



ALGAO-UK HER Committee - Minutes

Wednesday 21st January 2015

English Heritage West Midlands Regional Office, Birmingham

Present:

Committee / Organisation / Region	Represented by:	
Committee Chair. EH Designation/ALGAO HER Liaison. HER Local Engagement Group.	Ben Wallace (BW)	Warwickshire County Council
Committee Secretary. South West HER Forum.	Graham Tait (GT)	Devon County Council
HER Forum.	Chris Webster (CW)	South West Heritage Trust
East of England HER Forum.	Sally Croft (SCr)	Cambridgeshire County Council
South East HER Forum.	Julia Wise (JW) (in place of Alex Bellisario)	Buckinghamshire County Council (in place of Hampshire County Council)
North East HER Forum. BHUG.	Nick Boldrini (NB)	Durham County Council
East Midlands HER Forum.	Mark Bennet (MB)	Lincolnshire County Council
Observing member.	Jane Golding (JG)	Heritage Information Partnerships Manager, English Heritage
Observing member.	Sarah MacLean (SM)	Heritage Information Partnerships Supervisor, English Heritage

Other attendees:

Keith May (KM)	English Heritage
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1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

Committee / Organisation / Region	Represented by:		Action
ALGAO Maritime Committee.	Rebecca Loader	Isle of Wight Council	
OASIS management board. London HER.	Stuart Cakebread (SC)	Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (English Heritage)	
ALGAO Countryside Committee.	Ken Smith	ALGAO Countryside Committee	

Informing the Future of the Past steering group.	Alison Bennett	Essex County Council	Sent update
Yorkshire and The Humber HER Forum.	Louisa Matthews (LM)	North Yorkshire County Council	
Scotland SMRs/HERs.	Stephanie Leith (SL)	East Lothian Council	
HBSMR Users Group. North West HER Forum.	Robert Edwards (RE)	Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service	
FISH. West Midlands HER Forum.	Suzy Blake (SB)	Staffordshire County Council	
ALGAO Cymru.	Chris Martin (CM)	Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust	
South East HER Forum.	Alex Bellisario	Hampshire County Council	Represented by Julia Wise (Buckinghamshire County Council)

No apologies were received from:

Committee / Organisation / Region	Represented by:		Action
ALGAO Countryside Committee.	Ken Smith	ALGAO Countryside Committee	
Observing member.	Dave Batchelor	Head of Historic Environment Intelligence, English Heritage	
Observing member.	Dave Barrett	Derbyshire County Council	
RCAHMS.	Mike Middleton (replacement for Susan Hamilton – on maternity leave)	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland	

2. Minutes and Actions of the last meeting

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Action	Remit	Comment	Status
Get ALGAO Exec to agree changes to website to ensure advice note (Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England) on ALGAO website can be viewed by all.	BW	This is ongoing, and waiting on ALGAO Executive to agree changes to website. BW to take to ALGAO Executive meeting tomorrow.	Open
Get ALGAO Exec to agree changes to website to ensure that minutes and agendas and all other HER content on ALGAO website can be viewed by all.	BW	This is ongoing, and waiting on ALGAO Executive to agree changes to website. BW to take to ALGAO Executive meeting tomorrow.	Open
Circulate 'quick wins' presentation.	BW	Via committee or via HER Forum.	Open

Seek support for an HER Strategy for the Future from the ALGAO executive	BW	This was discussed by ALGAO Executive in November, and the Executive were supportive.	Closed
Liaise with English Heritage over the action plan for NHPP2, and fitting an HER Strategy for the Future within NHPP2.	BW	Now called Heritage 2020 (a 'cross-sector NHPP'). BW has been liaising about this through the ALGAO executive. There is a need to comment on the action plan, when it is in its draft stage.	Open
Draft an update to the ALGAO-UK HER committee terms-of-reference, for comment and approval.	BW	BW to circulate to the next Executive meeting	Open
Look at the content of http://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her to ensure that content was appropriate.	All	This is ongoing, and waiting on ALGAO Executive to agree changes to website. BW to take to ALGAO Executive meeting tomorrow.	Open
GT to update IfP link on http://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her	GT	This is ongoing, and waiting on ALGAO Executive to agree changes to website. BW to take to ALGAO Executive meeting tomorrow.	Open
Update advice note (Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England) and take to ALGAO executive for approval.	BW	Completed.	Closed
Speak to the Warwickshire GIS team and to the LGA/Defra about what work would be required to go under Annex III of INSPIRE.	BW	BW has had an ongoing email discussion with the Warwickshire GIS team. HERs are not included in Annex III of INSPIRE, so inclusion is optional. To discuss at a future meeting.	Open
Suzy Blake (Staffordshire HER) to submit an exemption for Staffordshire HER to Ordnance Survey; which, once approved, could be used as a template for other HERs across the country. Then to inform ALGAO-UK HER Committee and HER Forum when this is successfully done.	SB	SB - Staffordshire have successfully been through the fast-track process for the exemption of our Conservation Area data. This is a straight forward process which can be done through an online form (although you do need a log-in to the OS website to access this). Once we had completed and submitted the online form our exemption came through almost instantaneously! SB to look at the paperwork for the submitting new datasets for exemption (i.e. HER Monument, Event, HLC data etc) and hopefully will be able to give an update on this at the next ALGAO HER Committee meeting.	Open

