



RENDLESHAM REVEALED

ANGLO-SAXON LIFE IN SOUTH-EAST SUFFOLK



End of Project Evaluation

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Front Image: The excavations at Rendlesham in 2022, showing the excavated hall and boundary ditch (right hand trench) and associated rubbish dump (left hand trench) (taken by Jim Pullen).

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Introduction

“Everyone involved in Rendlesham Revealed - Project Team, partners, and volunteers - have contributed to a major advance in our understanding of the early East Anglian kingdom and the wider North Sea world of which it was a part.”

Professor Christopher Scull, Principal Academic Advisor

Rendlesham is the largest and wealthiest settlement of its time known in England. First recorded by the monk and historian Bede, writing in the 8th century, it was an important place for over 300 years, from the 5th to the 8th centuries, as a royal residence and administrative centre in the early East Anglian kingdom. Its exact location had been lost until 2008 when it was rediscovered by archaeological investigations led by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) to mitigate illegal metal detecting. Since then, a community of local volunteers, landowners, farmers, professionals and expert academics have worked together over 15 years to reveal the story of Anglo-Saxon Rendlesham.

This work has continued with *Rendlesham Revealed* (the Project), a four-year community archaeology project engaging local people as volunteers to investigate the Anglo-Saxon archaeology of south-east Suffolk. The Project is led by Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service (SCCAS) and funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF). A partnership group of 21 organisations and stakeholders supported the Project, bringing additional small grants and in-kind contributions.

Alongside a three-year programme of community archaeological fieldwork, *Rendlesham Revealed* delivered five other strands of activity: specialist post-excavation training to interpret the results of fieldwork; experimental archaeology; wider public engagement to share the Project results and interpretation to engage local people and visitors with the significance of the archaeology in the local area; online and digital resources; and creating a legacy of local volunteer capacity.

Rendlesham Revealed is a noteworthy success story that has considerably exceeded its aims and all targets and measures of success. As a community archaeology project, it is an exemplar of its type.

The Project has delivered significant outcomes for Heritage, People, and Communities, and leaves a substantial legacy upon which to build for the future. In its conception and skilled execution, it provides a model of best practice that can and should be followed by others, and to that end it is essential that the achievements of and learning from *Rendlesham Revealed* are celebrated and widely shared.

The Project ran from January 2020 to September 2024. Annual evaluation reports have been published for each of the four years of the Project, capturing progress and impact.

This end of project evaluation report provides a standalone account of headline numbers, outcomes, and achievements, reflects on the criteria that were necessary for success, and lessons learned that it is hoped will benefit future projects. This report concludes with a summary of the legacy that *Rendlesham Revealed* has generated for the future.

Case studies illustrating the personal impact of the Project for volunteers are presented in the appendix.



Volunteer at the community excavations at Rendlesham

Rendlesham Revealed in Numbers

Rendlesham Revealed has reached a significant audience - engaging **1,565,996** people across all of its activities - both digital and physical.

On average 285 people volunteered per year over the three years of main activity, bringing **the total volunteer participations to 1,222, which exceeds the Project target of 600**. Nearly three-quarters (73%) of volunteers were involved with the archaeological excavations, and there was a high rate of volunteers returning in subsequent years: over one-third (36%) returned for the second season and nearly two-thirds (60%) returned for the third season. The total number of unique volunteers taking part across all Project activity was 540, comprising: 313 general public, 122 schoolchildren and 15 teachers, 28 clients from Suffolk Mind, 28 young people aged 12-17 years and five staff from Suffolk Family Carers, ten Mentors from the local amateur group, ten undergraduate students and three staff from University College London: Institute of Archaeology, and 29 volunteers bringing specialist expertise.

The total equivalent volunteer hours logged were 23,672 over 530 days of activity, giving a **total volunteer non-cash contribution of £438,605**, over three times the original target of £139,950.

There were 90 days excavation, 41 days fieldwalking, 39 days GPS and geophysical survey, five days river valley survey and eight sites surveyed. Post-excavation finds processing took place over 141 sessions with 472 volunteer participations, of which 207 were schoolchildren. A total of 239 participants took part in 22 post-excavation specialist workshops. The experimental archaeology kiln engaged 36 volunteers and additional workshops saw 131 people from priority audiences take part.

Wider outreach activities saw: 2,031 people attending tours and talks; around 4,500 people received the new booklet; roadshows at 12 events across Suffolk which had 100,309 visitors; and 152,443 people had a chance to see the temporary exhibitions at National Trust Sutton Hoo and West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Museum. These wider audiences total **259,283** people, around two and a half times the Project's target.

Digital audiences for the virtual exhibition, walking trail, videos, and booklet total **263,516** - nearly 18 times the target. Wider digital audiences across all social platforms, blog, e-newsletter, and website totalled **1,042,287** - exponentially higher than predicted, contributing two thirds of the total audience for the Project!

1,565,996

people engaged across all project activities, digital and physical

1,222

volunteer participations
exceeding target of 600

540

individual volunteers
based on 60% returning

178

individuals from
priority audiences

£438,605

total volunteer non-cash contributions based on 23,672 hours,
exceeding the original target by over 200%

259K

wider public engaged in
talks, events and
exhibitions

1.3M

digital audiences accessing
resources, blogs, social
media and newsletter

Primary school children excavating at Rendlesham
(taken by Graham Allen)



Outcomes for Heritage, People and Communities

HERITAGE

Rendlesham Revealed has investigated and enhanced the understanding of Anglo-Saxon archaeological heritage in the Deben Valley, promoting better management and protection, and ensuring lasting public access to it.

Rendlesham Revealed has enhanced understanding of known sites and has the added benefit of setting the major Anglo-Saxon sites at Rendlesham and Sutton Hoo in their broader context. The excavation has investigated the unrecorded Anglo-Saxon archaeology of the Deben valley, identifying and recording the archaeological remains at Rendlesham, which are at risk from agricultural damage.

The excavated archive will preserve this information for the future and the artefacts and other finds have been properly cleaned, conserved and packed for Suffolk County Council to curate in the archaeological archives, available for future research and loans to museums. The geophysical survey and fieldwalking surveys have identified and recorded potential archaeology in the Project area.

New information and understanding from the analysis of three years' worth of excavation is detailed in post-excavation assessment reports. All this information will now be used to protect the archaeological heritage by enhancing the publicly accessible Suffolk Historic Environment Record, which provides the evidence base for heritage management through the planning process and is a major resource for public information and academic research.

***Rendlesham Revealed* has been successful in establishing a baseline for monitoring the long-term condition of the buried archaeology at Rendlesham.**

The Project has successfully raised awareness among landowners, land managers and farmers, using the new evidence to promote appropriate and sustainable management of the archaeological resources.

The Project leaves a considerable legacy of understanding and appreciation that will empower local communities to value and protect their archaeological heritage. As a result of *Rendlesham Revealed*, there is lasting public access, physical and intellectual, to the Anglo-Saxon heritage of the Deben valley because:

- new best practice guidance for archaeological investigation will ensure heritage is investigated responsibly by local people and amateur groups, reducing the risk of unintentional damage to the archaeology;
- all project archives, artefacts and other finds will remain fully accessible for the future as they are conserved, catalogued and curated according to best practice;
- training has left a legacy of skilled individuals and organisational networks, supported by SCCAS, that will enable local community groups to take forward future investigation and interpretation of their archaeological heritage.



Volunteers at the community excavations at Rendlesham in 2022 excavating the hall

PEOPLE

***Rendlesham Revealed* has provided structured training opportunities in archaeological investigation, offered diverse programs to encourage engagement with heritage, and had a positive impact on the mental and physical health of young people.**

Through the programme of archaeological fieldwork, the Project provided structured training opportunities for volunteers who learned new skills for the future and connected with their archaeological heritage.

***Rendlesham Revealed* engaged 494 unique individuals as volunteers in an ambitious citizen science project, which has delivered better understanding and interpretation of internationally important Anglo-Saxon archaeological heritage.**

The Project was successful in prioritising audiences who were less likely to engage with archaeology, and in engaging young people, especially young adults, in ways which could contribute to enhancing positive mental health and wellbeing and provide insights into future careers by teaching them new skills. Priority audiences were schoolchildren and their teachers, young carers, and young adults accessing mental health services.

By prioritising volunteering opportunities with the community fieldwork, the Project engaged: 275 general public volunteers, 122 primary schoolchildren and 15 teachers, 28 clients from Suffolk Mind, 28 young people aged 12-17 years and five staff from Suffolk Family Carers. This approach resulted in younger audiences being well represented with the proportion of volunteers aged under 25 exceeding the background population distribution.

Volunteers worked side by side with an exceedingly high-quality core team operating at the top of their profession. The Project has also created a growing community of skilled volunteers through a 'train the trainer' model implemented during GPS training and geophysical survey. For others already working in the field this was an opportunity to share their skills and develop their careers.

Volunteers have benefited from insights into future careers by learning new skills. Across all years of the fieldwork all volunteers' self-reported that learning and skills development were consistently high, covering archaeological investigation, Anglo-Saxon, history and

Suffolk's heritage. Young Carers and Suffolk Mind clients valued being able to record their new skills in their *British Archaeological Jobs Resource (BAJR) Archaeology Skills Passports*, and teachers at Rendlesham school see the value of the project for learning and for inspiring their children – and have learned a great deal themselves.

*"I never thought I'd ever get to do any archaeology properly.
Now I'm switching careers because I realised it is actually possible!!"*

Public Volunteer

Wider public audiences prioritised by the Project included local communities in South-East Suffolk, Ipswich families, and visitors to South-East Suffolk, but also those who were already involved and invested in the archaeology and heritage of Suffolk. These existing audiences included landowners and land managers, local amateur archaeologists and local history societies, metal detectorists, heritage professionals, and District Council planning officers.

Rendlesham Revealed offered a diverse, accessible and flexible programme of activities and digital content, which engaged new and existing audiences. From archaeological fieldwork, site tours, activities, roadshows with pop-up displays, talks, trails, printed booklet, exhibitions (both physical and digital), to accessible blogs, videos and photography, the Project's approach to interpreting and explaining heritage has been to provide multi-layered heritage interpretation in a range of different formats and levels of information, at different times, in order that people can engage in a way that suits their needs and interests.

Fieldwork was followed in near real-time online by a wide audience, through blogs organised into mini-series encouraging the public to follow along as a mix of quick reads and expert articles giving a "behind the scenes" insight. In addition, annual press releases generated positive local, national and international media coverage, the most popular stories relating to the fieldwork results, each generating around 120 pieces of coverage, including BBC, The Times and industry magazines. This impact on the regional and national news agenda can be seen more clearly when compared with a typical County Council news release, which averages just 10-15 pieces of local coverage.

Delivered by a passionate and skilled Project Team, this multi-layered approach has maximised engagement with heritage in terms of both the quality and the number of opportunities to engage, as well as the breadth and depth of reach achieved: audiences over the course of the Project total over 1.5 million people.

