

Spring 2009

Series 2
Issue 1



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Ministerial Review of Archaeological Policy and Practice October 2007 – 2009/10

The Ministerial Review of Archaeological Policy and Practice began in late 2007, with the publication of a briefing and discussion document entitled, *Review of Archaeological Policy and Practice in Ireland: Identifying the Issues*. The document outlined key questions and issues of concern, identified by the Department of the Environment, Heritage and Local Government, for consideration by the profession during the review. This was followed by three, sequential public consultation meetings, two in Dublin and one in Mullingar, which were open to the attendance of all members of the archaeological profession and other interested bodies and individuals. All the meetings were attended by the IAI Board members and were very well-attended generally. Written submissions responding to the discussion document, and the content of the discussion at the public meetings, were invited both prior to and during the consultation process. IAI Board members responded both individually and collectively.

“three, sequential public consultation meetings, [were held] two in Dublin and one in Mullingar ”

The start of the Review coincided with IAI's 2007 Autumn Conference ***Rethinking Irish Archaeology: Old Ground, New Ideas***. This conference brought cross-sectoral professional discussion forward from the Royal Irish Academy's ***Forum on Archaeology in Ireland: a vision for the future*** in May 2006 (published 2007), which in turn had developed themes explored in *Archaeology 2020: repositioning Irish Archaeology in the Knowledge Society*. Following the IAI Autumn conference, a formal document, informed by the proceedings of the conference, was prepared and presented to Minister, John Gormley at a meeting with members of the IAI Board in December 2007. The full report on the conference, entitled *Rethinking Irish Archaeology: Old Ground, New Ideas*, outlining the findings of the conference was subsequently submitted to the Minister and to the Department.

“An Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) was established in Spring 2008”

An Expert Advisory Committee (EAC) was established in Spring 2008, with members drawn from: National Monuments Service (DoEHLG); OPW; National Museum; UCD; UCC; NUIG; Heritage Council and IAI, along with two overseas participants from the UK and Sweden. When the EAC convened for the first time and met with Minister John Gormley, he requested that discussion be refined to focus on a review of legislation, with a view to the development of new legislation to replace the existing National Monuments Acts and to include a new definition and protective provision for important cultural landscapes. It was

requested that the EAC would advise on and oversee the preparation of draft head of bills for review by the Minister by the end of 2008, proceeding, in 2009, to a review of policy issues relating to practice.

In order to facilitate this constrained timeline, the committee broke out into five Work Groups to focus on specific themes and topics (e.g. legal definitions, archaeology and planning, protection of cultural landscapes; licensing, underwater archaeology and finds). Each of the Work Groups included key professionals with experience and expertise in the particular topics under review. These were drawn from a wide cross-section of the profession, including the state services, the commercial sector, local authorities, and state-sponsored bodies such as the NRA.

“the committee broke out into five Work Groups to focus on specific themes and topics”

The EAC agreed on main headings for the report and subsequent legislation as follows:

- a) Definitions, including definitions of what constitutes a monument and its setting, an archaeological site and a find spot
- b) Surveying, Categorisation, Recording and Registration of Monuments
- c) Protection to be applied to monuments and sites and offences to be applied for damage, interference
- d) Protection of underwater archaeological heritage
- e) Registering and Protecting newly discovered monuments
- f) Monuments in state care
- g) Interaction between Archaeology and spatial/land-use planning
- h) Definitions of Archaeological Assessment, Archaeological Monitoring and any statutory requirements
- i) Archaeology and Infrastructure and other development – the 2004 Act
- j) Statutory role of Local Authorities
- k) Archaeological practice in the planning context
- l) Regulation of archaeological excavation, detection devices and underwater licensing
- m) Excavation reports, dissemination of knowledge
- n) Custodianship and archiving
- o) Archaeological Landscapes: definition and protection
- p) Conservation Plans and Management Plans
- q) Establishment of a body with role in setting research agenda or assigning this role to an existing body
- r) Archaeological Objects

The following additional headings were agreed to be matters of policy rather than matters for inclusion in legislation:

- Guidelines for Local Authorities in relation to archaeology
- Policy and Guidelines in relation to national research agenda (or regional or county research agenda)
- How Archaeological Assessments are carried out
- How Archaeological Monitoring is carried out
- Excavation practice
- Standards of Excavation reports
- Raising awareness of archaeology
- Standards of archaeological practice.