Ensure that someone attends the CITiZAN 'specialist board meeting'	BW	BW attended the CITiZAN 'specialist board meeting'. Also, see below.	Closed
Liaise with David Thomas (RCAHMMW) to get information on Welsh benchmarks and outcomes and circulate within the committee	JG	JG has got information on Welsh benchmarks and outcomes from RCAHMMW. However, as this will form part of the Heritage Bill review (to go to a public consultation in 2016), this cannot be shared.	Closed
Re-write the Outcomes Framework Project Proposal as one project (rather than 4 separate projects).	JG	Done.	Closed
Write the Outcomes Framework Project Proposal by January 2015	NB	Done.	Closed
Let regions know about EH research projects on religious and funerary sites.	All English regional reps	Done.	Closed
Let regions know that volunteers are required to undertake updates to IfP (if not already done so).	All English regional reps	Done.	Closed
Liaise with ALGAO Executive to include the Professional Access section of the Heritage Gateway website incorporated within the ALGAO website.	BW	This is ongoing, and waiting on ALGAO Executive to agree changes to website. BW to take to ALGAO Executive meeting tomorrow.	Open
Send update on HER Strategy to the ALGAO-UK HER Committee.	BW	See below.	Closed
Send update reports to GT from other meetings (including reports from regional HER Forums) one week before the next ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting.	All	Done.	Closed

i. CITiZAN (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network) project.

The CITiZAN project has been successful in their bid from the HLF for a 4-year project, running until 2019.

Following the last meeting, BW attended the CITiZAN 'specialist board meeting'. BW mentioned a number of issues that this committee had previously discussed about this project – e.g. RCZA survey data, feeding data back to HERs (via OASIS), checking existing HER data, the fact that not all HERs were online, etc.

Since then, BW has attended a further meeting of the CITiZAN 'data providers', which also included Martin Newman from EH and the ADS. It was stated that the CITiZAN project will not use HER data – apart from areas where there has been no RCZA survey. BW noted that the RCZA data does not extend inland as far as the CITiZAN project boundary.

BW was informed that the project will look at how data can be delivered to HERs. The ADS will help them look at this and will see if OASIS could be used; and the ADS have been funded to carry out some work for them. There was uncertainty over the quantity of data that is expected to be sent to HERs. BW will circulate the minutes of this meeting, as well as the 'data collection and deposition' document. BW will continue to attend meetings and be involved.

The committee was pleased to see that the HLF was keen to develop an understanding of how to deliver projects that interface with HERs, and wanted to develop guidance. The committee suggested that the HLF (and organizations like MOLA, that are undertaking HLF-

funded projects) were informed that HERs can offer lots more than data (e.g. outreach, access to local groups, etc.)

3. Heritage Information Access Strategy (Keith May, English Heritage)

Keith May (English Heritage), gave an overview of the Heritage Information Access Strategy (HIAS).

This is an English Heritage initiative which will be taken forward with key partners and stakeholders.

The Historic England draft corporate plan (2015-2018) has the following objective:

Objective 2.6. *With our partners, improve access to information through Historic Environment Records and explore ways of moving towards a single means of accessing historic environment information nationally.*

8 principles of heritage information access have been drafted, as part of the Heritage Information Access Strategy process, of which:

Principle 1: *Local Authority HERs should be the first point of call for and primary trusted source of investigative research data and knowledge*

The Heritage Information Access Strategy programme is as follows:

- Initiation phase:
 - Governance
 - Communications
 - Engagement
 - Literature Review
 - Business Process Mapping
- Next step – transition to Phase 2:
 - Work packages
 - Building the business case

The current proposed Phase 2 work packages are:

- Collecting and validating data
- HER
- Heritage Gateway
- National Security Copy
- Marine HER & future of AMIE/Pastscape
- Data and information copyright and SLA
- Communication and engagement
- Phase 2 completion
- HIAS roles and Responsibilities

Governance of the Heritage Information Access Strategy consists of:

- HIAS Programme Board. Headed by Steve Trow, with other EH/HE staff
- HIAS Advisory Board. Including representatives of EH, ALGAO, IHBC, ClfA, CBA, etc.

BW commented that the Heritage Information Access Strategy interfaces with the HER Strategy (see below), and there is a possible overlap with the HIAS HER work package.

JG noted that the principles of HIAS influence the Outcomes Framework (see below).

SM stated that HIAS needs to look at how HERs are trusted; which links to the Outcomes Framework and IfP.

It was suggested that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee could provide the 'support' for the HER section of HIAS.

GT stated concerns over how the proposed work packages reflect the current state of the historic environment sector, rather than looking at new opportunities (for example, does 'Collecting and validating data' have to be a separate consideration from 'Heritage Gateway' or 'National Security Copy'?)

NB asked about BIAB, and how that fitted into HIAS. KM stated that this had been considered; although there are issues with the fact that BIAB is a British and Irish resource.

There was agreement from the ALGAO-UK HER Committee that they want to see better representation on the HIAS Advisory Board (and also the HIAS Programme Board) for HERs.