Rendlesham Revealed has established a sustainable network of local, regional and national partners, strengthened by the continuation of the Project's Partnership Advisory Group. This has developed a network of heritage professionals and universities that have brought a range of expertise, supported the delivery of Project activities, and enabled knowledge and skills sharing.

Through partnerships with community organisations like the Suffolk Archaeological Field Group (SAFG), the Project provided high-quality training and development opportunities, building a skilled volunteer workforce. SAFG led geophysical surveys for their members to develop their training and skills in magnetometry. A volunteer from the SAFG analysed the data and drafted the reports, which were reviewed and advice given by Professor Chris Gaffney from University of Bradford. This demonstrates a good example of creating links between amateur groups and academics to generate new understanding.

Throughout the Project, there was also a constructive relationship between the archaeological expertise of the core team and the fieldwork volunteers who brought other skills and expertise to the Project. These included professional historians, survey specialists, drone operators, metal detector users, electronic engineers, ceramicists, and a consultant orthopaedic surgeon – all volunteers whose own specialist skills contributed to the Project's success.

Volunteers from Anglian Potters provided expertise in ceramics but were new to archaeology, making links to their contemporary practice and skills and working collaboratively with other skilled experimental archaeology professionals to produce an output.

The forging of new and stronger links between local people, volunteers, amateur groups, academics and archaeological professionals has resulted in new opportunities for future work experience beyond the Project. For example, volunteer drone operators are now involved with other archaeological projects, and trained volunteers from the local amateur group have found their geophysical survey skills in demand at other sites. Volunteers from Anglian Potters will continue with their experimental archaeology, this was a rich and mutually beneficial exchange of expertise and knowledge that will continue into the future.

Rendlesham Revealed had a positive impact on the mental and physical health of young people by providing a new, rewarding, hands-on experience through unique opportunities for physical outdoor activities, intellectual engagement and social interaction. The Project Team consistently and passionately demonstrated a commitment to working with young people and with young adults with mental health illnesses. They have prioritised breaking down barriers to inclusion and participation, ensuring that activity suited the priority audiences and met their needs and interests. Great care was taken by all to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment:

“It made it possible for me to be myself and do things outside that I love, not just focusing on mental health but other things that I enjoy and am interested in.”

Client, Suffolk Mind

The young carers and Suffolk Mind clients who volunteered report clear improvements across a range of wellbeing indicators, which can be confidently attributed to taking part in the Project. All the Suffolk Mind clients said they would volunteer again, and around half the volunteers suggested that the experience could be improved by offering “*more work, more hours, longer days*” – a strikingly clear indication of how much the experience was enjoyed and valued. This challenges the traditional rhetoric and stigma around mental health. It is evident these clients were motivated and thrived in this environment, enjoying the work on site, but that their mental health conditions can be debilitating, making it hard for them to be consistent in daily life such as interacting with others, routine or employment.

Suffolk Mind clients valued feeling and being treated as part of the team, as opposed to ‘a diagnosis’, the same as other members of the public working alongside professionals. A new social confidence in their abilities has transferred outside the Project and inspired and enabled several of them to make other developments in their own lives, such as joining other voluntary groups, enrolling on distance learning further education, training to become a peer-support worker or engaging with mental health services in a way they were not able to before.

“I suffer from anxiety and meeting people can be difficult, but EVERYONE was open, friendly and I had nothing to fear.”

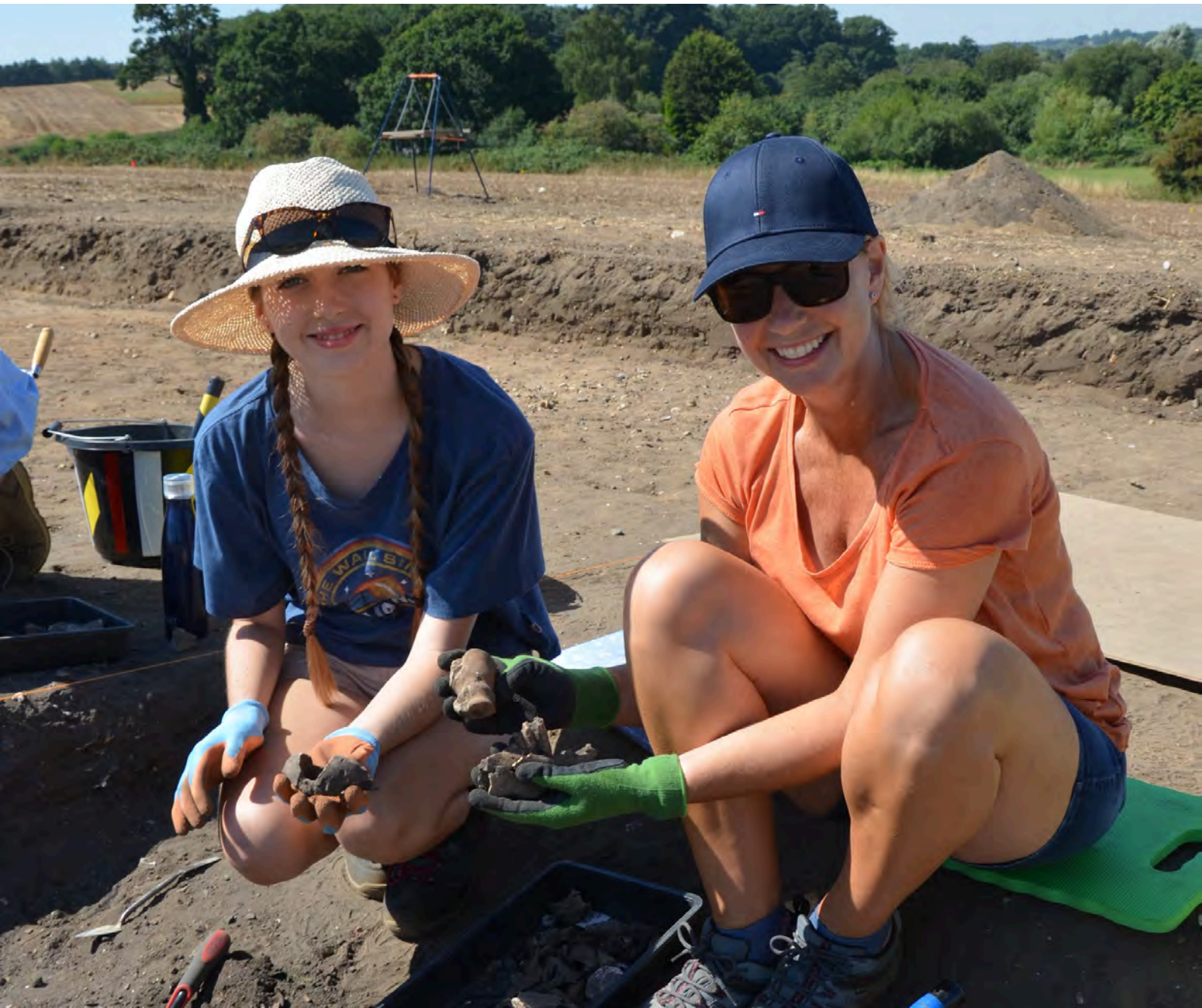
Client, Suffolk Mind

A break from caring responsibilities, new friendships, and new experiences created a welcoming, supportive and structured environment that contributed to the Young Carers’ overall enjoyment – they gained confidence and realised they could achieve something new. The excavations were also a good informal setting for Suffolk Family Carers staff to talk to the young people about careers and the support they can offer, such as helping with job applications or help in school.

“It was an amazing opportunity. To start off with I was a bit nervous, but really excited as not everyone has an opportunity to do something like this. I’m really pleased with myself with what I’ve been able to do, I’m really happy. I’ve learnt how archaeologists do their job in different ways and can find different materials from a long time ago.”

young carer, Suffolk Family Carers

All volunteers have benefited from their involvement with *Rendlesham Revealed* in ways that are likely to have contributed to improvements in mental and physical health and wellbeing. They report feeling valued, proud of their work, and that they were interested and deeply engaged by their activity. The Project has been a special opportunity for people to meet and spend social time – often discussing archaeology – with others that they may otherwise not have met, including intergenerational meetings of minds.



Family members volunteering together at the community excavations at Rendlesham (taken by Katie Everard).

COMMUNITIES

Rendlesham Revealed has empowered communities to research, explore and celebrate their heritage, built a network of resources that can be sustained beyond the lifetime of the Project, and increased awareness about the negative impacts of agricultural practices on buried archaeology.

Rendlesham Revealed has empowered communities to research, explore and celebrate their heritage at a local level. The Project has provided opportunities for people to volunteer with every aspect of the archaeological process and in all these ways they have been empowered to make a meaningful contribution to live archaeological research. Volunteers have been vital to the success of the archaeological fieldwork and post-excavation work, exchanging their time and dedication for on-the-job training in new skills and an enjoyable experience.

“It was wonderful to feel so involved in such a unique and important site.” Client, Suffolk Mind

“Being invited to Cambridge University labs was overwhelming for them, and they couldn’t believe they were being allowed to do it.”
Staff Member, Suffolk Mind

The volunteers from Rendlesham Primary School have ‘grown up’ with the Project, with the same class attending every year. The archaeology at Rendlesham is an important discovery for these schoolchildren, bringing history even closer to home, increasing their understanding and appreciation of their local area. These school children have been empowered to do the digging, hunting, touching, picking, sieving, and washing, and empowered to the intellectual task of being curious. School teachers have made a huge personal effort, including working on their days off, to ensure the school children maximise the opportunity for engagement with the Project.

A network of resources has built up for communities to use, which can be sustained by SCCAS beyond the lifetime of the Project. A GNSS GPS device purchased by the Project is available for amateur groups to use in their own projects. The Suffolk Heritage Explorer website hosts all the Project’s digital resources in a clear and organised format as a legacy of the Project. Physical legacies of the Project include five interpretation panels located at high footfall areas connecting with the Anglo-Saxon walking trail, and two school activity boxes.

Rendlesham Revealed has raised awareness about the negative impacts of agricultural practices on buried archaeology to encourage better management. Because more is now understood about the character of the archaeology on this site at Rendlesham and it is now well recorded, the Project Team have been better able to inform the landowners and farmers who work and manage the landscape. The Project Team have provided detailed advice on farming practices that will allow for better protection of the below-ground archaeological remains in the future. Over the course of the Project, all subsoiling has ceased and most of the land is now 'min-till'.

Rendlesham Revealed has raised awareness of the decision-making processes affecting local heritage. Open days and site visits provided access to archaeology for a wide range of people including the landowner, members of the general public, academics, local residents, local councillors, local police officers, academics, partners, and archaeological and historical societies. Internal presentations to the Growth, Highways and Infrastructure department of Suffolk County Council have kept senior decision makers, service managers, planning advisors and other colleagues informed on the community engagement impact and the significance of the archaeological results and preservation.

