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Dear Paul

### **Kent Archaeological Resource Centre**

Your proposal to develop an Archaeological Resource Centre for Kent was warmly welcomed at last week's committee meeting of the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME).

FAME represents around 50 archaeological businesses providing advice and specialist services to commercial clients and developers throughout the UK, and its members have been actively engaged for many years in the excavation, recording and publication of the archaeology of Kent.

The publication of *PPG16: Archaeology and Planning* in 1990 led to a massive expansion in development-led archaeological fieldwork in the UK, and a corresponding increase in archaeological archives in need of care, storage and the provision of public access.

However, such has been the growth in excavation archives that museum services in many parts of the country are currently unable to accept any more - and this of course particularly affects areas of intensive growth and development such as Kent.

As a result, our members are holding an increasing volume of undeposited and inaccessible excavation archives. The scale of the problem nationally is unknown, but a 6% sample of the archaeological practices operating in England shows that they alone hold over 42,000 boxes of finds from nearly 7,000 excavations.

And the problem is only likely to worsen, since both PPS5: *Planning for the Historic Environment* and the emerging *National Planning Policy Framework* require developers to deposit excavation archives in local museums to ensure that they are fully accessible to the local community.

So concerned are we by this issue that we have raised it through the [national media](#) and dedicated our recent [annual conference](#) to the subject.

FAME strongly believes that the archives created by development-led archaeological research should be made rapidly and readily available to all sectors of the local community, and that the way to ensure this is through the establishment of a properly-resourced national network of archaeological resource centres, so that the evidence uncovered through development is made fully and freely accessible to both this and future generations.

We therefore welcome and support your proposal to develop an archaeological resource centre in Kent.

Yours faithfully

Adrian Tindall MA FSA MI(f)A  
Chief Executive