GT suggested better consultation, openness and transparency in the HIAS process – particularly with reference to consulting HER Officers (via HER Forum, for example). BW stated that the committee would be happy to comment further and wants to be more involved.

Action: BW to inform the ALGAO Executive that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee want to see better representation on the HIAS Advisory Board (and also the HIAS Programme Board) for HERs.

4. HER Outcomes Framework and revised HER Audits

i. HER Outcomes Framework

NB has produced a project proposal for the (English Heritage-funded) HER Outcomes Framework project and will be managing this project.

The HER Outcomes Framework will be a national and comprehensive framework that will replace the current benchmarks, and will link to the audit process.

This project will gather a team of HER professionals together to produce a draft HER Outcomes Framework (HOF). This will be achieved by various activities leading to a Workshop day at which four groups, aligned to represent different audiences, will develop proposals for the HOF which will then be collated into a final draft. The Project will commence and finish in the financial year 2015-2016.

The workshop will look at creating the outcomes framework and commenting on how it will be used.

There will be a brief consultation on the draft HER Outcomes Framework at the end of this project to all HER Officers via HER Forum. However, there will be a more formal consultation on the HER Outcomes Framework as well as a revised audit proposal, after this.

BW asked if there will be guidance on how to use the framework. JG stated that this will be captured as part of this process.

There was broad support for this project by the ALGAO-UK HER Committee.

The Project Design will be written shortly, and the toolkit (to inform the workshop discussions) will be part of this.

ii. Revised HER Audits

JG outlined the completed and proposed changes to HER Audits.

The initial stage of the new style Full Audit will be to undertake 4 surveys (via Survey Monkey) to enable HIPs to draft a report. HERs will then have to finalise the report by including additional information as directed. They can also choose to expand on information provided also during their editing of the report.

In the financial year 2015-16, the number of full audits will be cut back (due to the HIPs team having other tasks to do), but there will be plenty of audit revisits.

JG noted that approximately 50% of HERs are not within the current audit process (either having a full or revised audit in the last 5 years).

JW suggested that HERs who hadn't already done an audit needed help and support, and for EH HIPs team to go out and help those HERs.

Action: All to discuss audits at regional HER committees, to look at costs/benefits and support each other.

5. Informing the Future of the Past

AB provided the following update:

This project to update the online guidance for HER Officers has started. Training was provided at the ADS offices in York to some of the editors and contributors. A 'How-to' guidance document for contributors has been drafted and circulated to those Steering Group members who attended the training, and I am waiting for comments back. Sarah MacLean, Sam Mellonie and I have produced individual templates for contributors outlining what they need to do and consider. As soon as the guidelines are finalised, they will be circulated out to contributors with the relevant templates with the aim that contributions will be added between then and the end of March.

6. HER Strategy

BW, JG, Sara Reilly (English Heritage) and Andrew Minting (Wiltshire Council Conservation Officer) last met in November to discuss this. They are due to meet again in mid-February. A draft strategy has been written, and is currently looking at how these relate to other projects (e.g. HIAS, IfP, Heritage 2020, etc.)

The ALGAO-UK HER Committee will be given the draft document soon, for comments. Comments will also be sought from other groups (such as IHBC, HIAS Programme Board).

7. Natural England – Countryside Stewardship and National HLC project.

i. Countryside Stewardship/ NELMS

BW highlighted that the future scheme will be called ‘Countryside Stewardship’, and the Historic Environment is part of this (as a second priority). It is understood that an online system will be used to manage the Historic Environment component to this, and that Historic Environment ‘options’ will be broadly the same as those available in the present schemes. BW stated that we don't have information about how this process will work, what consultation is proposed and what funding will be available.

However, whatever is proposed **Action: BW** to inform the ALGAO Executive that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee strongly state that any agreement with Natural England will need to be agreed by the ALGAO-UK HER Committee, and have a good consultation process with the HER community.

ii. National HLC project

BW highlighted a ‘National HLC’ project that Natural England are proposing. This would look at getting existing HLC data together, and looking at how this can be used. No new data collection would take place. This project is to go out to tender by Natural England.

Concerns were raised by the committee over:

- Use of data
 - Using HLC data to give values to landscape
 - use in targeting
 - Inappropriate use at a farm-level
 - The ability to link to individual HLC methodologies
- Issues raised included; mapping, quality, copyright/IPR, incompleteness of coverage, differences between HLCs, etc., etc.

SC mentioned the East of England HLC project that had fundamental issues in merging the data together, and lessons needed to be learnt from this project.

Action: BW to inform the ALGAO Executive that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee advice is not to do this project, and instead to look at accessing existing data via the ADS (or via HERs).

If there was still a desire to do this sort of project, that there would need to be much more (and better) consultation via the ALGAO-UK HER Committee, the HER Forum and workshops with HER officers.