The Project has enhanced the shared understanding and distinctiveness of local heritage and promoted its international importance. Volunteers understood the Project was important – the archaeological findings challenge previous assumptions about the character, scale and longevity of such early royal centres, and the sophistication of the societies of which they were part. They understood the importance of the Project both in terms of the academic research and from the point of view of having “the chance of a lifetime” to be part of that. It is clear the sheer importance and profile of the archaeology was a significant motivator to take part.

Many people felt strongly that this was part of their heritage, and something they felt affinity to. For many local volunteers, living close to the site of such important discoveries was significant. One volunteer mentor reflects how this experience was so meaningful: “I lived there! I was overwhelmed. I joined the Suffolk Archaeological Field Group and did bits, but to be on a dig that had a beginning, middle and end was joyous!”

The Project has increased national awareness of the important Anglo-Saxon archaeology in south-east Suffolk, which will help boost tourism in the area and publicity for heritage visitor attractions in Suffolk. Archaeology projects can have a profound social, environmental, economic and cultural impact on the development of communities. The excavation has confirmed the Anglo-Saxon settlement at Rendlesham is far more significant than expected and contributes to the rewriting of our understanding of society at that time and life in the Deben

valley 1,400 years ago. The discoveries change perceptions of Anglo-Saxon England and contribute to Suffolk's identity and sense of place. They build on the understanding of known sites like Sutton Hoo and puts it into the context of the wider landscape. Sutton Hoo is already a draw to the area as a famous visitor attraction and now the story of Rendlesham adds to the special quality of the local area, which will benefit heritage visitor attractions in Suffolk, and increase national awareness of the important Anglo-Saxon archaeology in south-east Suffolk.



Friends and family members volunteering together at the community excavations at Rendlesham (taken by Katie Everard).

Headline Achievements

This section of the report presents the headline achievements of each of the six activity strands of *Rendlesham Revealed*.

Uncovering the Anglo-Saxons archaeological on-site survey and excavation programme

The Project delivered three successful seasons of community fieldwork in 2021, 2022 and 2023. Although the covid-19 pandemic precluded the fieldwork in the first year of the Project, all planned activities in this strand were completed and all targets exceeded.

Local people volunteered, guided by volunteer mentors, with training supported by the archaeological contractor Cotswold Archaeology, coordination by SCCAS, and academic direction from Professor Christopher Scull.

Over the three years, 275 general public volunteers, 178 priority group volunteers, ten mentors from the local amateur group and ten undergraduate students were engaged in the fieldwork programme, plus additional workshops and talks, as well as post-excavation at the archaeological contractor's warehouse. 29 volunteers offered specialist expertise in archaeology, drone survey, metal detecting, and photography.

Together, the results from all three years' excavations and surveys evidence significant new discoveries, adding to the overall picture of the archaeology at Rendlesham and the Deben valley, ensuring it is better identified, providing a permanent record in grey literature reports for inclusion on the Historic Environment Record.

Fieldwork has revealed that the archaeological site is even more significant than expected:

"Rendlesham is the most extensive and materially wealthy settlement of its date known in England, and excavation of the hall confirms that this is the royal residence recorded by Bede. [...] Only at Rendlesham do we have the wider settlement and landscape context of an early English royal centre together with an assemblage of metalwork that illuminates the lives and activities of its inhabitants across the social range. Together, these are radically re-writing our understanding of the sophistication, complexity and international connections of society at that time."

Professor Christopher Scull, Principal Academic Advisor

Below is a summary of the fieldwork for each year. Archaeological reports and post-excavation assessments are complete and will be available on the Project website. Blog articles and videos are available online at: heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham-community-fieldwork

Year 1 of 3 Community Fieldwork (Project Year 2 - 2021)

Excavation took place over 30 days from 09 August to 22 September 2021, investigating the wider area of the Anglo-Saxon settlement in order to better understand the range of activity and what life was like during the 5th to 8th centuries. Five trenches were opened and four were excavated. The fifth trench was left unexcavated as a buried soil was found to be preserving the archaeology underneath.

The remains of buildings and pits were uncovered over a wide area indicating an extensive settlement whose inhabitants were engaged in farming and craft working. Evidence has been gathered that helps build up a picture of everyday life over 14 centuries ago, which includes: bones from butchered cattle, sheep and pigs, indicating the types of livestock that were kept and the meat that was eaten; items associated with spinning and weaving, including spindle whorls and loom weights; melted metal fragments which indicate iron smithing and the manufacture of copper-alloy objects; pottery vessels for cooking and storage; items of dress, including a copper-alloy brooch and buckle. Discoveries of other periods of history included: field boundary ditches and pits pointing to agriculture and activity in the Bronze Age; a settlement enclosure of the Iron Age; and a First World War training trench, probably dug by a battalion of the Territorial Force in 1914 or early 1915.

A **geoarchaeology** survey led by Cambridge University was carried out in July 2021 and 71 soil samples were extracted from an area in the valley by the River Deben, to determine the course of the river and the wider environment in the past. Additional soil samples were taken from some of the archaeological features during the excavations at Rendlesham in September 2021 for micromorphology assessment. The results revealed much about the environment of the Deben valley over the past 10,000 years and showed that in the Anglo-Saxon period the river was shallow and it

and would not have been navigable by large vessels above the head of the estuary, four kilometres downstream of Rendlesham. Visitors to Rendlesham and traders with their goods, would have arrived on foot or horseback.

14 **geophysical survey** volunteering days took place across two sites, during August and September. These were two days with Professor Gaffney from the University of Bradford, using advanced techniques to target a site in the river valley, to follow on from the geoarchaeology survey and add to the archaeological interpretation of the river. 12 days were led by the SAFG for their members to develop their training and skills in magnetometry. A GNSS **GPS device** was purchased, and three training days were delivered for members of the local amateur group. Ten **fieldwalking** sessions supported by University of East Anglia took place at Rendlesham with volunteers and primary school children.

Year 2 of 3 Community Fieldwork (Project Year 3 - 2022)

Excavation ran over 30 days, from 01 August to 23 September 2022. The excavations took place over two trenches, revealing incredibly significant findings: the foundations of the large timber hall (first identified by aerial photography in 2015); the perimeter ditch enclosing the royal compound; the remains of food preparation and feasting which show the consumption of vast quantities of meat, mainly beef and pork; dress jewellery, personal items, fragments of glass drinking vessels and pottery; traces of earlier settlement and activity on the site in the early Roman period (1st century AD) and the early Neolithic period (4th millennium BC).

18 days of **geophysical survey** took place across three sites with 23 people trained, as well as 16 days of **fieldwalking** carried out over two sites.

Year 3 of 3 Community Fieldwork (Project Year 4 - 2023)

Excavation ran over 30 days from 21 August to 13 October, investigating new areas within the royal compound near to the royal hall excavated the previous year, to answer more questions regarding the dating and layout of the settlement. There were three trenches to the south and the east of the royal hall. The excavation revealed more important discoveries, including the foundations of four timber buildings, one of which parallels a building identified at Yeavinger, the contemporary royal centre in Northumbria, which has been interpreted as a pre-Christian cult building or temple. Further archaeological evidence was uncovered including: evidence of 7th century metal working; two graves which have been radiocarbon dated to between the late 7th and late 8th centuries; enclosures and evidence of earlier settlement and activity from the Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Roman periods; a Second World War searchlight emplacement.

Two days **geophysical survey** and 15 days **fieldwalking** were conducted at two sites.



Volunteers taking part in the community fieldwork programme (taken by Alice De Leo, Graham Allen, Katie Everard, Jim Pullen, John Rainer).

Revealing Anglo-Saxon Life **post-excavation and training workshops**

Alongside the three years of fieldwork, 141 **finds processing workshops** with 472 volunteer participations massively exceeded targets. These were held each year on-site at the excavations and off-site at the Cotswold Archaeology warehouse over winter, giving volunteers the opportunity to learn more about the archaeological process. Volunteer sessions and specialist workshops involving general public volunteers and priority groups focused on preparing material excavated from the trenches for the relevant specialists to analyse.

The tasks for all volunteers included: cleaning, marking and quantifying the objects by material types as well as processing the soil samples to collect any artefacts or ecofacts. The Registered Artefacts, which includes unique objects and metal objects, were all recorded and packed for x-ray or specialist assessment. Site information, such as handwritten context sheets and drawings, were added to the site database. The human remains recovered from the two in situ graves were sent for radiocarbon dating. All the excavated material was sent to specialists for assessment, all of which form part of the post-excavation reports, along with a description of the site stratigraphy and narrative.

Volunteers processed and packed in total:

- 284kg of pottery, mostly fragments as well as an almost complete vessel;
- Over 48,590 fragments of animal bone weighing almost 300kg;
- 27.3kg of ceramic building material, 386g of mortar and 43.8kg of fired clay;
- 1,153 worked flints and 680 heat altered flints and stone;
- 4.7kg of metal-working waste;
- 3.8kg of lava quern stone;
- 375 Registered Artefacts, of which 269 were metal objects, 40 were glass and 19 were worked antler/bone.

Specialist workshops for the public and priority audiences also exceeded targets, engaging 239 people over 22 sessions on topics that included: archives, finds and public engagement, planning and commercial archaeology, metal working and metal objects, animal bone identification, flint, metalwork, first aid for finds, pottery, and Anglo-Saxon artefacts.

Suffolk Family Carers participated in practical workshops on-site at the excavations, including the specialist subjects of first aid for finds conservation, and animal bone. The young people could then use their newly-learned knowledge straightaway.

Workshops for Rendlesham Primary School focused on how archaeologists use artefacts to gain insights into the past. Many of the young people had volunteered at the excavations and the workshops were an excellent opportunity to consolidate their learning and hear about the results of their work.

Workshops for Suffolk Mind clients gave them a hands-on experience of the next phases of archaeological investigations. This included visiting the Geoarchaeology labs at University of Cambridge and the Cotswold Archaeology's post-excavation warehouse, broadening their understanding of archaeological processes and introducing them to the job roles involved.



Volunteers finds processing and attending post-excavation workshops. (taken by Alice De Leo, Graham Allen, Katie Everard, Anna West).

Being Anglo-Saxon experimental archaeology

An Anglo-Saxon Ipswich ware kiln was built and fired by volunteers from Anglian Potters, with Project partners Ipswich Archaeological Trust and Hands on Heritage. The aim of the Project was to make replica Ipswich ware pots using historical methods and to build and fire a replica Anglo-Saxon kiln based on excavated examples from Ipswich. Clay was generously donated by Tarmac and The Bulmer Brick and Tile Company.

In total 36 volunteers from the Anglian Potters and from Hands on Heritage were involved in experiments relating to clay processing, pottery making, the kiln building and firing and cooking with pots.

The kiln was first fired in April 2023, reaching 654 degrees Celsius; while the temperature changed the clay to ceramic, it was not hot enough to properly fire the replicas to match the hardness and fabric of the original Ipswich ware. Anglian Potters volunteers and Hands on Heritage were keen to conduct further research beyond the original aims of the activity. Firstly, modifying the kiln structure to achieve a more successful second firing in August when it reached over 975 degrees, producing well-fired pots. Then in September, experiments involved cooking with the fired pots, producing two dishes based on historic recipes.

