

Minutes of a Committee Meeting of The KAS Fieldwork Committee (FWC) held on 18th February 2023 at 10.30am in the KAS Library

Present: Keith Parfitt (KP), Chris Blair-Myers (CBM), Kevin Fromings (KF), Sue Oldham (SO), Elizabeth Blanning (EB)

Apologies/Not Present: Anne Sassin (AS), Clive Drew (CD)

The meeting opened at 10.36am

1. Welcome

KP opened the meeting.

2. Acceptance of the Minutes of the meeting on October 29th 2022

The minutes of October 29th 2022 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Conferences

Review of January Fieldwork Conference

It was agreed that this was a successful event with some 90 attendees. The Events team is finding their feet more in the organisation of conferences and have now set down a process and timetable for event management. The committee commissioning the event is to be responsible for upfront contact and confirmation of the speakers, and also for on-the-day management such as ticket checking, with one person named as point of contact with the Events team. It was also noted that the University calendar is hampering the confirmation of events as the venue cannot now be confirmed more than 5 weeks in advance; also that the external communication was not fully professional (it appeared that internal messaging was re-used); also that we should ensure that, where possible, we have a balanced set of speakers (eg there were no women speaking in January and no Kent-based speakers for the CBA SE conference in November 2023).

November Conference Planning

CBM will speak with the Defence committee to see if they want to run with this. If so, they would deal directly with the Events team and the FWC would have no involvement.

If the Defence Committee cannot take on the November conference, then it was proposed that a Prehistoric theme would be appropriate, suggested subjects being Lees Court, causewayed enclosures in Sheppey, Thanet, Eccles, Ringlesmere. Further discussion on this will be at the June FWC committee meeting once we have confirmation of the Defence Committee's intentions.

In addition it was noted that KAS as an organisation intends to hold 4 conferences per year. EB has contacted Helen Geake but received no response; possibly Andrew Richardson could follow up as he corresponds with her quite regularly. There are quite a few events already suggested, but a problem in finding affordable venues large enough to hold them (up to 400 people) especially in the west of Kent.

4. Fieldwork Forum on March 18th

It was suggested that this should be billed as a Prehistoric Flint Day, with a refresher course in how to identify flints on site. KP will contact Paul Hart and Frank Beresford to see if they will speak and KP will also contribute where necessary. Also potentially to contact Chris Butler in Sussex; that would mean paying him a fee, but we have budget for this. Representatives of the affiliated archaeological societies will be invited to bring specimens, and to start a discussion on whether we should start a Kent lithics study group.

The event will be held in the barn at Badlesmere from 10am-1pm, followed by a short local walk. A heads-up will be given to Elizabeth Roberts regarding the fact that there may be a larger group of people in the

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area that day.

The Events team does not handle these types of events. Since SO will be away for much of the run up to the day, SO will request CD to set up a FWC Forum mailbox including all committee members so that this can be taken forward.

EB suggested that Ann Watson may have a list of affiliated society addresses, as the current address list is out of date. SO will follow up.

SO will draft a mail to be sent to the address list and send it from the FWC mailbox so that replies come direct to this. Attendees will be requested to RSVP so that we know the number of attendees, and advised to bring their own refreshments.

KP will be point of contact for this event.

5. Budgets

Budgets are agreed for this year. There was no further discussion on this topic.

6. Grant Applications and Payments

The new bank account is now operational, and there is also a new Finance director – Brie Thomas.

Requests for payment should be sent to the Finance Director who gets authorisation from Kerry, and she notifies CBM or Ed to make the payment.

Payment of Grant to DROP

This was approved at the Trustees meeting on January 14th and should be paid asap.

Payment of Grant to SPAB for Boxley Abbey funding

This was re-approved at the Trustees meeting on January 14th and should be paid asap.

Grant for Lyminge – Gabor Thomas

This was agreed in principle at the Trustees meeting on January 14th, with some outstanding questions to be discussed between Clive and Keith. SO to contact CD to see he has resolved these with Gabor.

Grant for Sts Peter and Paul Church Project - Ken Dark

The last update on this was from Kerry on 9/1 when he met Ken, and Ken was to speak with CD. It was noted that there would be openings for KAS volunteers as part of the excavation.

Grant for Slayhill Saltings Kiln Analysis/Upchurch Pottery Archive

CBM went with Richard to speak with Ian and Gerald. There are 307 boxes of pottery which are very well documented, with the sites illustrated and recorded. This comprises 80% sherds from multiple eras, including 8 cremation groups. The main purpose of the grant is to ensure that the collection is fully documented and archived.

KAS' charitable status does not permit funding for commercial purposes, i.e. from a commercial company. It was therefore agreed that the Upchurch Archaeology Research Group should be asked to re-submit the application, citing that the grant would be used for specialist support.

The request meets the requirement for publication in Arch Cant, and the offering of a study day to disseminate the findings to a wider audience. KAS is interested in a reference collection of Upchurch ware, and the current project regarding Kiln 3 will contribute to this.

The FWC will support the Archaeobotany, Pottery, Illustrations and Drawings, and Archive Audit elements of the application, but not the Kiln reconstruction (at Butser) or Travel and Accommodation aspects.

However the grant amount required is outside the remit of the FWC, and so would need to be recommended to the Trustees to determine the support that KS will offer.

Next steps:

- SO will contact Louise Rayner to advise that the FWC have discussed the grant and give a brief review of the outcome

- CBM will talk to Ian and Gerald about re-submission to conform to the requirements of KAS, which must be done before it goes to the Trustees

7. Research Groups Update

CBM has progressed the pottery correspondence between classification systems, based on the national collection and incorporating Mola and CAT. He is now looking at the Essex classifications, and incorporating more recent finds so that it covers North West Europe.

8. Fieldwork Projects

Lees Court

KP has permission to dig the big ring ditch, and this will start after Easter until about mid-May. It is not planned to empty the whole ditch, and it was unclear as to whether Richard has already dug this.

Trottscliffe

CBM said that consent has been granted by landowner and tenant farmer to open entire east range in this year's dig, which will be a 2-week project subject to the cropping cycle. It will depend on what we find this year as to what happens next, but it is likely to be a multi-year project which the landowner is likely to support. Due to the hypocaust found, this is likely to be a bath suite, but no stokehole has been found to date. We already know the villa layout, but it would be helpful to extend the mag survey to match the full res cover already done, as this may reveal more ditches/pits.

There is a lot of plough damage, and it is unclear whether the pounded chalk found is the floor base. A test pit to figure out the geological sequence in a void would help.

9. Any Other Business

Website Queries

One of the new trustees may take over the responsibility for ensuring there is a Volunteer coordinator. One proposal is that the current membership secretary will handle this through Subscriber. Subscriber is building a framework for us to populate, which will also deal with Direct Debits etc. This should start in the next 3-4 weeks.

KAS-Accredited Museum

A legal Memorandum of Understanding has been signed between KAS and Maidstone Museum. This has not been circulated more widely to date.

Digitisation

The scanning and photographic equipment is at Marsham St, but the project needs to be planned in terms of the material to be used and where it should be stored. For the FWC, the collections (eg Ozengell) are of most interest. The software used must also be compatible with both the museum software and KAS website software.

10. Next Fieldwork Committee Meeting Date

Saturday June 17th 2023 to be held in the KAS Library at Maidstone Museum at 10.30am.

The meeting closed at 13.11.