., O’Sullivan, D., and Foxhall, L. (2013) ‘The king in the car park’: New light on the death and burial of Richard III in the Grey Friars church, Leicester in 1485. *Antiquity* 87 (336): 519-538.
2. Mitchell, P.D., Yeh, H., Appleby, J. and Buckley, R. 2013. The intestinal parasites of King Richard III. *The Lancet* ([http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(13\)61757-2](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(13)61757-2)).

### 4. Details of the impact (indicative maximum 750 words)

#### REACH:

The period of British history which saw the end of the Plantagenets and the rise of the Tudors, especially the figure of Richard III himself, is fascinating and meaningful to a great many people both in the UK and throughout the world. Our research was covered globally in newspapers and magazines as well as on radio, TV and online (285 stories on the BBC website alone) in at least 10,000 reports and interviews. As a result of this media coverage the core project team alone have been contacted by over 5,000 individuals and groups from across the globe for further information, permission to use images, or to ask questions, specifically because the research changed or informed their views about the historical and archaeological past. The project was voted the 2013 ‘Research Project of the Year’ by *Current Archaeology* magazine, which aims at a popular readership. The Channel 4 (C4) TV programmes broadcast 4<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013 reached 5.4 million viewers and were the highest rating specialist factual documentaries ever shown on C4. These have now also been shown in Canada, the US and Australia (**E1 – E numbers relate to evidence listed in section 5**). Many of these viewers contacted us directly, and many as a result of our research, have explored the project website (625,000 hits by 31<sup>st</sup> July 2013) and even visited Leicester. Analysis of social media revealed that many millions of Twitter users engaged with the project; peaks of impressions were on 12 Sept 2012 (initial announcement: 39 million), 4 Feb 2013 (confirmation of discovery: 472 million) and 24 May 2013 (release of *Antiquity* publication: 4.8 million). Facebook engagement via the University of Leicester page on 4 Feb elicited 2,598 responses from as far afield as Australia and South America as well as a strong local response (**E2**). The Bosworth Battlefield Heritage Centre (BBHC) has hosted at least 16 ‘Richard-

related' media events since the discovery.

**SIGNIFICANCE:**

Our research has: **1.** enhanced cultural understanding; **2.** informed public attitudes and values; **3.** shaped teaching curricula; **4.** guided heritage policy; **5.** stimulated museum development and tourism packages; **6.** brought considerable socio-economic benefits to the region. In addition, the find has opened public debate and is actively changing attitudes and practice more widely. For example, the issue of re-interment, particularly the place of reburial, has been widely discussed, including in Parliament, and this has also generated wider awareness of both the ethical and the scientific considerations of dealing with human remains in archaeological contexts. Another example is Shakespeare's *Richard III*, in film or on stage, which will never be viewed in quite the same way again, now that we have identified the circumstances of his death and burial. Stephen Fry mentioned our research in this regard in the 2013 BAFTA awards ceremony, and actors have publicly stated that it will change the way they approach the play and the part of Richard III. Further, *Richard III* has now brought scoliosis into the headlines and has served as a positive example of the achievements of sufferers from this condition (**E3**).

For the people of Leicester and Leicestershire, the find has become a symbol of local pride and identity for virtually all sectors of this diverse, multicultural area. Open days on the site both before and after the initial announcement in September 2012 attracted over 5,000 visitors. The team have given >300 talks to local groups, excluding schools, including two events at a local cinema showing Laurence Olivier's depiction of Richard III which sold out on both occasions. The emails and comments online in response to press coverage, the views of callers to radio talk shows and the thousands of conversations with members of the public at open days and talks demonstrate clearly that the research is enormously meaningful to people who live in Leicester and Leicestershire because it feeds into their sense of place. It is part of their connection to the city and the region, enhances their identity as Leicester residents, and makes people feel they belong to Leicester and its past, whatever their background or socio-economic status (**E2 & E4**). It has infiltrated many different aspects of life in Leicester and Leicestershire. There has been a Richard III Beer Festival (20/3/2013) and Richard III has become part of Leicester City football chants, appearing on the 'King Power' football shirts of fans.

Schools and teachers (primary and secondary) both locally and nationwide have been particularly enthusiastic about incorporating our findings into their curriculum. The research has a direct impact on history teaching, but also on science and English literature. In response to the many requests for outreach talks there have been 5 special events on campus for schools (attracting 450 primary schoolchildren), on-line discussion and Q&A sessions with schools, where pupils can ask questions directly, as well as 3 workshops in schools. The AQA Examination Board have contacted the University about using this research as a case study for A-Level Archaeology since it shows how archaeology and history link up, as well as demonstrating many scientific aspects of archaeology (**E5**) – this is a direct impact on the school curriculum. Looking to Higher Education, as a result of the findings the University of Sydney is now teaching a Richard III course.

