



Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers
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Stephen Trow
Heritage Protection Director
Heritage Protection and Planning
Historic England
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30th October 2015

Dear Steve

National Infrastructure development and historic environment skills and capacity 2015

In relation to the above FAME and CifA would like to make an initial joint response, although both organisations will be separately sending detailed comments by mid November.

We very much welcome this Historic England strategic initiative, which complements discussions both our organisations have had with HS2 and TTT. The report provides clear evidence that as a result of predicted increased demand, in particular from large infrastructure projects, there is a significant risk of a major skills and capacity gap developing in archaeology and heritage. It also identifies that this demand provides a unique opportunity to tackle strategically long-term problems in skills and employment more generally. As such the report presents a compelling case for urgent action on skills investment, on the part of the whole sector, to avoid negative impact to the government's infrastructure programme and to the wider programme of sustainable development across the country.

The report usefully identifies a number of areas where action to either increase the supply of archaeologists, or modify demand could combine to build the required capacity. In this initial response FAME and CifA wish to highlight the proposals for non-graduate entry to the profession, and in particular the work already undertaken in respect of the Trailblazer apprentice scheme. While we note that the report asserts that progress has been rapid, with prospect of delivery in 2016, we would like to emphasise that successful implementation will be absolutely critical and that without this new route to entry it is inconceivable that the capacity issues so graphically illustrated by the report can be successfully addressed.

The Trailblazer scheme is an employer-led process and a number of FAME members and CifA ROs are involved in its design, with HE having helpfully taken on the role of lead employer. Our current concern however, based on feedback from members, is that

insufficient time and resources are available to the team to move things forward to ensure a well-designed scheme is in place to meet peak demand. We believe there is a risk that the process may be further delayed or break down and instead of a coherent industry solution emerging, we will be left with a fragmented outcome as individual employers or groups of employers leave the current consortium. As such we ask that HE consider whether they can review, reprioritise and provide extra resource to ensure the success of this critical initiative. In our turn we will be contacting our members who are involved and request they do the same, and in addition we offer support if required. We would suggest a gantt chart or similar programme, with critical path and milestones, is produced to focus everyone's attention on the need to produce specified output by strict deadlines in order to achieve the challenging April 2016 roll-out of the scheme.

FAME and CIfA congratulate HE, and in particular Bob Hook, on the work that has gone into the capacity report and the Trailblazer scheme to date. Both initiatives are hugely important in preparing the archaeology and heritage sector for the challenges ahead and we recognize that it will be important for HE, FAME and CIfA to work together towards a range of solutions.

We look forward to hearing your views on the Trailblazer scheme in particular and to continued engagement with you on the broader capacity issues.

Kind regards

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Nick Shepherd', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

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