

**Portable Antiquities Scheme response to York Archaeological Trust Conservation Advice recommendations**

- A) Further training for Finds Liaison Officers in e.g. microscopy and object investigation procedures. Update their conservation advice. Training for new Finds Liaison Officers.**

The British Museum's Department of Conservation, Documentation and Science have agreed to deliver at least two sessions *per annum* to Finds Liaison Officers and the wider public. It is key that new Finds Liaison Officers have training in conservation advice. A number of Finds Liaison Officers have purchased microscopes, in light of the work of the York Archaeological Trust, but resources are limited.

- B) Greater Finds Liaison Officer use of regional conservator contacts, for e.g. radiography and site retrieval, also e.g. authentication where find-site report accuracy may be in doubt.**

The York Archaeological Trust, working with the Finds Liaison Officers, provided a list of local conservator contacts, which the Portable Antiquities Scheme will endeavour to update. Finds Liaison Officers have limited budgets which might be used towards radiography, but are unlikely to cover on-site conservation work; invariably if the recovery of the find is complicated the Finds Liaison Officer will depend on the good will of an archaeological contractor/unit or the relevant funding bodies. Authentication of a find-site would normally be part of a Police investigation and outside the remit of the Scheme.

- C) Continue training sessions for metal-detectorists and community archaeological groups in good conservation practice and advice on sources of materials and services. This could be run on a much larger scale than currently, with separate funding.**

The York Archaeological Trust, working with the Finds Liaison Officers, organised a series of successful Conservation Workshops for finders, mostly targeted at metal-detectorists. It would be highly desirable to do similar events again, which may be linked in with national Finds Road shows (planned again for 2007) and the British Museum has agreed to deliver one session *per annum*.

- D) Update PAS website, write articles on conservation issues for metal-detecting journals.**

The Portable Antiquities Scheme would hope to be able to update Conservation Advice on its website as appropriate. There may be scope for inviting conservators in the British Museum and external bodies to contribute to the metal-detecting magazines, perhaps as part of the bi-monthly contribution to *Treasure Hunting*.

**E) Secure funding for regional conservation service providers to PAS.**

This seems unlikely to happen in the short term. The Portable Antiquities Scheme had no immediate plans to organise such a bid, and has not sought advice from the Portable Antiquities Advisory Group on the matter.

**F) Regularise use of British Museum and National Museum & Galleries of Wales conservators and resources for preparing 'treasure' material for the Treasure Valuation Committee.**

This is outside the remit of the Portable Antiquities Scheme and is being discussed elsewhere.

**Further information: House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, Science and Heritage recommendation**

A recent report of the House of Lords Science and Technology Committee, Science and Heritage (Nov 2006), in recommending a national strategy for heritage science states (para 8.40): "wherever possible it would be desirable to build on existing achievements [in developing a national strategy for heritage science], such as ... initiatives in specific areas such as the Portable Antiquities Scheme, coordinated by the British Museum."