The volunteers recorded their experiments, and the results are documented in an archive report as well as articles, video and images on the Suffolk Heritage Explorer website: <https://heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham-experimental-kiln>

Nine experimental archaeology workshops engaged 131 people from priority audiences passing on knowledge of the early development of Ipswich as a town, and one of its principal industries during the Saxon period, and how experimental archaeology contributes to understanding the past.



Volunteers potters and the team proudly holding their pots after the first kiln firing.



Volunteers making replica pots and building and firing the replica Ipswich ware kiln.

Interpreting the Anglo-Saxons reaching out to the wider community

The Project was proactive in sharing the archaeological results and the story of Anglo-Saxon Rendlesham with the wider public, through temporary exhibitions, events and finds handling roadshows, talks and presentations, permanent information display boards, a walking trail guide and teaching resources.

Engagement through exhibitions in person and online adds up to a considerable total of 152,770 people. The *Rendlesham Revealed* **temporary exhibition** opened at National Trust Sutton Hoo on 23 March and ran for seven months to the end of October 2023; 132,507 visitors would have had the opportunity to see it. The exhibition took visitors on a 400-year journey to reveal how the Anglo-Saxon royal settlement at Rendlesham developed and celebrated the many volunteers from the local community who uncovered the long-lost archaeological remains. This story was brought to life with over 150 archaeological finds from the settlement, ranging from food remains to gold jewellery, many of which have never been on public display before – these were on loan from Colchester and Ipswich Museums and from the SCC Archaeological Archives. A **permanent online virtual exhibition** was created from the temporary exhibition, enhanced with additional video content about the archaeological fieldwork; it has attracted 327 views to date and will remain a permanent legacy for the Project.

A smaller display opened in January 2024 at West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Museum, which has been seen by 19,936 people in the six months leading up to the end of the Project.

Feedback from visitors to the exhibitions was extremely positive:

“Excellent presented – contextualised the site very well.”

“The depth and breadth of the finds on display were excellent and opened up more about the lives of the people locally, as opposed to Sutton Hoo itself, which is much more closely associated with dying.”

“After being involved as a volunteer it was lovely to see results of the project in a beautiful and informative display.”

An **accompanying booklet** was produced giving more in depth information about the site’s discovery and detail of key objects. 5,000 copies were printed and at least 4,500 have been distributed at the exhibitions, local events, to libraries and schools, and posted to every volunteer. It is a permanent legacy, published online as an e-reader or downloadable PDF.

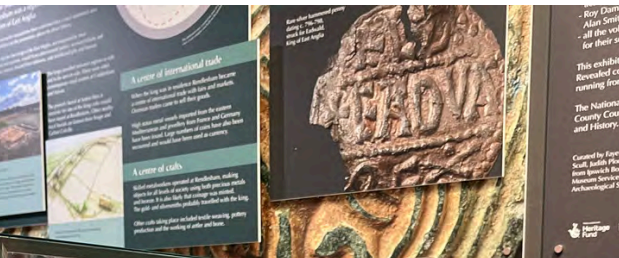
The Project reached people from target audiences and the wider public who engaged with the emerging archaeological results and excavated artefacts through displays and **finds handling roadshows** at twelve local events across Suffolk, which together received 100,309 visitors.

There has been a huge amount of public interest in the Project, and the Project Team along with invited subject matter experts have delivered **25 talks** engaging specialist interest groups such as amateur history societies, heritage professionals and the local community. Talks have attracted large numbers, with a total in-person attendance of 1,567 people including those from well beyond East Anglia. The Project Team also presented at the high-profile **Historic England Wellbeing and Heritage Conference** in March 2024 to share learning with other organisations on engaging priority audiences and removing barriers to access. Impact case studies were presented on the benefits of the Project for Suffolk Mind clients with long and enduring mental health illnesses including Borderline Personality Disorder and PTSD.

Two **volunteer network celebration events** were held at the Ipswich Corn Exchange to share project and fieldwork results with the public and volunteers, with printed exhibits, artefacts, reenactors, and talks by the specialists. The first was in 2022 with around 250 drop-in attendees and the second in 2024 with around 325 drop-in attendees. Ipswich Borough Council, a project partner, provided the venue hire at a discount, giving an in-kind non-cash contribution of £4,500.

Five **permanent interpretation boards** have been installed at Wickham Market, Melton, Woodbridge and Ipswich railway stations on the East Suffolk Line, and at Rendlesham Church. These railway stations typically have a combined use of around two million people annually. A new online **Anglo-Saxon Walking Trail Guide** highlights the local archaeology including the Rendlesham site, allowing audiences to connect with the archaeological heritage of the Deben valley whilst walking through the landscape. The route connects to Wickham Market and Melton on the East Suffolk Line, and to Rendlesham Church via public footpaths. Over three years, the online version of the Walking Trail has had 6,249 unique views.

Teaching resources were created in consultation with local schools. Two classroom-ready adaptable lesson plans, linked to the KS2 National Curriculum, focus on Anglo-Saxons and archaeology. These PowerPoints are available for free to download. They have been advertised to 291 primary and special education schools in Suffolk, with approximately 37,000 children ages 5 to 11. In addition, two physical archaeology activity boxes were made for Rendlesham Primary School and their consortium of 8 other schools. They include replicas of Anglo-Saxon costume and objects, with instructions and activity cards.



A selection of the wider outreach: permanent information boards, walking trail, events and finds roadshows, public talks, temporary exhibition and accompanying booklet.

Anglo-Saxons online digital access

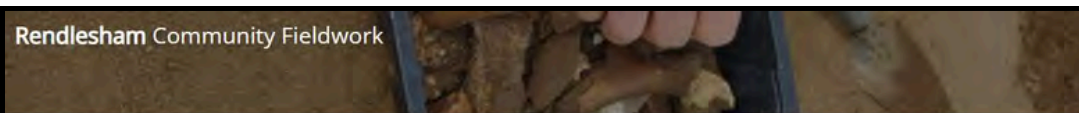
Rendlesham Revealed has maximised opportunities to make every possible piece of information available online in a clear accessible format, that is easy to navigate and read on the **Suffolk Heritage Explorer website**, which will remain a legacy beyond the end of the Project: heritage.suffolk.gov.uk/rendlesham

A range of media formats are used, including **blogs, videos and photo galleries**, to suit different audiences, including schools, young people, adults and education settings. An unexpected outcome of the covid-19 pandemic was the Project Team's use of video to reach a wider audience, this continued throughout the Project and the videos have become an important resource for sharing information with the public. Videos include the experts lecture series, Anglo-Saxon Life featuring re-enactors, an animated video and fieldwork videos by the experts.

Followers and likes of the Project's social media channels and unique website visitors have increased steadily throughout the Project reflecting a growing support base who are keen to engage. The Project Team wrote 201 blog posts which received 67,931 views, of which 66 were published over four series covering the fieldwork, post-excavation, kiln and exhibition, which received 45,076 views. The blog sharing the results of the 2023 excavations received 3,849 views, which is almost eight times more than any other blog post. In total, 20 e-newsletters were produced and circulated and there are 1352 subscribers to date.

The rich online digital resources includes:

- eight **best practice guides** published in March 2022, which have been seen by 3,581 people, receiving interest from outside Suffolk. A video user-guide on how to use the online Historic Environment Record was published in August 2024;
- **booklet** e-reader published in March 2023 and **virtual exhibition** tour published in February 2024;
- four **fieldwork videos** published in February 2023 using footage captured by volunteers have already attracted 548 views;
- ten expert lectures, delivered as a live **online talk series** engaging 656 people in 2020 during the covid-19 pandemic, have had 21,814 play-back views;
- three **Anglo-Saxon Life videos** developed with Project partner West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Museum and published in August 2021 have now received an astonishing 225,873 views in total, a huge number and likely the result of schools across the country using the resources in classrooms;
- **Teaching resources and animated video** created for children and young people explains how archaeologists discovered Rendlesham and what the royal settlement may have looked like. The animated video is displayed at the Sutton Hoo site in their family room and is now also embedded in the virtual exhibition tour. The total number of online views reached 2,430 by the end of the Project.



Rendlesham Community Fieldwork

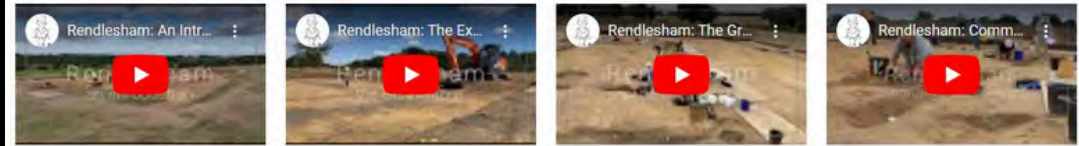
Since 2008, Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service have been investigating the royal Anglo-Saxon settlement at Rendlesham. Archaeological investigations continued with volunteers over three seasons of fieldwork from 2021-2024 throughout the Deben valley, as part of the community archaeology project, *Rendlesham Revealed* funded by The National Lottery Heritage Fund.

Please note, the Rendlesham site is on private farmland and has no public access.

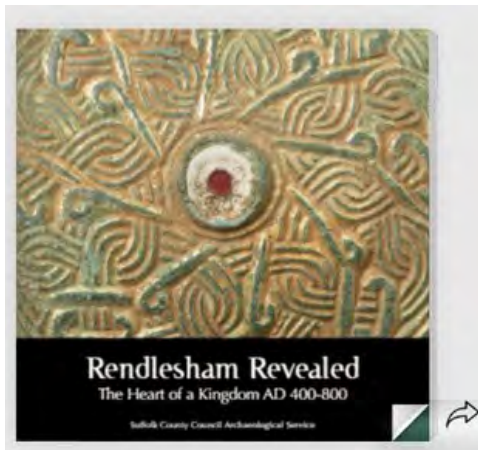
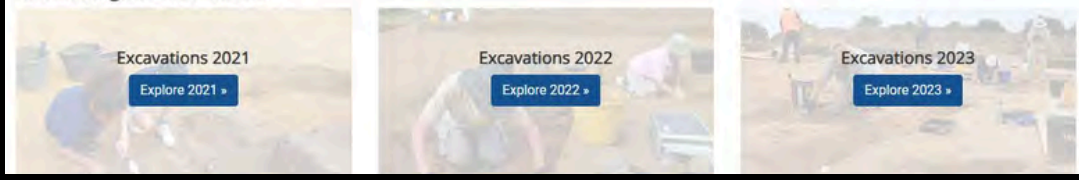
Explore the results of the community fieldwork, with video interviews, year-by-year discoveries at the excavations, articles on the post-excavation analysis and results of surveys.