8. Regular updates from other meetings:

i. ALGAO England Executive

The last ALGAO England Executive was held last November. **Action: BW** to circulate the minutes of this to the committee.

ii. Report from EH HDM/ALGAO HER Liaison Meeting

The last EH HDM/ALGAO HER Liaison Meeting was held last November. **Action: BW** to circulate the minutes of this to the committee.

iii. HER Forum

The next meeting is on Wednesday 8th July at The Kings Manor, York. A programme is being put-together by CW and Nick Davis (English Heritage). Suggestions for topics have included: Heritage At Risk Grade II project, Arches, Historic Stone and Quarries (Herefordshire and Worcestershire) project, EH National Importance Project, Alerts and Constraints Mapping, Dorset HER Forum, TACOS update. Invitations will go out in the next couple of weeks.

iv. HER Local Engagement Group

This group has ‘disengaged’.

v. FISH

A strategic meeting of FISH-HIERNET was held on 18th November 2014 in Cardiff. Minutes will be posted on <http://fishforum.weebly.com/> soon. The meeting discussed:

Overview of Data Standards Work in Wales. This included discussion of a new Heritage Bill being prepared and to be presented before Welsh Government in 2016. This will include requirements for statutory HERs and changes to the way the designation process is managed. The merger of the Royal Commission and Cadw will not form part of the bill.

Update from Scotland including SHED. SHED Strategy was launched in April 2014, and the first meeting of the SHED Programme Board took place in May. The Board is made up of representatives of interests in the historic environment and related sectors that curate relevant data - see the SHED web presence for details (<http://smrforum-scotland.org.uk/shed/>). An Action Plan is being developed. Further work on PastMap, and on the development through the SMR Forum of technical specifications for polygonisation are two of the active strands of the Strategy.

Heritage Information Access Strategy (HIAS). Keith May gave a presentation on the Heritage Information Access Strategy. Discussion centred on the flow of information, and the issues of duplication of effort, and the role of OASIS.

International Updates. Philip Carlisle (EH) & Katie Green (ADS) gave an overview on the Getty Vocabulary Program International Terminology Working Group, and the [Arches Project](#), ARIADNE (Advanced Research Infrastructure for Archaeological Dataset Networking), LoCloud (Local Content in a Europeana Cloud) and NEARCH (New Scenarios for a Community-involved Archaeology).

TACOS. Mike Heyworth (CBA) summed up the the key concept of sharing thinking and developing collaboration. There was a brief discussion on the value of holding such an event – with agreement from everyone that it was a very useful event. The report and other info is available at <http://fishforum.weebly.com/tacos.html>. A plan of action to take some of the considerations forward is being developed.

Wales HER Software Suite. Jeff Spencer gave a presentation on Archwillio, the HER system used by the 4 Welsh Archaeological Trusts. He gave a potted history, and covered its functionality, management as an open source piece of software and future areas of development. Marion Page introduced the ANDROID [Archwillio App](#) and spoke about its use and its development.

People's Collection Wales. Graham Davies (from National Museum Wales) gave a presentation on [People's Collection Wales](#). It is a website that draws together the digital collections of the main heritage institutions in Wales, alongside content from smaller museums, archives and libraries, and allows members of the public to contribute their own content.

Historic Wales. David Thomas (RCAHMW) gave a presentation on [Historic Wales](#), a web portal that provides access to the records of the Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Wales, National Museum Wales and Cadw.

The PAS in Wales. Mark Lodwick (PAS) introduced a new HLF funded project, Saving Treasures, Telling Stories, which enables the Museum of Wales and PAS to strategically purchase items for their core collections over a five-year period.

Implementing Linked data in PAS. Dan Pett (PAS) described the PAS website and its use of Linked Data and the move towards open data which has seen an increase in its audience (500,000) by 15% each year.

Implementing SENESCHAL vocabularies at ADS. Katie Green (ADS) discussed Linked Data terminologies at ADS.

vi. HBSMR User Group Meeting Report

Suzy Blake hosted another successful HBSMR User Group meeting at Staffordshire CC's offices in Stafford. The group had previously agreed a written form of the Terms of Reference under which it had effectively been operating under for a number of years. The group discussed how the Terms of Reference could be developed to enable greater transparency and mitigate against any potential democratic deficit created by the group's wide geographic spread and the pressure on local authority travel budgets. At the previous meeting in Northallerton, the group had agreed to the development of HBSMR v.5, which will move all the associated spatial data into the main SQL database. Exegesis demonstrated the development version of HBSMR v.5, Maplink v.5 and its support for QGIS (a free open source

GIS package). The group discussed the structure and content required for the associated metadata.

vii. BHUG Meeting Report

No meeting since the last ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting, next one not scheduled yet. Likely to remain as more of a virtual group with meetings after HER Forum once a year.

viii. OASIS Management Board

SC highlighted the following points:

- The OASIS team asked for me to post a blog on the OASIS blog, which I've finally done, as has Mark Barrett. Mine focused on the use of DOIs and using them to enhance data for HER search requests.
- OASIS records signed off and type of event. Possible issue with some types of event records not being signed off, such as geophysical surveys, which could create a bias for research

National Reports

- England. I suggested it would be useful also to know how many records were being signed off by Mark Barrett, and how many HERs were actually doing their own validation (Not a huge number I'm guessing, and if so this could be an issue for HIAS?).
- Over 500 EH reports were now linked to the ADS Grey Lit Library.
- Scotland. Doing well with validation their reports, although an issue with the Highlands Council is creating problems with units, and there is no HER cover for Inverclyde Council.
- HERALD/OASIS redevelopment workshop held in Edinburgh. Most people supportive of the OASIS idea, that it provides easy access to the relevant data set, and easy access to the Grey Literature. The workshop also recommended add in the museums sector into the form to record and 'track' the deposition of archives .
- Wales. Catherine has had meetings with 3 of the 4 Welsh HER officers about their possible use of the OASIS system to directly upload Grey Literature and an 'enhanced bibliographic record' from the HER database
- Northern Ireland. Catherine has met with the Historic Environment Division (the SMR and NMR for NI) of the Northern Ireland Environment division and showed them the OASIS form and how it might used by them. The ADS will expand the current OASIS to include NI in order that they could review the form, trial it, and report back so changes can be implemented for HERALD. This means adding their requirements alongside the Scottish and Welsh ones when redeveloping the form.

