

FAME 2025 – 2030 Strategy and Aspirations

Vision 2030:

‘Archaeological business will flourish within a sustainable model for commercial practice, creating careers that help conserve and advance understanding of the past for the benefit of society.’

Mission:

‘To promote a business environment where archaeological organisations operate safely, sustainably and for public benefit.’

Purpose:

FAME is a trade association, representing the views of archaeological employers and managers. FAME’s members are organisations that practise archaeology and heritage within the commercial marketplace. Together, they employ the majority of archaeologists working in the UK.

FAME’s purpose is for development-led archaeology to be recognised for the positive professionalism and value it delivers at the heart of planning, development and construction in the UK and Ireland.

FAME as a Trade Association provides leadership for the practice of archaeological investigation as a commercial enterprise. It provides a collaborative approach for its members to present their views on challenges within the market place and regulatory process which can seriously affect the ability for its members to conduct business effectively and fairly.

FAME provides a voice for commercial practice and allows collective action which has more weight than if individual companies were to express their concerns. The rules articulate this as:

- a) To represent the interests of archaeological managers and employers within the profession and beyond;
- b) To provide advice, support and information to its members;
- c) To promote safe and healthy working practices within the profession;
- d) To promote best professional practice in business, employment, and in fieldwork and publications, and archiving;
- e) To promote learning and professional development to improve standards within the profession; and
- f) To operate in a manner transparent and accountable to its members.

Public Benefit

The [European Archaeological Council \(Europae Archaeologiae Consilium\)](#), a membership organisation consisting of the national bodies charged with the management of the archaeological heritage throughout Europe has presented as report on *The Benefits of Development-led Archaeology*¹:

“This report presents nine tangible public benefits which can be derived from development-led archaeological investigation, illustrated by genuine case studies from across Europe and beyond. It is designed to act as a resource for all archaeological heritage managers, archaeologists, and other stakeholders to help make the case for supporting development-led archaeology, and to help shape investigation projects to get the most out of them for the public.

It recognises that the benefits of archaeology go far beyond its inherent value in creating knowledge about our shared past, creating many other societal and scientific benefits. It demonstrates very small additional cost of development-led archaeology at the state level, and concludes that this cost is outweighed by the positive benefits which can be realised if planned into projects from the outset.”

Within the UK the CIRIA guides (2008 and 2021) on Archaeology and Development² provide specific guidance and case studies to support this approach within a national context.

Strategy Evolution

FAME (and its predecessors) has endeavoured to ensure archaeological business has been conducted in as fair and safe a manner as possible, supporting its members and representing the interests of field archaeologists to clients, partners and the public. After 50 years FAME now needs to evolve into an organisation that is agile and effective in representing the interests of our membership for the foreseeable future.

FAME’s first action plan was drafted in 2013 by the newly appointed CEO, following FAME’s conference presentation to *Valuing the Profession* which identified eight aspirations (see Appendix 1) and a need for communicating the **value** of development-led archaeology to clients. This approach led to a campaign for “Remodelling the Market”, and production of advice for clients to undertake informed procurement of archaeological services. This successful approach was enhanced in 2016, and a Business Plan produced in 2017, renewed by a costed action plan in 2020.

The FAME business model was divided into two main parts:

- a) Routine business - basic tasks, maintenance of organization
Including consultations, board & member meetings, liaison, member services

¹ <https://zenodo.org/records/10696865>

² Nixon, T., Holloway, C., Geary, K., Hinton, P., and King, G. 2021 Archaeology and Development: good practice guide CIRIA C799, London, ISBN 978-0-86017-941-2

- b) Aspirational business – key goals to actively pursue
 - i) raising awareness/profile of commercial archaeology;
 - ii) skills enhancement/ CPD for commercial practice;
 - iii) innovation, harness technology, increasing value to clients

And it set the following overarching ambitions:

We need to position ourselves as archaeologists upstream at points in the design and project implementation process which gives us parity with other professions

We need to find out what is important for our clients via partnership collaboration, using Trade Associations, and learning from client feedback to individual members

We need to drive and facilitate the ability of our members to improve and innovate for the benefit of our clients, the construction industry and the UK economy

In 2021 the membership were asked at the FAME Forum what were the overriding priorities they thought the association should focus on. The responses identified:

- Future proofing, creating a sustainable industry
- Career progression and succession planning; training for managers in commercial practice

Strategy Development

In addition to routine matters of governance, support to members, consultations and partnership working, over the next five years FAME's action plan will focus on five aspirational topics:

- Advocacy;
- Health & Safety;
- Commercial Sustainability;
- Environmental Sustainability; and
- Innovation

Initial priorities for 2025 are:

Advocacy

1. APPAG – develop relationships with Westminster to ensure the interests of archaeology and commercial practice are better appreciated
2. CDM regulations – FAME to respond to the anticipated 2025 review
3. Archives – FAME to push for the publication of the legal advice on Transfer of Title, and supporting documents, by Historic England

Health and Safety

4. CSCS cards:
 - i. Advocate for acceptance of archaeology as construction activity by CSCS/BuildUK/CECA etc

- ii. If successful, then setup an archaeological CSCS card.
- 5. Publishing/revising of FAME Health and Safety Guides:
 - iii. Fencing
 - iv. Temporary works
 - v. Revise utilities paper

Commercial sustainability

- 6. Ensure FAME has a viable income that will cover the expected expenditure of the next five years
- 7. Take an evangelical approach to encouraging members in creating financial surpluses and so become sustainable organisations for the future
- 8. Contract management for archaeologists – provide training/advice.
- 9. Employment law – update FAME members on changes in the law for 2024/25.