The working groups, while deliberating on key issues for change in existing legislation and the development of new provisions in legislation also consulted widely and actively. They also discussed potential issues arising for practice and the resourcing of proposed changes in the Act and associated legislation (notably the Planning and

Development Acts). The participation of members of the Department ensured that the drafting of legislation progressed and the Work Groups were briefed as to the proposed changes and new draft legislation. Each of the groups reported back to the EAC in late September and early October 2008.

“The detailed report and the draft heads of bills are ... scheduled for public presentation in late May.”

A report to the Minister, including the draft heads of bills was prepared in December 2008 and submitted to the Minister in January 2009. With the completion of the legislative review, the focus of the next phase of work of the EAC, during 2009, will shift to the policy topics pertaining to practice.

A summary report, prepared by the Dept. is now published on the IAI and Dept websites. The detailed report and the draft heads of bills are currently under governmental review and are scheduled for public presentation in late May. These will become the focus of the IAI conference which was deferred to June for this purpose.

Margaret Gowen
Chair

Proposed Changes to the format of meetings

The IAI Board proposes that the membership should reconsider the current practice of holding two multi-day conferences annually. This proposal is based on the unsustainable costs incurred at present; despite the high quality of the speakers and presentations the costs are unfortunately not justified by the attendance levels.

“the Institute should ... hold one main, multi-day annual conference ... in the spring in conjunction with the AGM”

The board also recognises that in the current climate our members may find the costs of attendance at two conferences (including transport and accommodation) to be prohibitive, which would have a direct impact on attendance levels.

The board proposes that the Institute should instead hold one main, multi-day annual conference, with a broad scope and the potential to attract greater attendance.

This conference would be held in the spring in conjunction with the AGM.

By reducing the number of multi-day conferences, this could allow IAI to develop a series of one-day conferences/seminars or workshops on a narrower, thematic basis to complement the CPD programme or respond to current events.

“this could allow IAI to develop a series of one-day conferences/ seminars or workshops ”

This proposal will be put forward for discussion and approval at the AGM on 24 April. Any members who cannot attend are invited to submit comments on the proposal in writing to the main IAI office or by email to iaireland@eircom.net in advance of the AGM.

Continuous Professional Development

The IAI is committed to the establishment of a permanent Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programme, available to all the members of the Institute as an essential element of professional practice. The current CPD Pilot programme (II) is part of the institute's on-going strategy for the promotion of transparent and accredited professional standards in Irish archaeology and for improved quality management of professional practice.

Involvement in CPD is currently voluntary, however, the Institute would encourage each member to actively get involved and keep records of their CPD, as participation will become mandatory by 2012. The CPD credit system is designed to be flexible and achievable. The CPD programme consists of three pillars namely: Thematic course; Professional activities; Accreditation and Assessment.

The Institute has identified thirteen themes under which a series of CPD courses (1 day/ shorter seminar and workshops) will be organised as part of Phase II of the IAI CPD programme. The courses are designed by the IAI in conjunction with professionals from archaeology and other disciplines. Attendance at these courses will entitle the participant to IAI CPD credits. In addition to thematic courses, a range of professional activities have been identified for CPD credits, some of these activities include archaeological research, structured reading and learning, involvement with professional institutes and attendance/ presentation at conferences. All approved CPD events and activities are internally accredited by the IAI and members are encouraged to keep a record of their personal CPD. All thematic courses will be independently assessed by an external assessor approved by the Board of the IAI. The IAI is actively working towards the development of accredited courses

in conjunction with third level teaching institutes as part of the National Framework of Qualifications (NQF). The IAI is working towards having an online recording system for members CPD as part of a members section on the IAI website.

Some of the CPD events take account of published guidelines for the archaeological profession. These courses are designed to increase awareness across the profession of the existence and usage of these guidelines and generate discussion amongst members of how the guidelines can be put into best practice.

The first in a series of seminars planned for 2008/09 took place on Friday 22nd November 2008. The one day seminar entitled 'Report writing for the practicing archaeologist – methodology and skills' took place in the Helen Roe lecture theatre, 63, Merrion Square, Dublin 2. The course was designed and run by Linzi Simpson (Margaret Gowen & Co. Ltd.) and Penny Johnston (Eachtra Archaeological Projects Ltd.).