Heritage Information Access Strategy (HIAS)

- An internal EH board and an external advisory board have been sent up to investigate a number of broad issues within Historic England, and HERALD may form one of the work packages they will be forming. This would be the current OASIS Management Board, plus possibly IHBC and IfA).

HERALD Survey

Summary report has been produced, and here are some of the main points:

- Variable level of understanding about OASIS (function, purpose , etc.), and the Grey Lit Library. Mostly within parts of the HE sector not yet fully using it, but also EH, units, and academics. So more training and publicity needed to engage with data producers and consumers.
- The OASIS system should support the development of different levels of interaction with OASIS. Significant minority of HERs who don't want to interact with OASIS, but value access to the Grey Literature online with the added benefit of an archiving solution. These HERs could be part of a very minimal version of the OASIS form. Other HERs who do use OASIS in their work flows could continue to collect and use the full event record.
- HERs need to be able to transfer data automatically between HER and OASIS to allow for HERs to contribute to or benefit from the data which is in OASIS at the point in the work flow that fits with them.

- OASIS system to be extended to include the historic built environment and other 'specialist areas'.
- Recommendation for a facility to upload 'backlog' grey literature; this is grey literature that reports non-current archaeological work or may be digitised (scanned) reports.
- Also I think that there was a suggestion of keeping it OASIS, rather than renaming it HERALD

Next OASIS Management Board Meeting: 28th April

ix. Report from regional HER Forums

a. East of England HER Forum

Central Bedfordshire. Some funds have been made available to digitise some photographs and negatives. It is hoped this can be continued in future years. Enquiries remain stable and in line with recent years. Descriptions are currently being changed over the V4 'Devon model'.

Bedford Borough. Recently completed an audit pilot with EH and are awaiting feedback meeting. We are currently completely swamped by DC & HER work, several big projects including Riverside North development and the final link of the Bedford Bypass. Listed Building enhancement work being undertaken, cleaning up designation records, creating a GIS layer and matching to (and correcting) entries on the NHLE.

Peterborough. The bespoke HER has been redeveloped and is now compatible with GIS Innogistics. Consisting of 3 interacting databases; Monuments, Activities and Archives, the Monuments link to the existing Images and Documents database. Information in the Monuments database will be made available online on the PCC corporate website. The Peterborough HER has also moved to the Town Hall. They also had a graduate volunteer working with them for five months.

Norfolk. Alice Cattermole has now returned from maternity leave. Enquiries are up, possibly many arising from use of the Norfolk Explorer website. The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic enhancement project is finished – 1700 finds now have detailed descriptions and are linked to 1500 monument records. All Palaeolithic items have been photographed, new identifications made, and drawings made of previously undocumented items. Producing guidance with planners on how to deal with these sites as the project has highlighted a lack of existing guidance. Other projects include the Brecks landscape partnership project and the outsourcing of grey literature scanning. Plans to integrate Norwich UAD data into the HER are afoot. The PAS team are also very busy.

Hertfordshire. IT problems are now desperate, planned migration to Windows 7 in summer failed and IT have suggested they wait until they begin rolling out Windows 8 (despite the fact there are no current plans to do so). Isobel Thompson is looking to reduce to 3 days per week but has now secured assistance from another member of staff with a background in environmental science. The Chilterns AONB Conservation Board is setting up a project to study the Chilterns hillforts and an HLF bid is currently being drawn up.

Cambridgeshire. Upgraded to HBSMR v.4 (currently hosted internally but exploring opportunities for remote hosting). The charging system (whereby HER searches are commissioned by DC officers and sent out with the archaeological brief) has been widely accepted. We have welcomed a newly created 0.6 FTE HER post to cover HER work. We moved offices, with a reduction of space and loss of HER visitor PC. We have been working with our EH Regional Science Advisor Zoe Outram to help disseminate collated archaeomagnetic data to HERs and also at future recording practices to better facilitate this. The sampling technique has been added to the event thesaurus as a result.

Suffolk. County Archaeologist dismissed at the end of November 2014, appeal process is ongoing and no further details at present. The work of the County Archaeologist has been spread across team. Digitisation of grey literature completed, now looking to digitise secondary files. A 6-month Bradford placement is starting soon, focussing on document preparation for scanning. Commercial enquiries up and the Suffolk Explorer website busy, facilitating more targeted enquiries. The Norfolk NMP team are looking at the coasts & heaths AONB area (new sites recorded). A project design for the creation of a UAD for Ipswich is in draft, to include direct integration into the HER, hopefully starting in July. The Ipswich NMP enhancement (Block 2) is now underway, to be completed by March 2015. As of February the SCC field team will be a community unit and not part of the County Council, and also relocating.