Video Interviews

The videos below feature interviews with Professor Christopher Scull and Faye Minter, who explain the archaeological excavations at Rendlesham since 2008, unearthing the remains of a large Anglo-Saxon settlement. There is also a short film featuring local people who volunteered from 2021-2023.



Archaeological Excavations



Responsible Archaeology Guidance and Best Practice

Here you can find guidance, templates and notes on archaeological best practice.

Whatever your archaeological project, whether it is metal detecting your local fields or an excavation, it is important to record as much archaeological information as possible.

By doing things properly and responsibly, we can all make a difference, ensure that archaeology is recorded accurately and collectively, and that our knowledge and understanding of our history is preserved.

Before starting any archaeological project, it is important to do your research and to plan. Always make sure you are aware of any environmental designations or is a listed building. Check whether the site is subject to any environmental designations or is a listed building.

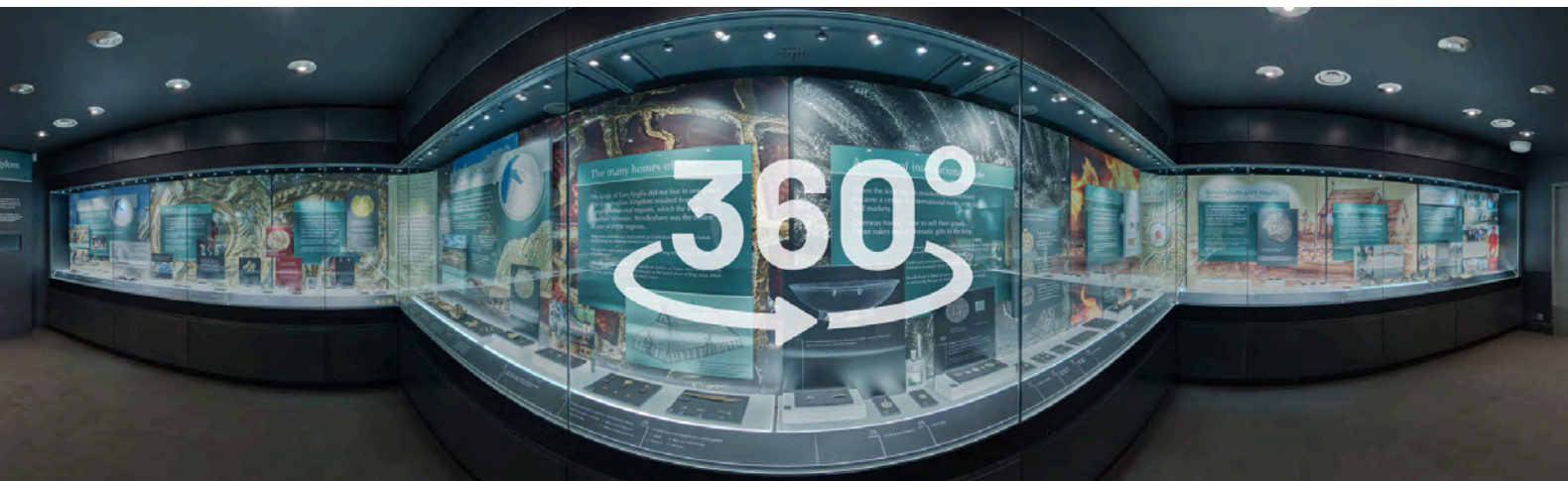
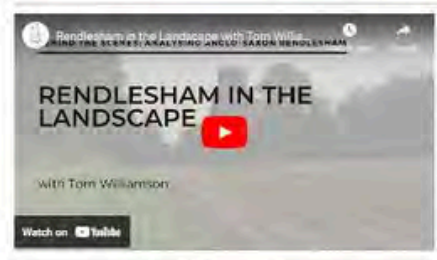
Explore the sections below for guidance, templates and top tips!

Planning an archaeological project guidance and templates

[Discover More](#)

Research the area links to resources and the Historic Environment Record

[Discover More](#)



A selection of the digital resources on the Project website: videos, fieldwork results, virtual exhibition, booklet e-reader, and best practice guidance

Conserving the Anglo-Saxons creating a legacy of continuing local volunteer capacity

The Project has established a network of skilled volunteers through the fieldwork programme.

Membership of the SAFG has expanded considerably as a result of the Project. The Project has also supported existing members of this group, upskilling members who took on the role of mentor at the archaeological excavations.

SCCAS purchased a GNSS GPS device in 2021 with a discount non-cash contribution of £11,000 and provided training to the SAFG. Since then, the SAFG have continued to use the device for their own archaeological projects and have trained some of their own members to use the device. In total, 16 people have been trained through the Project over five survey days. The number of members also being trained in geophysical survey has grown, with 36 people trained over 34 survey days through the Project, increasing the SAFG capacity. SCCAS have supported their learning by providing a data processing workshop led by University of Leicester.

“That’s the first certificate I have received for about 40 years I think! A big thank you to you and [teacher], an absolutely brilliant day which came at just the right time for many of us trying to get to grips with geophysics.”
Attendee, Geophysical survey data processing workshop



Volunteer mentor supporting a new volunteer at the community excavations
(taken by Graham Allen)

Success Criteria and Lessons Learned



The model for community fieldwork an excellent model for future projects

The model of a volunteer cohort trained and supported by a small professional team to undertake archaeological fieldwork with strong research aims has proved extremely successful and would be an excellent model for future projects.

Critical to success was the longer-term nature of the Project, refining the volunteer model. The professional team was streamlined and knew what to expect, volunteers from public and priority groups returned with previous years' experience of the site under their belts. It was possible to build on learning as well as delivering enhanced benefits that can only be achieved by volunteers returning over multiple years.

The Project benefited from strong research aims and academic direction from a leading expert in the field of archaeology and the early medieval period. Professor Christopher Scull was a driving force to the academic integrity of the Project and this led to high quality fieldwork results, recording and interpretation, bringing an estimated £50,000 as in-kind time.

Volunteers doing real archaeology contributing to actual research was an important and meaningful aspect for the volunteers and was a recurring theme raised in the volunteer feedback: community archaeology projects must have strong research objectives: *"Being part of a professionally managed, academically rigorous project is extremely important"* Public Volunteer.

It was important to involve volunteers meaningfully in all aspects of the archaeological processes, as opposed to a manufactured experience. The Project

successfully involved volunteers in surveys and excavation to finds processing and post excavation. This approach expands people's understanding of the scale of work that goes into archaeological projects, especially for those wishing to pursue a career in archaeology. At least five individuals indicated they had decided to pursue a career directly as a result of their experience – so it is important that community projects give a realistic experience. See Appendix for volunteer case studies.

Mentors recruited via the local amateur group were key members of the volunteer team, providing an extra layer of support to new volunteers and giving additional project capacity. The recognition and responsibility meant a great deal to them personally, and the role enabled them to enhance their skills. Members of the amateur group were upskilled through training and they went on to train more of their own members directly: trained members training the new members!

Making space for priority audiences the project's stand out achievement

The fieldwork was hugely oversubscribed with a much greater demand for participation than could be met. This reinforces the need to ringfence opportunities for priority audiences who would not otherwise be able to engage. Participation data shows that this focus on priority audiences also ensured that Project participants reflect the local background population by age.

The Project Team were successful in proactively making new partnerships with schools, Suffolk Family Carers and Suffolk Mind, to ensure that there was capacity for these groups to engage with the community fieldwork in a way that suited their needs. Additional opportunities to engage priority audiences were also taken where they were identified either through partnership working or requests. This included additionally engaging Wickham Market primary school, Suffolk Family Carers school leavers, and Rushmere Hall Primary school.

The standout achievement of *Rendlesham Revealed* is the extent to which the Project has engaged with the priority audiences. Opportunities to work with partners with shared objectives were identified and over the period of the Project relationships and trust were built. The invitation for these groups to take part was generous and there were the resources to support the engagement, such as transport and accommodation. Barriers to access have been thoroughly understood and successfully mitigated by the Project Team. People have engaged who would not otherwise have been able to take part in a project like this, and the extent to which they have benefited has exceeded all expectations, as demonstrated in the appended case studies.

The Project prioritised working with two local primary schools, focusing on depth of experience and has shown how effectively this approach to community archaeology

can engage schools – children, staff and parents. It has been considerably more impactful to engage one school over three years. See case study in Appendix C.

Engagement with young carers through Suffolk Family Carers was proportionate to the resources of the Project. Consideration should be given to increasing this area of engagement in future projects and perhaps introducing first steps towards formal qualifications. A considerable amount of logistical planning is required and budget for transport, accommodation and food is essential to remove barriers to access. The format of an over-night residential proved successful, not only enabling engagement with the archaeological fieldwork, but also bringing other benefits in social skills. See case study in Appendix B.

For Suffolk Mind, the greatest impact has been delivered by repeat volunteering over the longer term. Future projects with similar groups should aim to re-engage the same volunteers over a minimum of three years or provide multiple opportunities over successive months, to give clients time between volunteering sessions to reflect and grow - intense or one-off experiences are therefore not as effective. See case studies in Appendix A illustrating the clients' individual experiences.

A feedback session with Suffolk Mind clients provided insight into additional ways future projects could help overcome other barriers. Social anxiety is an overwhelming challenge for some clients preventing them from having the confidence to volunteer. One suggestion to help with this and engage more clients was for the Project team to attend more of the Suffolk Mind group support sessions to meet more clients in person and show them videos or photos about the volunteering opportunities, so they could see what it was like on site and run through the logistics and any worries. This would be easy to implement and simple to monitor for its effectiveness.

It was essential that the Project offset the financial barriers to participation faced by target audiences – in particular transport and accommodation. There are otherwise insurmountable financial barriers faced by Suffolk Mind clients on PIP or Universal Credit, hindering them from engaging in heritage. By bearing these costs, the Project provided a unique opportunity for this group to become participants. For the Suffolk Family Carers, while financial barriers are present, there is also the barrier of time away from caring responsibilities. This can be complex and add additional financial burden, therefore working in partnership with Suffolk Family Carers organisation helped to mitigate this as they were able to provide support to families.

Measures of success for community heritage projects often turn on the expectation of needing to involve as many people as possible, however this Project has evidenced that engaging fewer people in more meaningful ways over the longer term has greater and more lasting impact.

As a result of the Project, SCCAS will focus on developing partnerships and explore

where these can be extended by opening opportunities to other young people where similar benefits can be achieved such as children in care or care leavers.

The *BAJR Archaeology Skills Passports* are a useful tool for formally recording skills and training. Additionally, there are also formal qualifications AQA Introduction to Archaeology, that could be explored for future projects. There is also the opportunity to consider introducing other areas of skills like 'leader for the day', shadowing members of the team, or work experience or paid apprenticeships.

Landowner Engagement must be collaborative

The relationship with the landowner and farmer is a critical success factor for a community archaeology project – it must be collaborative, and these important stakeholders must be engaged. For example, the relationship with the landowner at Rendlesham started in 2008 and developed through biannual meetings that continued throughout the *Rendlesham Revealed* project. Organisations or local authorities like SCCAS are best placed for projects like this where there are already established working relationships with landowners through advising on land management and metal detecting.