The attendance at the course, although lower than pre-arranged, represented a cross section of the archaeological profession. The attendees were affiliated with the National Roads Authority, Galway Mayo Institute of Technology, Kilkenny Archaeology, Archaeological Development Services Ltd., Cultural Resource Development Services Ltd and University College Dublin. The course was assessed by Dr. Ann Lynch, Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government. The feedback questionnaire from course participants and the assessor feedback was positive and encouraged the development of similar courses.



Some of the attendees at report writing seminar, November 2008

CPD – Future courses

Six CPD thematic courses will take place between May and October 2009. These events are a combination of one day and half day events and will take place in Dublin, Galway, Cork and the Midlands. The events are being presented by archaeologists from across the profession. The courses shall address such issues as writing and editing for the archaeological profession, the production of environmental impact assessments, the creation and securing of the archaeological archiving and the role of local authority archaeologists in Ireland.

“Six CPD thematic courses will take place between May and October 2009.”

Further details about the CPD credit system and CPD events are available on the website (www.iai.ie). Any queries should be addressed to the development officer (developmentofficer@iai.ie).

The IAI is a partner in a ‘Pilot’ Landscape Character Assessment CPD training module. The CPD module is a Heritage Council initiative with three professional institutes, namely the Institute of Archaeologists of Ireland (IAI), the Irish Planning Institute (IPI) and the Irish Landscape Institute (ILI).

The CPD module is an initiative to address the fact that many professionals dealing with the management of the Irish landscape do not receive formal training in Landscape Character Assessment (LCA). The objective of the CPD module is to raise awareness within the professional Institutes and other partners of the key elements of LCA and Historic Landscape Characterisation (HLC) and their wide-ranging uses and benefits, across many sectors of society.

The taught aspect of the two day course will be presented by staff of Queens University Belfast, ERA Maptec, Museum of London Archaeological Services and Clare County Council. The course will draw upon relevant case studies that will generate discussion from the different professions involved. The course will be independently assessed by Countryside Training, UK.

“The IAI is a partner in a ‘Pilot’ Landscape Character Assessment CPD training module.”

The pilot CPD module will take place on Thursday 14th and Friday 15th May 2009 in Co. Clare and three places are allocated for IAI members. The details for the selection of three members will be announced on the Institutes website shortly.



Survey of Employment levels in Irish Archaeology

The archaeological profession, similar to other professions, is facing challenging times due to the economic slowdown in the Irish economy, in particular the collapse of construction sector activity. Anecdotal evidence indicates that there has been a marked decline in the employment levels in Irish archaeology. As an initial stage in assessing this situation, the IAI undertook a questionnaire survey in March 2009 to generate accurate baseline data of employment levels from across the profession. At this critical time accurate and up-to-date information is essential to enable the Institute to represent the membership and the profession throughout Ireland.

The questionnaire was circulated amongst consultancies, teaching institutes and state agencies amongst others largely mirroring those canvassed as part of the Discovering the Archaeologists of Europe survey in 2007 (to ensure that the survey would be comparable with the DISCO baseline). The deadline for completion of the questionnaire has now passed and the Development Officer is in the process of processing the results. The results of the survey will be made available on the Institutes website in April 2009. The development officer would like to thank all those who completed and returned the questionnaire.

Five year plan 2009-2014

The IAI Board is in the process of preparing a new, draft Five year Strategic plan (2009-2014) for presentation to the membership. The new Strategic Plan is based upon a review of the previous Five Year Plan (2003-2008) and also the seven objectives of the Institute as outlined in the Memorandum and Articles of Association.

These are the lynch pin of the Strategic plan and they cover:

1. the promotion of contact and collaboration between professional archaeologists,
2. The expression of corporate professional opinions on archaeological matters,
3. The improvement of archaeological standards, including the adoption of a code of practice,
4. The establishment of contacts with similar organisations,
5. The promotion, by discussion and action, the solution of practical and academic problems of archaeology on the island of Ireland,
6. The publication of a newsletter at least once annually to be known as IAI news and
7. The holding of at least one conference annually on matters relating to archaeology.