Essex. Office move imminent, with loss of desks and storage space, HER enquiries are up. Having revised charges, we have brought in average of £1780 a month over the last 6 months, compared with an average of £536 for the same period in 2013. Ongoing projects include the National Heritage at Risk Grade II Project: Testing the National Framework. EH are developing a national framework, consisting of an online recording tool and accompanying training package, aimed at collecting and maintaining nationally consistent Grade II listed building data and providing volunteers with the guidance and skills to undertake condition surveys. This project aims to test usability and impact of the emerging framework through the use of local volunteers supported by heritage professionals, in order to ensure the nationally developed tools function at local level (two areas chosen; one urban - Harlow New Town and one rural – Clavering). The results will also update the Essex Buildings at Risk Registers and the Essex HER, as well as providing groups and individuals with news skills. Volunteers currently being trained. The Essex aerial reconnaissance project (2012-14) funded by EH included nearly 12 hours of flying. New sites recorded and some SM monitoring completed, including some on the 'HatR' register.

b. East Midlands HER Forum

In the East Midlands the last HER meeting was on the 3 December 2014. There has been little change in the HER Services generally although almost all HERs are expecting further pressure from cuts to local government spending over the next few years.

Lincolnshire is undergoing restructuring and Historic Environment Services appear at the moment to be stable. The staff consultation on the changes is imminent and until this is available staff are unsure of any implications for the HER. There will be an office move this year, with less space available, and this is currently timetabled for May/June.

In Lincoln City the Heritage Officer who managed the heritage database has now retired. The post was advertised but not filled. The Lincoln City DC archaeologist will shortly be taking over this role for two days a week on a temporary basis.

Northamptonshire lost their Assistant HER post in October and the HER is now back down to one person. Further changes are expected over the next twelve months or so but no details are yet available.

There are no reported issues from the other HERs in the Region.

c. London HER

No report.

d. North West HER Forum

Ben Croxford of Merseyside Environmental Advisory Service hosted the ALGAO NW HER meeting at their offices in Bootle. Curatorial services in the NW continue to be under a great deal of pressure.

Merseyside: The Merseyside HER has made great strides in digitising the old paper SMR and is now planning for the incorporation of the grey literature, the known backlog of which is estimated at 460 reports. The project has utilised c.280 hours of volunteer time from four volunteers.

Lancashire: the County Archaeologist's post is set to be cut in March 2016. The HER Officer is now splitting his time between Lancashire HER and Cumbria HER, who have been without a HER officer in post for some time.

Cheshire: The Shared Service Project Review, which is looking at the functions of the service, is almost complete. The public consultation on the future of the service, which was undertaken late last year, received a comparatively high number of responses. Of particular note was the high level of customer satisfaction which was typically in the region 85 to 95%, and 93% for the HER in particular. The County Archaeologist, who was retained to complete the review, will be leaving at the end of March.

Greater Manchester: GMAAS and the Centre for Applied Archaeology will be joining the School of Environment and Life Sciences later this year (within the University of Salford). This will entail yet another move of office! However, there should be some good synergy with research, teaching and enterprise within the School.

e. South East HER Forum

No meeting since the last ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting

f. South West HER Forum.

The South West HER Forum has not met since the last ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting.

g. West Midlands HER Forum

The last West Midlands HER Forum was hosted by Staffordshire County Council in Stafford on 3rd Nov 2014.

Staffing Updates: Anna Wilson left Coventry City Council on 12th November to take up a four year post with Civic Voice. Chris Patrick will be covering the HER until Anna has been replaced.

Herefordshire are now down to 3 FTEs as Peter Dorling (their last remaining externally-funded project archaeologist) left at the end of June.

Mark Stretton (Conservation Officer) is now looking after the Sandwell HER and hopes to attend future ALGOA WM HER Forum meetings.

In Shropshire Charlotte Orchard has now fully taken up her role as Archaeological Advisor while Giles Carey has joined them from Warwickshire (to replace Charlotte). Mick Krupa is likely to retire soon (in January or February), although it is hoped that his post will be replaced.

Will Steele has replaced Giles Carey at Warkwickshire. Both Will and John Robinson have contracts running until July, although it is hoped that they will be kept on after this.

Mike Shaw has now retired from Wolverhampton City Council. Ellie Ramsey has taken over working part time (23 hours a week for Wolverhampton and 15 hours per month for Walsall). Wolverhampton also now have a volunteer working with them two days a week. The volunteer is an ex-masters student from Birmingham University and has therefore been able to pick up the work very well.

Olly Russell has now left Worcestershire. Recruitment is underway for Olly's post but in the meantime Aisling Nash will cover 60% HER managers role with Andy Weobly (an ex-placement student) who is currently HER Assistant covering her HER work. Aisling will still carry on with dc work, covering two districts with Mike Glyde covering the rest as before. Worcestershire also have two new staff. Dennis Williams (a returner) will provide maternity cover for Teagan Cornah while Ben Shears is with them as a student placement for 6 months.