Partnerships vital to project success

The Partnership Advisory Group, with 21 local and national organisations and universities, has been successful, and the ongoing support of partners and stakeholders was vital to the success of the project.

New partnerships were established, and existing partnerships were developed. Partnerships were important to the success of this Project – again something that only a well-connected organisation, such as SCCAS could have achieved, which already had working relationships or networks that could introduce new partners. This was essential, and without it the Project would have been much smaller in scope.

This partnership working brought additional benefits to the public such as access to exclusive spaces such as University of Cambridge geoarchaeology labs, the Cotswold Archaeology post-excavation warehouse, the Hands on Heritage archaeology site, desirable venues for exhibitions at the National Trust and at West Stow and prime locations for information boards in train stations.

Partnerships with universities brought great benefit to the volunteer training and was important to the success of the fieldwork surveys. This brought in-kind expertise from leading experts directly to volunteers and enabled advanced survey

techniques to be used, thereby enhancing the archaeological interpretation and understanding. These partnerships contributed nearly £30,000 non-cash in-kind time.

Professor Charles French, a specialist in geoarchaeological survey and micro-morphology, led the river valley survey volunteer training. Professor Tom Williamson, a specialist in landscape history, along with a PhD student led the fieldwalking volunteer training. Professor Chris Gaffney a specialist in archaeological sciences and geophysics consulted on the geophysical survey and supported the local amateur group. Usually, the local community would not have access to this advanced knowledge and experience and so these partnerships are opening doors for volunteers and amateurs to learn from academics at the top of their field.

Ten undergraduate students and three staff from University College London: Institute of Archaeology (UCL) joined the volunteer team for four weeks in the final year of fieldwork in 2023. This is the first time UCL had been able to participate, as the covid-19 pandemic and related internal policies prevented them from attending in previous years. UCL contributed non-cash in-kind contributions equivalent to the value of £7,950 for the students' accommodation and travel. One of the unexpected outcomes of *Rendlesham Revealed* was giving students an experience of community archaeology and expanding on their core learning requirements.

Skilled and well-resourced project team sufficient project staffing is essential

The Project Team was made up of one FTE Project Delivery Officer, with line management from the SCCAS Archaeology Archives and Projects Manager.

A Core Management Team monitored and steered the progress of the project, which included SCC's Head of Natural and Historic Environment, SCCAS Archaeology Archives and Projects Manager, Professor Christopher Scull and Professor Tom Williamson.

It is essential to ensure sufficient project staffing from the conception of a project, especially one as ambitious and activity-based as *Rendlesham Revealed*. Understaffing can lead to issues including impacting staff health and wellbeing and risk failure to deliver project benefits.

The one FTE officer role, based on NLHF advice, proved woefully insufficient with an original salary budget of £153,000 over four years. An analysis of the required workload in response to the capacity challenges suggests an ideal staffing level of one FTE manager role and two FTE officer role with a total salary budget of around £530,000 over four years (based on 2024 Council pay scales, including on-costs). As a percentage of the total budget, the salary budget for *Rendlesham Revealed* was 26 per cent and the suggested salary budget would be 55 per cent. This may be a good

guideline for future activity-based projects to ensure they are appropriately resourced. Projects can be well-conceived but if they are not executed by a skilled and resourced team, they will not be successful.

The challenges identified relating to staff capacity were mitigated in the final year of the Project with the recruitment of a new additional part time Project Delivery Officer for one year, using the contingency budget. This brought capacity and energy to the very over-stretched team, particularly with supporting the fieldwork and large amount of volunteer administration. The appointment brought new skills and previous experience working in schools, which has been successfully applied to outreach events as well as creating school resources.

The Project was successfully delivered, and all targets met or exceeded due to overtime hours, the dedication and strong organisational skills of the Project Delivery Officer and the proactive, practical involvement of the SCCAS Archaeology Archives and Projects Manager.

A large host organisation adds value through expertise and staff resource

Reflecting on the challenges of staff capacity, as a large organisation, SCCAS was able to mitigate this to an extent by calling upon other members of the team to 'plug the gaps' as needed, bringing in expertise and staff resource to add value and ensure the Project was a success.

SCCAS could also call on a pool of skills inside SCC, for example the Rights of Way team collaborated on the walking trail, as well as business support, finance and the central communications and press team. The value of this in-kind donation is estimated to be over £51,000. In addition, the Archaeology Archives and Projects Manager gave an estimated 4,800 hours, over 3,000 more than expected, which estimates a total of over £170,000 in-kind contribution.

A large host organisation such as SCC has other benefits too, including: recourse to wider networks, relationships, and spheres of influence; the financial security of cash-flowing project expenditure over a quarterly claims cycle; the profile, reputation, and standing to amplify messaging and communicate effectively; a low risk, trusted partner.

Publication an obligation to publish the full fieldwork results

At the time the Project was being developed, NLHF advised that the costs of full analysis and dissemination through monograph publication of the fieldwork results

were not eligible for funding. This was and is problematic as community archaeology projects have the same professional and ethical obligation to analyse and publicly publish their results as any other excavation project. SCC is now finding alternative ways to deliver analysis and public dissemination, beyond the *Rendlesham Revealed* project, negotiating reduced rates with specialists, and fundraising for costs of publishing as an *East Anglian Archaeology* monograph. This is a challenge for future community archaeology projects that needs to be met if the public, academic and professional value of their results is to be properly recognised and realised.

Generating public enthusiasm **the challenge of meeting expectations long term**

The Project was successful in generating public engagement and a network of skilled volunteers, There is an inherent challenge in community archaeology projects in continuing to meet this public expectation and enthusiasm long term. Once the fieldwork element of the Project is completed: “*you’re left with tons of people who want to volunteer to work with archaeology and there’s no project for them to work with anymore.*” Archaeology Archives and Projects Manager, Suffolk County Council.

SCCAS will continue to support volunteers and local amateur groups to work together, in order to harness the enthusiasm and skill in a productive way, and where possible to facilitate engagement with commercial or university-led projects. Meaningful legacy, as ever, is crucial and the opportunities for major multi-year projects of this kind are rare.

Digital provision **an important element for future projects**

The Project was fortunate to have volunteers who brought videography and photography skills to the Project and with their skills some great digital outputs have been produced that are available on the website and embedded in the virtual exhibition tour. The Team reflected that for future projects building provision and having a clear plan for developing footage into engaging digital resources from the start of the Project would have given more cohesive outputs. The importance of digital resources is very apparent – and was brought into sharp relief during the covid-19 pandemic when fieldwork was postponed – even for a predominantly hands on project.



Legacy

The Project Team has curated an impressive legacy for the future, of archaeological research, developing partnerships, skilled volunteers, physical interpretation and online resources.

Archaeological Discoveries

The new discoveries uncovered by the ambitious scheme of archaeological investigations are internationally significant, leaving a legacy of well recorded and interpreted evidence that change our understanding and perceptions of Anglo-Saxon settlement and society, and can inform future land management and designations.

The results of all the fieldwork are recorded in **fieldwork reports** which have enhanced the Historic Environment Record. The **archaeological archive** from the excavations has been deposited to the county's Archaeological Archive in September 2024, to be permanently and freely accessible for future research and museum loans. SCC are now finding alternative ways to achieve a **monograph publication** of the fieldwork results along with a conference presentation, which will be a lasting legacy of the incredible archaeological discoveries being fully accessible to the public and professional audiences.

SCCAS remain engaged with the landowner and farmer, with ongoing discussions about the future archaeological management of the site at Rendlesham. SCCAS have provided written advice on the archaeological significance and preservation for each field on the estate. Since the Project began, the landowner has ceased subsoiling and reverted to 'min-till' in most areas. SCCAS has welcomed Historic England to be involved in these discussions.

Partnerships

The partnerships created and developed through the Project will be maintained by SCCAS. There is a clear opportunity to develop the partnership with UCL further in the future to combine resources and position community engagement as integrated with university fieldwork schools. There is also an opportunity to collaborate on archaeological research objectives that advance understanding of Suffolk's heritage. Suffolk Mind is a new working partnership for SCCAS, and it has strengthened with each year of the Project. There is strong enthusiasm from Suffolk Mind to develop this partnership and extend the opportunity to more clients in a structured way alongside their existing mental health programmes. Exploratory discussions have identified the potential to collaborate on a pilot project or longitudinal study with support from the Integrated Care Board with the long-term aim of making projects like this supplementary to their mental health services.

Trained and experienced Volunteers

There is a legacy of trained and experienced volunteers, many of whom are already taking their experience and learning further, as evidenced in the appended case studies. Membership of the Suffolk Archaeology Field Group (SAFG) has expanded by over one-third as a result of the Project, with 25 of the newly skilled volunteers joining up as a way for them to continue their learning in an environment that can support them. Existing members of this group have been upskilled and increased their experience taking on the role of mentor at the archaeological excavations. SCCAS regularly meet with and monitor amateur groups across the county and advise on their projects and will continue to do so beyond the Project. The SAFG also conduct their own archaeological fieldwork projects across Suffolk, so their new skills will benefit archaeological sites beyond the *Rendlesham Revealed* project.

The GNNS GPS device is a project legacy as specialist equipment that can be loaned to local groups. This has already been used 9 times by SAFG for their own archaeological projects, and they have trained some of their own members to use the device.

Experimental archaeology kiln

The experimental archaeology kiln remains as a physical Project legacy on-site at Hands on Heritage and the volunteers are already continuing to use it for further experiments outside of the Project. Once built, kilns can be used many times, if they are covered over the winter to prevent rain and frost damage. This was successfully tested with the reconstructed kiln, which was covered over the winter of 2022-23 and fired multiple times following some minor repairs. Several volunteers from Anglian Potters have also remained involved with Hands on Heritage teaching their

volunteers about pottery making and experience with kiln production. Together, the volunteers and partners involved have already continued beyond the original scope of the Project and will continue to conduct further research and shape ongoing activity, with technical and academic advice from SCCAS.

Digital Resources

There is a considerable interpretative resource that will remain accessible after the end of the Project, including digital outputs available in a clear accessible format, that is easy to navigate and read on the Suffolk Heritage Explorer website. The website includes videos, best practice guides, expert talks, non-technical booklet, a walking trail guide, blogs and a virtual exhibition. Physical interpretation includes five panels located at high footfall areas connecting with the Anglo-Saxon walking trail.

Teaching Resources

Two high quality archaeology activity boxes have been produced for Rendlesham Primary School and their consortium of 8 schools. Two 'ready-to-go' online teaching resources, permanently available for free download, are already in use and have been widely advertised to 291 primary and special education schools in Suffolk, with 37,000 children aged 5-11yrs.



