

FAME: a platform for collaborative improvement

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Articles that FAME have produced and/or collaborated on. Credit: FAME

In August 2026, Chris Brayne officially assumed the role of Chief Executive of the Federation of Archaeological Managers and Employers (FAME):

“ I am delighted to have the opportunity to lead an organisation with such a rich history of sector support. Over the past 51 years, in an industry defined by competition, FAME, in its various guises, has proved that collective action is the most powerful tool for sustainability. From establishing safety standards to leading on carbon reduction, our story stands as a way-marker for continued innovation in a rapidly changing world. ”



Tim Malim, FAME Chair presenting at the FAME Forum. Credit: FAME

FAME is the trade organisation for development-led archaeology in the UK and Ireland. It began in 1975 as the Standing Conference of Unit Managers, later became the Standing Conference of Archaeological Unit Managers (SCAUM), and finally became FAME. Its mission was to facilitate the exchange of information between directors of research and rescue organisations, many of whom were young and enthusiastic field archaeologists who had not been trained for the demands of project, staff and financial management.

Since 1990 and the growth of developer funding in archaeology, FAME has promoted a space for collaborative discussion and action, enabling often competing businesses to come together and offer a collective voice on issues affecting the practice of archaeology and the sustainability of archaeological organisations. So, what have we achieved through collaboration?

Health, safety and welfare

An initial aim was to ensure that archaeology operated safely, and our H&S manual, first published in 1986, became an industry standard. We have continued this approach through our Health & Safety working group, which includes representatives from member and partner organisations. The working group has drafted a series of Technical Advice Notes, and FAME also issues H&S Alerts based on specific incidents that members have experienced, acting

as a conduit for collective information so that the sector is made aware of risks and how to mitigate them.

FAME also conducts H&S audits so that the sector can assess its accident record against the national data for the construction industry, enabling collective understanding of how we are managing site safety. During Covid, the working group discussed how to work safely while complying with the restrictions, ensuring continuity of employment for staff and preventing business failures.

Contracts and business practice

The introduction of PPG16 created a marketplace for competitive archaeological work, but with no preparation or upskilling of archaeologists to meet the new challenges. We responded with collective action to produce the *Guidelines and Notes on Competitive Tendering for Archaeological Services* (1996), and *Archaeology and Employment* (1999).

FAME continues to share information to help colleagues through information exchange, newsletters and the annual State of the Archaeological Market Survey, a tool designed to improve understanding of the sector and its contribution to the economy.

Advocacy and good practice

FAME has also worked with other trade associations and heritage bodies, particularly ClIfA, to support initiatives such as the Southport Review (<https://bit.ly/4zoM33G>); the Fair Pay Campaign, Credit where Credit isn't due (2014) (<https://tinyurl.com/mrwj9vc9>); CIRIA's Archaeology and Construction: Good Practice Guidance C799 (2021) (<https://bit.ly/4bLDB4o>); and, most recently, Archaeology and Solar Farms: Good Practice Guide (2026) (<https://tinyurl.com/3r2j9ky7>).

Innovation, training and capacity building

In 1986 (revised 1991), FAME and the British Property Federation published the *Code of Practice* of the British Archaeologists and Developers Liaison Group, providing a new way to manage contracts. Later, FAME's advice Which Archaeologist: the Procurement of Archaeological Services (2014) (<https://tinyurl.com/5xuavmc>) was published to encourage potential clients to make informed choices on the value of our services and whom to commission.

In response to climate change and the need for the industry to reduce its carbon emissions and comply with PAS2080, FAME collaborated with Spring Environmental and Historic England to produce a bespoke carbon calculator tool for archaeologists in 2024.

Archaeological archives

Beginning in 2012, FAME led a campaign to address the patchy yet complex arrangements for the deposition of archaeological archives, which have meant that organisations hold many thousands of boxes that museums cannot accept because of insufficient storage capacity. Engagement with colleagues in other organisations has led to an advisory panel, the publication of guidance and a Deed of Contract for the legal transfer of artefacts, which is currently under revision.

A space for collaborations

Finally, one of FAME's major achievements in collaboration has been to build a robust networking event around our AGM and forum, where training is delivered on topics of importance for business practice, such as insurance risk, contract management, scientific dating techniques, geophysics awareness and biomolecular archaeology.

FAME's strength has always been our members shared commitment to resolve risks to staff and organisational sustainability. Speaking with one voice, we have built a foundation the archaeological community can rely on, and by continuing to build on it together, we will be ready for whatever comes next.

Tim Malim

Tim has been Chair of the FAME Board since 2014 and has had a career covering commercial archaeological practice, local government, and the charity sector since the 1980s, working throughout the UK and abroad. He is currently a director of Hampton Heritage Design and Consultancy, as well as Deputy Head of Archaeology for Heneb's north Wales Field Services.



Chris Brayne

Chris is the newly appointed CEO of FAME and brings over 11 years of experience as the former Chief Executive of Wessex Archaeology. He currently serves as a Commissioner for the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales (RCAHMW) and provides expert digital and AI consultancy through his company, Cognaterra.



Doug Rocks-Macqueen

Doug is the Deputy CEO at FAME, where he supports its members and helps deliver FAME's goals. Doug is also the Executive Director of Open Past, which is a charity that supports the development of skills and knowledge in history, heritage and archaeology.