The PAS has a new West Midlands intern to help Peter Reavill, Angie Bolton and Teresa Gilmore with their workload. Her name is Victoria Alnatt and she started on 28th October. As with previous interns she will be based at Ludlow with Peter.

Other News: Herefordshire HER should now have moved into their new archives and records centre, although following the move the service is likely to be closed to visitors until the end of January.

Warwickshire, Worcestershire and Staffordshire have secured funding from English Heritage through their 'Capacity Building' fund for a series of Neighbourhood Planning workshops. The workshops are aimed at helping local communities to develop the historic environment elements of their local plans.

The PAS team has seen an increase in the number of metal detecting clubs and have also been involved with the police in several instances of illegal detecting and heritage crime.

HER Provision in the West Midlands: The issue of HER (and advice) provision across the West Midlands. With Mike Hodder having retired from Birmingham, Anna Wilson leaving Coventry, Walsall only having limited input from Ellie Ramsey at Wolverhampton and neither Sandwell or Dudley having dedicated HER officers/archaeological advisors (although both are supporting the HER through existing Conservation staff). It was agreed that the issue would be taken forward to the ALGAO West Midlands meeting and raised at the next ALGAO HER Committee meeting.

Date and Venue for Next Meeting: Herefordshire have offered to host the next meeting in their new building. It was agreed to aim for a date in early March if Herefordshire are able to accommodate this.

h. Yorkshire, Humber and North East Regional HER working party

No meeting since the last ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting, next one due in April 2015

9. Country updates.

i. ALGAO Cymru HER report

Heritage Bill. The Wales Heritage Bill is still on course to go out to public consultation during this spring with Royal Assent being given in spring 2016. It is still expected that HERs will be made statutory by the Bill, and draft guidance for local authorities and benchmark documents have been produced by Cadw and are currently being consulted on within the HER community.

Condition recording. The HERs have joined Cadw and other interested parties in looking at improving the ways in which condition is recorded by field work and within the HERs. This process will aim to produce a new national standard for condition recording to coincide with the production of the Heritage Bill in 2016.

HER software. The Wales HER software suite continues to develop - in particular in the past year with the development of a 3D LiDAR processing module developed in conjunction with The South Downs National Park. The four Welsh HERs and the two English users of the software are soon to embark on a branding exercise and the production of a web site and a revised demo of the suite, to bring the software to a wider public.

Work also continues on a Welsh interface for OASIS, which should allow ADS to harvest and incorporate event records, and their attendant grey literature, directly from the HER.

Glastir. There have been various hold ups with the next round of Glastir, the all Wales agri-environment scheme, and it does not now look like the next round of applications will be available for consultation with HERs until after the end of the financial year. This interruption to the expected funding stream at the end of this financial year has caused staffing problems in some HERs and assurances are being sought from the Welsh Government that new funding for the production of Historic Environment Feature management reports will be available from the start of next 2015-16.

ii. Scotland SMRs/HERs

The Scottish SMR Forum met on 19 November, 2014.

The Hillforts Atlas Project – Strat Halliday gave an overview of the UK wide project and its aims. He is undertaking the Scottish part of the project, and is mostly using Canmore as a source of data for the atlas. He noted that through examining Canmore he had carried out a large amount of data cleaning relating to enclosures and earthworks, which will be supplied to RCAHMS and the HERs/SMRs in due course.

Scottish Borders Historic Land Use Values (HLUV) pilot – Graeme Cavers of AOC Archaeology gave results of the HLUV pilot carried out for Scottish Borders Council, with the aim of identifying 'constraints and opportunities in heritage management'. GIS model assessed squares in High, Medium and Low values, based upon Potential, Sensitivity and Survival. This produced polygons for the area, and the limitations of the model were discussed. G Cavers suggested that it was probably appropriate for a general regional/national dataset but not for smaller scale analysis. C Bowles noted that the pilot was geared towards people who aren't heritage specialists so that they could get an overview/feel for the area but would still need to consult with local archaeologist etc.

Inverclyde Council – Still no archaeology service provision.

North Lanarkshire Council – Archaeological advice being provided by Murray Cook, archaeologist (part-time) for Stirling Council.

Aberdeen City Council - After the retirement of Judith Stones, a temporary arrangement has been made with the Archaeology Service for Aberdeenshire, Moray and Angus Councils to provide a minimal service of archaeological advice. A more formal SLA, to include HER enhancement as well as advice, is being discussed.

The SMR Technical Working Group met on 28 January, 2015.

Scottish Gov't collective approach to spatial data – Iain Mackay from the Improvement Service gave a presentation, and outlined how the IS is planning to collate spatial data from all 32 councils in Scotland and provide it as WFS and WMS. This would satisfy the statutory requirement for INSPIRE compliance, as well as the One Scotland Mapping Agreement,

which aims to make local and national government spatial data Open. They are currently running a pilot with a few small datasets, including Tree Preservation Orders, and using FME software to merge data into one format.

SCHARP (Scotland's Coastal Heritage at Risk Project) – the project has been given an 18 month extension until August 2016. HERs will continue to get downloads of data from the project, mostly condition surveys by volunteers, and photographs. At the end of the project RCAHMS and HERs will be given a complete set of data from the project for their area.