Schoolchildren finding pottery while excavating at Rendlesham
(taken by Graham Allen)

Appendix

Volunteer Case Studies

The case studies are based on interviews, feedback and questionnaires by the volunteers and group leaders and are written in June 2024 by the Project Team (Alice De Leo, with contributions by Karen Howard)

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SUFFOLK MIND

SUMMARY

28 clients from Suffolk Mind were proactively engaged with the *Rendlesham Revealed* project and given priority to volunteer, with eight dedicated days on-site at the excavations, fieldwalking and river valley survey. Additional workshops were organised including at the Geoarchaeology Labs, University of Cambridge, as well as post-excavation at the archaeological contractor's warehouse.

Six case studies are presented of clients who volunteered multiple days, based on feedback from a group interview held three months after the final fieldwork season. These illustrate encouraging outcomes, especially when read alongside the survey data presented in the Project's annual evaluation reports.

All the clients who volunteered have diagnoses of Borderline Personality Disorder (BPD) and/or Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD). A description of these diagnoses is provided, along with observations by Claire Andrade, group facilitator for Suffolk Mind's Waves service.

Consultation with Suffolk Mind ensured barriers to participation were addressed, mainly financial and transport. The clients identified the following major barriers affecting their everyday lives: social anxiety, fear of the unknown, leaving the house, sensory overload, travelling. The Project provided a free mini-bus, reimbursed other travel costs and provided refreshments on site. Clients volunteered as a group with staff from Suffolk Mind; a Zoom session held in the first year explained what to expect; the same project staff were on site at all volunteer days. Clients were given autonomy to choose activity each day and were given '*British Archaeological Jobs Resource Archaeology Skills Passports*' to record skills.

Leaving the house to volunteer was a big achievement for most clients. Once they volunteered with the Project the first time they understood what was expected and had the confidence to do more.

Archaeology in particular, especially the practical hands-on tasks and contributing to important research, appeared to be an important aspect for the clients. Not all types of volunteering opportunities would have had the same benefits for them.

RENDLESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER CASE STUDIES: SUFFOLK MIND SUMMARY

The clients all talked about the “*Rendlesham ripple effect*”. Volunteering with the Project has motivated them in many ways, such as joining other voluntary groups, enrolling on distance-learning further education, training to be a peer-support worker, or engaging with mental health services in a way they were not able to before. For clients with such long, enduring mental health illnesses, outcomes like these are not usually seen as a result of traditional mental health services.

Being involved in a long-term project was beneficial for the clients as staff saw a greater positive impact on clients’ mental health for those joining multiple volunteer opportunities over 3 years, more so than a one-off experience. Commitment and consistency is a real struggle for these clients, so returning each year was a major achievement for them.

The case studies show that projects like *Rendlesham Revealed* can supplement traditional mental health services and contribute to recovery by providing an alternative informal environment for; difficult conversations, socialising and bonding, realising their value, giving a grounding practical experience - all of which can lead onto some big personal achievements.

The clients used the following words and phrases during the group interview to describe their experience volunteering with the Project:

- Life saving
- Life changing
- Grounding
- Focuses your mind
- Slows your thoughts down
- Puts life in perspective
- Privileged to be a part of it
- Bonding
- Humble
- Calming
- Connected
- Welcoming
- Being in a collective
- Friendly
- Improved confidence
- made me want to go out of the house and make the effort
- Brought out the inner me
- Eye-opener
- Sense of belonging

MENTAL HEALTH DIAGNOSES

BOARDLINE PERSONALITY DISORDER (BPD) AND POST-TRAUMATIC STRESS DISORDER (PTSD)

Personality disorder is a serious mental health condition affecting up to 52% of psychiatric out-patients and 70% of in-patients and forensic patients (*National Centre for Biotechnical Information 2017 Oct; 41(5):247-253*).

It can be caused by genetics coupled with negative environment or trauma. Complex PTSD can also be derived from prolonged childhood trauma.

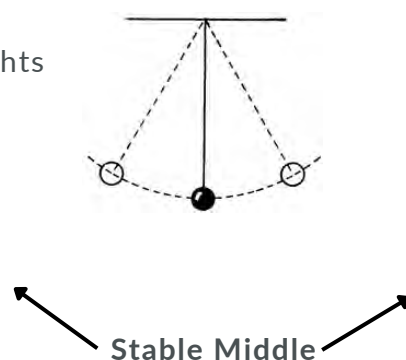
People with this diagnosis can struggle with intense and overwhelming emotions daily, as well as social anxiety, depression, self-harm, an underlying and continuous sense of fear, and PTSD-like symptoms such as flashbacks and dissociation.

These are very real barriers to meeting emotional needs, such as being part of a community, going out and enjoying interests, achieving their goals, feeling a sense of identity, feeling valued, or even going out for a walk to maintain physical health and wellbeing.

The experience can be described as a pendulum swinging between symptoms of psychosis and neurosis, very rarely settling in the stable middle.

Psychosis

- Irrational thoughts
- Paranoia
- Hallucinations
- Delusions
- Severe distress



Neurosis

- Anxiety
- Irritability
- Negative emotions
- poor response to stress
- Interpret everyday situations as a threat
- Low self-esteem
- Anger

OBSERVATIONS: CLAIRE ANDRADE GROUP FACILITATOR, SUFFOLK MIND

Claire Andrade is a mental health professional and has been a group facilitator teaching psychoeducation for the last 8 years within the Waves personality disorder service for Suffolk Mind.

“My aim as a Suffolk Mind employee in working with the Rendlesham Revealed project team was that clients would be able to see how they can meet some of their emotional needs in practice, rather than just talking about it. They could then reflect on how it feels when they meet these needs and come to feel that they can do it more often.”

“Many clients have had negative experiences making them believe they are not worthy, valued, capable or important, this project really challenges this, more in short space of time than many other practices.”

“Most have suffered significant past trauma and as such find life very difficult and can be triggered into feeling very unsafe even when they are safe. Some may also experience episodes of dissociation. They struggle significantly with feelings of rejection and abandonment and find relating to others a core deficit. Due to these difficulties, they find managing their emotions very difficult, so a safe, calm and supportive environment is important where rules and boundaries are clear and they know what to expect. They need to feel accepted and understand the role of staff around them.”

“The specific needs of this group were so well met [by the Project]. Staff were so welcoming and calm around them, always supportive, gave clear information and instructions and were always with the group to guide them where needed or to answer questions. They treated the group as individuals who were there to learn and get involved and not as a group of people with a mental health diagnosis. Archaeology was always the focus which is exactly what the group needed. [Project] Staff were engaging the group which really focuses their minds on something positive and productive.”

[The Project] also made it possible financially for individuals to attend the site by funding transport and arranging for a bus to pick up the group and return them to their hometowns. Without this many [clients] would never be able to [volunteer] at all as their health prevents many from working and they may receive disability payments only.

“It has been so impactful for the group in so many ways, physically, socially, emotionally and they have laughed and smiled a lot. They have learnt that their perception of how others see them may be wrong, which is life changing.”

“None of the group had ever been on an archaeological site before or been able to learn about the history from those working in this field. They had never met experts in any field except mental health before and felt so privileged to be able to listen to and learn from them all. Everything they did was new for them and they were amazed that they were allowed to dig for themselves. The only thing they found challenging was leaving at the end of the day. We could see the group gaining confidence through this learning, which has really enhanced their sense of self and shown them they are valuable and can contribute in their community. This is something that is very hard for them to learn but through this project they have.”

“This project has been remarkable in so many ways for the group, some have been stated above. It has opened up a whole new world for the group in terms of their actual, rather than perceived ability to become involved in things, as many of the group keep themselves very isolated. Some having not left the house for months at a time. They believe themselves to be of no value and broken and being wanted and allowed to volunteer to do this has been invaluable in showing them this is not the case. They feel more able to contribute and could really see themselves in a more positive light which is positive for their mental health. A few have managed to volunteer at Sutton Hoo and some others have gone on to run community peer groups and volunteer in museums.”

“Mental health services have not been able to provide this level of impact for them, so it shows how valuable being outside, learning and doing to find the Saxon's has been for them. We can't thank the teams enough. This diagnosis can manifest in many ways and one can be that people can really struggle to consistently attend things, even when they really want to, so to have had clients come to all or most of the days over 3 years is amazing. I know that one of the biggest things for them apart from the dig itself was the way that they were made to feel so welcome and treated as equals, this has been said a lot and something they genuinely do not feel on a daily basis at all. Staff on the dig made them feel free from stigma and that is huge.”

These observations and the following case studies evidence some significant mental health benefits for the clients involved in the Rendlesham Revealed project. However, more research is needed more widely on the benefits of heritage, and archaeology in particular, on the more long, enduring and persistent diagnoses such as BPD and PTSD for the management of mental health and how these benefits can be sustained.



**“I never ever
thought I’d be
given these
opportunities
...it’s brought that
inner ‘me’ out.”**

CASE STUDY: SUFFOLK MIND

NEV

Nev volunteered with the excavations and fieldwalking for six days over the past three years and joined the post-excavation workshop.

When we first met Nev on the field he was quiet and nervous, but soon he got stuck in with the trowelling and taking environmental soil samples. By the end of the first day he was talking to everyone. Over the next two years, Nev brought such enthusiasm to the team.

Nev’s level of concentration when excavating or finds washing was evident, he took pride in his tasks and seemed to enjoy being around the group. Even when Nev was finding life challenging and was struggling with his mental health, he turned up, was focused on the tasks and left with a smile on his face.

Speaking to Nev today, several months after he volunteered, he was emotional when telling us about what volunteering had meant to him, his voice shaking and tears in his eyes. He spoke with pride when sharing how volunteering with Rendlesham Revealed gave him the confidence to pursue his training to become a volunteer peer support worker.

Nev spoke about how volunteering made him feel:

“When I joined WAVES I wouldn’t say boo to anyone. I was hardly leaving the house. I weren’t doing anything. So the opportunity of doing something [with archaeology] that I’d watched on TV for so long was a no brainer for me.”

[The Project] has helped me, from doing it [archaeology] and how relaxing it was. Doing it has brought us back to earth, just what the calming nature of doing it and the history behind it.”

Nev described his greatest achievement volunteering with *Rendlesham Revealed*:

“Getting me out the door and not just for attending WAVES, so that was a big part of it, it helped me start getting out of the door again.”

Suffolk Mind’s Waves course is delivered through group sessions, and Nev had made a relatively new friendship at the time when they both started volunteering with *Rendlesham Revealed*. Sharing this experience with Natalie, another client, has strengthened this friendship, which gives Nev that extra support in his daily life:
“And it built mine and Nat’s friendship, our relationship, to what it is now. I’ve gone from being in that shell to where I am now. When Nat first met me, she weren’t quite sure what to make of me. We talk every day together, we support each other”

Nev told us how *Rendlesham Revealed* has impacted his life and has motivated him to explore new things:

“It’s brought me from being in that shell to out doing bits, where I’m finishing WAVES where I didn’t think I was going to finish at one point, to then being taken on by Rethink to help run a men’s group for BPD. I’m now training with Can Connect to be a lived experience peer support worker, voluntary.”