Meet the Board

Each issue of the Newsletter will introduce the reader to the different Board members. This issue has short piece about Linda Lynch, Conference Organiser (outgoing)

Linda graduated from University College Cork in 1998 with an Hons MA in Archaeology. She is a licence eligible osteoarchaeologist with Aegis Archaeology Ltd. Her particular area of interest is post-medieval archaeology and she is currently undertaking a PhD in UCC on the osteoarchaeological evidence of health in post-medieval Ireland. In addition to being a member of IAI, she is also a member of the Association of Professional Osteoarchaeologists of Ireland, the Palaeopathology Association, the Irish Post-Medieval Archaeology Group, and the European Association of Professional Archaeologists. She was elected to the Board in 2006 and served as Conference Organiser until 2009.

The decision to stand down from the Board was two-fold. She says 'I feel that now is the time to bring on board a new Conference Organiser who can further the professionalisation of the conferences. It has been an invaluable experience serving on the Board of the IAI, and the dedication and determination of each of the Board members to further the advancement of the archaeology in

Ireland is truly exceptional. It is important that the Board accurately represents the profession and the range of archaeological works in Ireland, and strives for the advancement of the profession.

As such, it is important that 'new blood' comes onto the Board to continue and develop the experience of previous Board members. I feel that I have contributed to the Board and the Institute to the best of my ability and it is now time to hand over the reigns to another person. While the organisation of the conferences involved a huge amount of work and many late nights, the results were truly worth it.

At this point I would like to particularly thank my colleague Dr Rory Sherlock, whose tireless dedication and input made the conferences as successful as they were. Meanwhile, I will be endeavouring to complete my PhD on health in post-medieval Ireland, which I'm sure will bring many further late nights! It never ends....'

Contributions for the next issue

Contributions are invited for the next issue of IAI news and the deadline for submissions is 1 September 2009.

Articles should be short (500-1,000 words), topical and relevant to Irish archaeology (including recent discoveries, research programmes or issues of archaeological practice) with a maximum of four small or two large illustrations.

Submissions should be in a suitable digital format - MS Word compatible for text, JPEG, PNG or TIF for graphics. Please contact the editors in advance (developmentofficer@iai.ie) prior to any formal submission.

The IAI reserve the right not to publish any particular item submitted.

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Membership Numbers

In 2008, the IAI accepted sixteen new members: eleven full and five graduate members. This brings the current, overall membership to 345, 286 Full Members, 47 Graduate and Student Members and 13 Associate Members.

The IAI has commenced its 3rd level education drive which will see the Development Officer visiting various 3rd level teaching Institutions and presenting a short talk about the structure, function and planned developments in the IAI. This is the first of several planned initiatives aimed at raising awareness of IAI and leading to an increase in membership numbers.

IAI Staff and Office

The IAI offices are located at 63 Merrion Square, Dublin 2.

Office hours are between 10am-4pm, Monday through Thursday. Our Administrator, Grainne Finn. Grainne handles the day-to-day running of the Institute and provides administrative support to the Board and Officers of IAI.

Dr. Eoin Sullivan was appointed as the Development Officer in May 2008. This part-time position is dual financed by the generous support of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Heritage Council.

Services to Members

The IAI currently hosts an Event diary on the IAI website; this event diary will be developed to include a more comprehensive list of events of interest to the archaeological profession, attendance at which will be credited as part of the CPD programme. Each event, deemed to be applicable for IAI CPD credits, will be listed in the event diary with the appropriate number of credits. The event diary will be of assistance to members and event organisers. To have an event listed please contact: iaireland@eircom.net.

The IAI is currently undertaking a stock take of the back issues of the Journal of Irish Archaeology. The back issues will be made available for purchase by the members of the institute at a competitive price; to enquire about back issues please contact: iaireland@eircom.net.

The IAI, through the development officer, is currently in negotiations regarding a discount scheme with a commercial supplier of site safety equipment suitable for the archaeological profession. Negotiations are at an advanced stage and it is hoped that details of the scheme will be announced on the Institute's website shortly.

This CPD accredited electronic newsletter entitles the reader to thirty minutes of CPD credit. The bi-annual newsletter entitles the reader to one hour CPD credit (1 IAI CPD credit) per year.