Maritime data – the RCAHMS Project Adair has generated a large number of new records within Canmore, and extends the area covered out to the 200 mile limit offshore. A discussion was held regarding the vagaries of the data, and ways to depict this on both PastMap and within HERs.

10. Any Other Business

i. Assessing the Value of Community Generated Historic Environment Research

Dan Miles (English Heritage) has written a project tender to assess the amount of research being undertaken by community groups, and the potential scholarly value that this research could have. The tender will be posted on HER Forum by Dan next week.

ii. Portable Antiquities Scheme / HER liaison

Following on from the Ploughzone Archaeology discussions on HER Forum in 2013, Magnus Alexander (English Heritage) is about to undertake a project studying the use of PAS data in HERs, and identifying barriers to use of PAS data in HERs.

The ALGAO-UK HER Committee noted that barriers include licencing data and keeping it up-to-date. The committee supported this project as timely and useful. **Action: BW** to circulate the project proposal to the committee for comments.

iii. English Heritage Projects

JG noted that the HIPs team liaise with any projects that affect HERs to ensure they get early consultation with either the ALGAO-UK HER Committee (if a national project) or the relevant local HER (if a local project).

iv. Roman Rural Settlement in Britain

It was noted that a new development to this ongoing project is to broaden the scope of the rural settlement project to include all the small towns (walled and unwalled). The project will proceed with data collection immediately and will therefore be contacting a number of HERs to request further pdfs of relevant reports. A note to this effect has gone out to HER Forum.

v. HER Histories

Stewart Bryant is writing an 'HER Histories' project as part of the EngLaID project. **Action: BW** to circulate documents about this to the committee.

vi. Association of Gardens Trusts

Verena McCaig (Historic Landscape Project Officer, Association of Gardens Trusts) is setting up a regional forum in the North of England. It was suggested she talks to the regional HER Forum in these areas.

vii. EngLaID

BW highlighted the fact that the EngLaID project have put-together a draft licence for the publication of HER data. As this just gives thanks to the HERs for the data, and doesn't publish any detailed data, the committee thought this is appropriate. **Action: BW** to circulate this draft licence to the committee.

For detailed case-studies, the EngLaID project will liaise with individual HERs covered by these areas to agree licence and publishing terms for any data used.

viii. Heritage Gateway

Updates to Heritage Gateway have been put on-hold due to staff availability and restrictions on being able to update the website. Adverts (advertising the data available on Heritage Gateway) will be appearing in various publications soon.

11. Date of Next Meeting

11am to 4pm on Wednesday 3rd June at English Heritage West Midlands Regional Office, Birmingham.

Appendix 1: The following table describes the OPEN ACTIONS.

Action	Remit	Comment	Status
Get ALGAO Exec to agree changes to website to ensure that minutes, agendas, HER advice note and all other HER content on ALGAO website can be viewed by all.	BW		Open
Ensure content of http://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her is fit-for-purpose (including updating IfP link).	BW		Open
Liaise with ALGAO Executive to include the Professional Access section of the Heritage Gateway website incorporated within the ALGAO website.	BW		Open
Circulate 'quick wins' presentation.	BW	Via committee or via HER Forum.	Open
Liaise with English Heritage and comment on Heritage 2020 draft Action Plan, and ensure HER Strategy fits within Heritage 2020.	BW		Open
Draft an update to the ALGAO-UK HER committee terms-of-reference, for comment and approval.	BW	BW to circulate to the next Executive meeting	Open
Speak to the Warwickshire GIS team and to the LGA/Defra about what work would be required to go under Annex III of INSPIRE; ready to discuss at next ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting.	BW		Open
Suzy Blake (Staffordshire HER) to look at the paperwork for the submitting new datasets for OS exemption (i.e. HER Monument, Event, HLC data etc.) in time to be able to give an update on this at the next ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting.	SB		Open
Inform ALGAO Executive that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee want to see better representation on the HIAS Advisory Board (and also the HIAS Programme Board) for HERs.	BW		Open
Discuss audits at regional HER committees, to look at costs/benefits and support each other.	All English regional reps.		Open
Inform the ALGAO Executive that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee strongly state that any agreement with Natural England over Countryside Stewardship will need to be agreed by the ALGAO-UK HER Committee, and have a good consultation process with the HER community.	BW		Open
Inform the ALGAO Executive that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee advice is not to do the National HLC project, and instead to look at accessing existing data via the ADS (or via HERs). If there was still a desire to do this sort of project, that there would need to be much	BW		Open

more (and better) consultation via the ALGAO-UK HER Committee, the HER Forum and workshops with HER officers.			
Circulate minutes of ALGAO England Executive to the committee.	BW		Open
Circulate minutes of EH HDM/ALGAO HER Liaison Meeting.	BW		Open
Circulate project proposal for project studying the use of PAS data in HERs to the committee for comments.	BW		Open
Circulate documents about Stewart Bryant's 'HER Histories' project to the committee.	BW		Open
Circulate draft EngLaID HER licence to the committee.	BW		Open

Appendix 2: Abbreviations and links

For abbreviations and links, please see the Informing the Future of the Past Glossary at <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/ifp/Wiki.jsp?page=Glossary>