City and county heritage policy and plans have been affected dramatically by our research, the research results playing a significant role in Leicester's successful bid to be short-listed for designation as UK City of Culture 2017 (**E7**). The small temporary museum exhibition in Leicester's Guildhall attracted over 45,000 visitors in its first 8 weeks which can be compared to the typical *annual* visitor numbers of 35,000. The city has invested £4 million on an historic building adjacent to the Greyfriars site to develop as a visitors' centre focused upon Richard III to open in 2014, and the visitor centre will serve as a core element in the city's heritage strategy which seeks to promote social and economic regeneration within the city (**E6**). The Cathedral, where the bones are expected to be reburied, is also developing a strategy for dealing with the large numbers of visitors expected after re-interment – it has already noted a significant increase in visitor numbers coming to look at the memorial stone alone (**E4**).

The find has also increased visitor numbers to the BBHC. February 2013 saw a 138% increase on visitor numbers compared to 2012, and the 2 months following the public announcement on 4<sup>th</sup> Feb 2013 saw an overall increase of 85%. The interpretation at the visitor centre has also been updated to take account of the discovery of Richard III's body. BBHC also produced a new temporary exhibition, *Richard III: The Making of the Myth* which was scheduled to open at the

same time as the announcement, and held a special rose-laying ceremony with the Diocese and Richard III Society in March. New art work by artist Graham Turner was revealed at BBHC in June, featuring a depiction of the battle based on the wounds of Richard III following the excavation. Further, the Ricardian Boar badge discovered at the Battlefield site in 2009 forms a key part of a new exhibition at another the county's flagship Snibston Discovery Museum – *Treasure! Shedding the Light on Leicestershire's Past* (23/3/2013-3/11/2013) (E6).

Direct **economic impact** on the city of Leicester and the immediate vicinity has been an outcome of our research. The number of visitors to Leicester has risen dramatically – visitor numbers to the Guildhall increasing from 6,651 in Jan-Mar 2012 to 46,266 in 2013 (and from 9,819 to 50,269 in the comparable Apr-Jun period (E2)) and tourism is expected to rise significantly (e.g. E8 & E9). For example, the Guardian newspaper has continuously advertised a 3-day Richard III tour of the Leicester area. Leicester Shire Promotions are currently working with city and county museums to develop a new Richard III audio tour to venues across the county, another focusing on Medieval Leicestershire and walking tours joining up BBHC and Blue Badge Guides in the city. During the site's open days in August and September 2012, all Leicester accommodation was fully booked bringing significant economic impact with hotel bookings in Leicester rising by 20.5% with room-rates up 16.9% (E10). In addition, the production of general books on Richard III is on the increase as to date the UoA has had 50 requests for permission to use images in popular, commercial books (beyond newspapers and magazines or popular publications of our own). A wide range of other merchandise, from T-shirts and greetings cards to hobby miniatures featuring Richard III bursting out from the car park, have also been produced. Meanwhile, sales of the Ricardian Boar Badge and other stock at BBHC have increased significantly, with take-up of this emblem at other venues including in the city.

At present, of course we have only the relatively short-term impacts of the find, but the impacts on both public attitudes and values as well as on the economy of the city and the region seem likely to be much longer lasting.

**5. Sources to corroborate the impact** (indicative maximum of 10 references)

- E1. Letters from Channel 4 & Darlow Smithson Productions.
- E2. Tourism statistics from Leicester Shire Promotions; Social Media survey commissioned by the University of Leicester in June 2013 & Guildhall visitor data.
- E3. <http://www.artinfo.com/news/story/866116/identifying-with-richard-iii-a-qa-with-actor-ron-cephas-jones>; <http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2013/feb/05/richard-scoliosis-me-twisted-spines>; <http://www.sauk.org.uk/news/123/64/A-royal-condition.html>
- E4. Letter from the Dean of Leicester Cathedral.
- E5. Email from the AQA Examination Board.
- E6. Copies of supportive documentation to corroborate impact from Leicester City Museums & Leicestershire County Council.
- E7. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-leicestershire-21701487> & <http://www.leicestercityofculture2017.co.uk/cityofculture.aspx>
- E8. [http://fd2d.com/articles/2013/03/debating\\_the\\_impact\\_of\\_richard\\_iii\\_discovery\\_on\\_tourism\\_in\\_leicester\\_and\\_leicestershire\\_at\\_house\\_of\\_commons](http://fd2d.com/articles/2013/03/debating_the_impact_of_richard_iii_discovery_on_tourism_in_leicester_and_leicestershire_at_house_of_commons)
- E9. <http://www.thisisleicestershire.co.uk/Richard-III-Publicity-equivalent-pound-2m/story-18240719-detail/story.html#axzz2NE5ht6QJ>
- E10. <http://www.thisisleicestershire.co.uk/Richard-III-factor-credited-boost-hotel-bookings/story-18643576-detail/story.html#axzz2TSR3gAhC>