

Digging on Archaeological sites: An introduction to the theory and practice of archaeological excavation.

Start date 16th June 2017**End date** 18th June 2017**Venue** Madingley Hall
Madingley
Cambridge**Tutor** Prof. Stephen Upex**Course code** 1617NRX067**Director of Programmes**

Emma Jennings

For further information on this course, please contactPublic Programme Coordinator, Clare Kerr
clare.kerr@ice.cam.ac.uk or 01223 746237**To book** See: www.ice.cam.ac.uk or telephone 01223 746262

Tutor biography

Stephen Upex has written on a wide variety of topics related to British landscape history and archaeology, and his interests range from prehistoric settlement, Roman and Saxon farming to medieval open fields systems – a topic which formed the subject of his PhD dissertation. He taught at the University of Brunei from 1996- 2008 and has also published extensively on aspects of South East Asian archaeology and culture. He has excavated widely within the East of England on Prehistoric, Roman and Saxon sites and is currently researching the landscape area around the Roman town of *Durobrivae* in northern Cambridgeshire. He has contributed to several Time Team programmes and his book on the *Romans in the East of England* was published in 2008. He is a member of the Chartered Institute of Archaeologists and a fellow of the Society of Antiquaries of London.

Course programme

Friday

Please plan to arrive between 16:30 and 18:30. You can meet other course members in the bar which opens at 18:15. Tea and coffee making facilities are available in the study bedrooms.

19:00	Dinner
20:30 – 22:00	Session 1: Archaeological work generally / the way sites operate / sample excavations
22:00	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Saturday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	Session 2: Pre-excavation surveys 1: Air photography / documents and the digging of sites.
10:30	Coffee
11:00 – 12:30	Session 3: Pre-excavation surveys 2: Field walking / geophysical surveys / contour plotting / phosphate sampling / soils / metal detecting / general ground surveys.
13:00	Lunch
14:00 – 16:00	Free
16:00	Tea
16:30 – 18:00	Session 4: Digging the site and how to dig.
18:00 – 18:30	Free
18:30	Dinner
20:00 – 21:30	Session 5: Dealing with finds and post excavation processing etc - a practical session looking at archaeological material from current excavations –pottery, coins, etc.
21:30	Terrace bar open for informal discussion

Sunday

07:30	Breakfast
09:00 – 10:30	Session 6: On site sampling: bones / snails / pollen; plus drawings, sections, plans, and what they tell us.
10:30	Coffee

11:00 – 12:30	Session 7: Dating and phasing of a site. Sample excavations and publications
12:45	Lunch

The course will disperse after lunch

Course syllabus

Aims:

1. To provide the students with a basic approach to how archaeological sites are identified and the range of techniques for surveying sites prior to excavation.
2. To provide an overall view of how most archaeological sites are excavated from a practical and scientific point of view and how site dating is formulated.
3. To outline the process and methods of recording on archaeological sites.
4. To give an overview of the sorts of finds which can be found on archaeological sites and how such finds are processed.
5. To help people who have never dug on archaeological sites before and give them the confidence to deal with practical excavation.

Content:

The topics covered during the weekend will include basic aspects which deal with how archaeological sites are identified and discovered, and then move on to deal with pre-excavation survey methods such as geophysical, contour and soil surveys. Excavation methods and the ways of recording sites through photography, plans and sections will also be covered along with some of the scientific methods of interpreting sites and their dates. The weekend will also contain practical sessions where participants can handle and recognise archaeological material from various excavated sites and go through the processes of taking a typical excavation site and formulating the reporting aspects of the site which lead to publication.

Presentation of the course:

The course will focus on the shared exploration of the topic through lectures, discussion sessions and a practical approach to excavation by handling material from recent excavations.

As a result of the course, within the constraints of the time available, students should be able to:

1. Understand how sites are first identified, and then surveyed and excavated.
2. Understand how sites are recorded using various methods during excavation.
3. Recognise some of the types of material which comes from the excavation of sites.
4. Feel confident about working on archaeological sites in the future.

Reading and resources list

Listed below are a number of texts that might be of interest for future reference, but do not need to be bought (or consulted) for the course.

Author	Title	Publisher and date
Renfrew, C, and Bahn, P.	<i>Archaeology: theories, methods and Practice</i>	Thames and Hudson 2008 (5 th ed)
Barker, P.	<i>The techniques of Archaeological Excavation</i>	Batsford 1996
Wilkinson, P.	<i>Archaeology: What is it, Where is it and How to do it.</i>	Archaeopress, Oxford 2007
Green, K.	<i>Archaeology : An Introduction</i>	Routledge, 2005
Chris Catlin	<i>A practical handbook of Archaeology</i>	Hermes house 2013

Note Students of the Institute of Continuing Education are entitled to 20% discount on books published by Cambridge University Press (CUP) which are purchased at the Press bookshop, 1 Trinity Street, Cambridge (Mon-Sat 9am – 5:30pm, Sun 11am – 5pm). A letter or email confirming acceptance on to a current Institute course should be taken as evidence of enrolment.

Information correct as of: 19 April 2017