Environmental sustainability

- 10. Finish and publish the Archaeology Carbon Calculator.
- 11. Provide advice/training on and promote the use of the Archaeology Carbon Calculator.
- 12. Research and disseminate findings - What does PAS2080 mean for the sector?

Facilitating Innovation

- 13. Research member awareness of AI and what they believe the impacts will be.
- 14. Public benefits (how to engage communities on development-led project) - facilitate best-practices.
- 15. Archaeological science – encourage experimentation and sharing of successes and failures, new techniques and methodological advancements

APPENDIX 1: FAME's achievements on eight aspirations in 2013

The depressed state of the archaeological market has been very well documented since 2008. Those practices remaining in business have done so through laying-off staff, swallowing up any reserves built up during the preceding decade, or a combination of the two.

And market conditions remain difficult and highly competitive. The Faithful and Gould UK Construction index showed a fall of 2% in tender prices in 2012, and a predicted 0% growth in 2013. Not until late 2014 does it predict any significant rise.

Salary levels are governed by our ability to provide the client with a product they value. Once surplus is achieved in any organization, its capacity grows for training and development and for investment in its key resource, its staff.

We regard the current debate on salaries as simplistic, and would like to put forward a more ambitious vision for the sector. Over the next few years, we would like to develop an environment in which improved levels of pay become achievable, and we see a number of ways in which this can be brought about:

1. Informed procurement: better understanding from clients of what risks they run when choosing a supplier on cost alone. Archaeology is a young profession, and since PPG16 we have competed immaturely and seriously undermined the perceived value of our work. As an industry we need to move on from crude price-driven competition to a more balanced, better informed procurement model, based on quality, outcome and enhanced value - competition by design. The current market is a product of our own making, in which all parts of our profession are complicit - national agencies and local government, commercial and charitable organizations, not-for-profit and university-based practices. We will shortly be publishing a discussion paper on procuring quality, and will invite comments from across the sector. We envisage this forming a central strand of any new Archaeologists and Developers Code of Practice.

Achievements: *Which Archaeologist? The Procurement of Archaeological Services – FAME Guidance and best practice for managing risk in selecting an archaeological supplier published in 2014. Provides detailed advice and suggested criteria for clients to help their decision making.*

Future action: one page version of Which Archaeologist, signposting to main document

2. Partnership: building long-term relationships and framework agreements with those clients who already operate quality systems.

Achievements: *FAME members have had partial success in this, but further encouragement would be advantageous. FAME as an organization has begun building partnerships with similar organizations (e.g. ACRA, MOA, CECA, AGS).*

Future action: FAME needs to intensify and expand this with other trade organizations.

3. Measurement: the development of standard methods for the measurement of archaeological tasks (for example through fee benchmarking), to manage expectation and reduce uncertainties in cost allocation by clients.

Achievements: Since 2015 FAME has proposed a project to Historic England and received in principle support. Funds have been supplied for a Project Design (in progress).

Future action: this process needs to be completed and the full project implemented over the next three years.

4. Innovation: developing new methods and techniques for improving efficiency and thus increasing value to the client.

Achievements: FAME members are experimenting and developing new approaches. We should share success and failure as part of FAME information (similar to the H&S alerts). FAME has raised the issue of resistance to innovation due to the constraint of process driven planning led archaeological practice. FAME has funded and cooperated with CIRIA's revised Archaeology and Development: best practice case studies 2017 – 21.

Future action: we should do more to promote the benefits of, and opportunity for, innovation

5. Future proofing: exploring the potential for moving the profession upstream, by actively responding to government- and industry-led initiatives such as Building Information Modelling and other construction-sector modernisation programmes.

Achievements: FAME has increased its responses to government consultation, in partnership with others (principally CIFA). It has also responded to sector-specific agendas (e.g. APPAG, BA, SoA).

Future action: FAME needs to engage more proactively with the construction sector.

6. Skills enhancement: developing appropriate skill-sets that will be truly valued by clients, including business planning, project management, risk and contract management

Achievements: FAME has addressed these issues through several themed Forums in York. FAME has also launched training webinars and has started a list of useful CPD courses.

Future action: advice notes on items such as contracts, and more information for members on relevant CPD

7. Employment Best Practice: revising our own 2004 Employment Manual with up-to-date information and regular updates

FAME board debated and rejected this, in favour of the advice services provided by QUEST.

8. Raising our profile: moving upstream, to be perceived as designers rather than construction workers; the need to be valued as part of the knowledge and creative industries, rather than simply a sub-set of the construction industry.

Achievements: Individual FAME members might have made progress with this (perhaps more relevant to consultancies).

Future action: FAME to actively promote the concept of our members as designers and knowledge builders, whose activities bring value to their clients' projects. Make a virtue out of a necessity, by reassuring clients planning obligations will be met in timely way, that development will meet the sustainability threshold in respect to the historic environment, that we manage risk and cost for the benefit of clients, archaeology contributes to their corporate social responsibility and leaves a legacy of public benefit through enhancing knowledge and understanding of our shared heritage providing good PR, we contribute through teamwork and partnership to help them achieve their project goals

Further achievements: In 2016 we set out the following which are achieved or ongoing:

- Costed action plan
- List of Trade Associations to target as principal partners
- Comms strategy with focus on construction industry
- Develop CPD courses for commercial practice
- Campaign for standard and sensible approach to deposition of archaeological archives
- Campaign for a staged approach to standard conditions placed on planning permission
- Research our workforce and percentage of non-UK staff, and effectiveness of evaluations
- Promote valued added service model for archaeology rather than commodity service model
- Promote innovation rather than process-driven archaeology ----- develop value added model
- Produce technical advice notes
- Encourage appropriate contract management and risk management to members
- Develop regional and international liaison (home countries, Ireland and US)

- Show how developer-funded work has benefited the public's knowledge and understanding