Nev continued to explain about his training with Can Connect, and how proud he is that he is undertaking the same course as some professionals.

“There is what 3 or 4 volunteers doing this course, you’ve got people from Mind doing it, people from Norfolk social services and even some doctors doing it and I’m sitting there thinking ‘I’m doing this!’ and it’s that opportunity where I would always go back to WAVES and Rendlesham because if it weren’t for that I wouldn’t be doing any of this. So I’m really humble.

It’s just being offered that opportunity to do that [become a peer support worker], I thought it was a joke at first and that is why peer support work took me forward to that. When they asked me to do that in September/October last year I was like, it was daunting and I was like ‘what me? this is me you’re talking about’ and so its really nice I’ve been given that opportunity”

Nev was overwhelmed that he passed the DBS check: *“I’m always open and honest about my past. When I got that letter beginning of last week, I messaged Nat and sent a copy of it and it was tearful but they were happy tears.”*

RENDLESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER CASE STUDIES: SUFFOLK MIND
CASE STUDY: NEV

“I’m now in week three of the training, last week was about wellbeing and this week was about what you’ve been through and that, so for me last week and this week I’ve found quite easy cos I’m just going through what I’ve been through many times before and obviously I spoke about Rendlesham from the beginning and what it has done for my mental health.”

“But from that person who wouldn’t stand up in front of anything, anyone and say boo, now you can’t shut me up.”

“My highlight would have been the first session we went to [Rendlesham] because of how eye opening it was and at the end of the day going ‘already? we want to stay’. The first day we went was my favourite day cos it got me hooked.”





“It made me feel very humble...it puts life into a different perspective”

CASE STUDY: SUFFOLK MIND

NATALIE

Natalie volunteered with the fieldwork for five days over the three years and joined the post-excavation workshop.

It was evident while on site that Natalie really enjoyed the experience, she brought a friendly and calm energy, which we noticed the rest of the group seemed to respond to and find reassuring. Natalie openly joined in conversations asking questions to the Project staff, learnt how to hand-excavate, take environmental soil samples and got stuck in to the finds washing.

We asked Natalie to tell us why she decided to volunteer: *“I volunteered through WAVES. Claire [Suffolk Mind staff] was just so passionate about it so that was contagious.”* Natalie had previously been to America on a “dinosaur dig” with her mum quite a few years ago, which sparked her interest: *“I’ve always been interested in history so when the opportunity came up it was like ‘Wow!’. It’s just the excitement of it and learning about the people who were here before us. It’s just all very fascinating, I suppose.”*

For Natalie, the experience brought more than she was expecting, finding it grounding and an opportunity for reflection. *“The first year it was really interesting. It wasn’t what I was expecting. I didn’t expect it to be so grounding, like it was very peaceful. It made me feel very humble and just kind of putting you there in the thick of it, in the big scheme of things how teeny tiny we are and I don’t know, just puts life into a different perspective. So it was much more than the history and the digging in the ground that I took out of it. I think I took some personal growth from it and a lot reflection time.”*

RENDLESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER CASE STUDIES: SUFFOLK MIND
CASE STUDY: NATALIE

Natalie can struggle to leave the house at times but this Project gave her a new motivation. *“It’s that fear of the unknown, it’s literally terrifying and I know we were both pretty scared about going and we were excited but we were really nervous and we didn’t know what to expect but you guys were all just so amazing. You know I think everyone struggles with fear of the unknown to some degree but for people with BPD it’s super heightened, you know it’s really anxiety provoking. You guys were so welcoming, so accommodating, so friendly and understanding, when we went on every occasion.”*

Bonding with friends and family was another important and unexpected outcome for Natalie while volunteering at Rendlesham, especially with her new friendship with Nev, another Suffolk Mind client. *“You want to be with other people, for me it was a good amount of socialising. We [Nev and I] had really good bonding, it was when we became quite good friends from the first one.”*

Natalie’s dad also got involved, he dropped her off to volunteer a few times and then she asked if he could volunteer as well. *“getting dad involved was really lovely, because the dinosaur dig I’d done with my Mum in America, so it was really nice to have the memory with Dad as well.”*

George, her dad, was at the group feedback interview and said: *“when my daughter said she was going on an archaeological dig, thinking back to the fact that I’d done something like that before, I thought it would be such a good thing [for her]. It’s been quite humbling sitting here this afternoon...people with mental health, obviously certain mental health problems, can have so much isolation now, and I can hear from what everyone is saying is that these projects where they volunteer [are important].”*



“This is a once in a lifetime kind of thing and I’m just very excited to be a part of it. It just slows your thoughts down [and gave me] a sense of belonging.”



**“It’s all coming
into place at last!
Hopefully then I’ll
be able to get a
job and be sorted
in a career I’m
properly
interested in”**

CASE STUDY: SUFFOLK MIND

KERRY

Kerry began volunteering with the excavations in 2022, starting out with just a few days, she asked to return every week, volunteering for a total of 22 days. She became part of the team, progressing from novice hand-excavation to recording archaeological features and even helping new volunteers. Kerry was also involved with the geophysical survey and fieldwalking over six days in 2022 and 2023.

This was Kerry’s first experience volunteering with archaeology and you could see that she loved being on site. Kerry’s enthusiasm continued to grow and she did not waste any time in finding other projects to volunteer with, to build on her newly learnt skills, including with the local amateur archaeology group, Sutton Hoo, and Cotswold Archaeology.

Kerry has since enrolled onto a part-time distance-learning undergraduate degree in archaeology with the University of Leicester.

The *Rendlesham Revealed* project came at a time when Kerry was at a cross-roads in her life that involved her having to give up her career of 23 years, and she has grabbed this new opportunity with both hands and is continuing to soar.

We asked Kerry to tell us about herself and why she decided to volunteer: *“I grew up in Colchester so you didn’t have to go far to find Roman stuff everywhere and I was always digging stuff up... as a kid. And then as I grew up I didn’t take it any further than that. I just sort of carried on and fell into different careers.”*

Kerry explained that her background was in motorbike sales and then she became a mechanic, before moving onto breakdown recovery and car transport for the past 20 years until her circumstances changed a few years ago. *"I had to stop the career that I'd had, because injury meant that I couldn't carry it on and then it [Rendlesham Revealed] come in the cross over of what to do next and then I ended up kind of picking back up what I 'wanted' to do rather than what I 'fell in' to do."*

Kerry heard about *Rendlesham Revealed* after reading about it online. She volunteered in the second year after hearing that her friend was going to volunteer through Suffolk Mind. *"he'd got a few days through WAVES and I knew about WAVES because I was waiting to go on and then now he's finished WAVES and I'm doing WAVES and it's all sort of intermingled in a good way really. It has definitely changed the course of my life."*

Kerry has been diagnosed with autism, ADHD and recently BPD, she openly described how these conflicting illnesses can be a struggle:

"It's like the full set. [With autism] getting the order of things its extremely important... that bit is really good, but then the ADHD kicks in and it's like, I've had enough now. Your mind is like, oh I want to do that bit, oh now I want to do that. Then that calms down and then the autism is like finish that, finish that, finish that before you do the next bit but then the BPD says nope. Finish it, start it, no! It's just stop-start."

We asked Kerry to describe her experience volunteering with *Rendlesham Revealed* and this led onto a discussion about the social aspect. She enjoyed being in a group focused on archaeology and doing tasks in companionable silence.

"You're outdoors. You're in a collective so you have got people to talk to but when you don't you are still not on your own. There are lots of people like me who are mentally ill that kind of want to be in a group but you don't want to be sitting and talking to someone the whole time, but you want to be with other people. You want to 'be' with them but you don't want to 'be' with them. When you get a lot of people in a group who will quite happily sit together in silence digging a hole and scraping and now and then you say the odd word or the odd sentence and that's fine and you go back to your own thing."



Kerry reflected on a moment that was a highlight during her time volunteering:

“One moment was finding objects, everyone stopped to have lunch but I couldn’t sit still so I walked around and saw in the spoil heap some bones and then I saw a rivet that was part of a bone comb. At the end of lunch I showed Chris Scull and Chris let us sit and sieve the rest of the soil and we filled up the finds tray.”

Following her time at the excavations, Kerry joined the local amateur group who were involved in the survey fieldwork at Rendlesham. They trained her to use GPS equipment and to conduct geophysical surveys. *“You just think you go to a field and dig but there is so much work that goes behind that. Rather than just digging a hole there are all the other bits that go into it. Why we are digging in a certain area, there is a lot more to it than people realise. I think it is fascinating.”*

Kerry explained how she has been motivated to follow a new direction for her life involving a part-time distance learning degree in archaeology:

“I thought ‘right I’ll do some more archaeology stuff’ and then I got more and more into it...the job centre said that I could do a degree and do it properly. So I did and I’m now in the second year of my degree doing archaeology. The first year went by really quickly because I was really interested and then there was a couple of modules that I didn’t like, that really dragged on but it’s what you have to do with it but overall it’s kind of quite positive and a good experience. I can only wish I had this type of opportunity to do my degree when I was a kid as planned, but life took other turns though and here I am now.”





**“I’ve been waiting
my entire life to
do something
meaningful.
It was life
changing and it
probably saved
me”**

CASE STUDY: SUFFOLK MIND

DOUG

Doug volunteered 22 days with the excavations in 2022, joining his friend Kerry, also a client of Suffolk Mind who volunteered. Together, they became an important part of the volunteer team, at first only booking onto a couple of days, to then coming every week as often as they could. Doug excavated and recorded archaeological features. He went onto learn geophysical survey and fieldwalking over six days in 2022-2023.

Doug had a love of history since he was a young boy: *“In 1982 I’d seen in the East Anglian Daily Times that they were going to dig up one of the mounds at Sutton Hoo under Martin Carver. I was 15 I think at the time and I actually wrote a letter to Martin Carver saying that ‘I love my history please can I come on the dig?’ and I actually got a letter back and he said ‘yes we’d love to have you on the dig’. For various reasons my parents decided they weren’t going to take me on the dig and my life went in a different direction unfortunately.”*

We asked Doug why he decided to volunteer: *“I came to Rendlesham through WAVES. I make no secret of my mental health, I tried to kill myself a few years ago. I got involved with WAVES and I was amazed to hear that there was opportunities to go to Rendlesham, and then not content with spending one or two days there, along with Kerry, I spent the entire dig there.”*

“If I can ever talk to anyone about how much it has changed my life then I will talk forever.”

Doug spoke openly about his mental health and how this project has had an impact: *“I’ve had mental health issues my whole life, ADHD, BPD, PTSD and generally just being depressed all my entire life, years of being on pills, suicide attempt. I think I was at a cross roads ...and then from that absolute darkness, that real bad time, to get involved with the [Rendlesham Revealed] project. How can you not see the benefits of that. It was life changing and it probably saved me.”*

“It all comes from a personal desire to get better and if you haven’t got that then it doesn’t matter what is put in front of you, you know, it won’t have any effect on you whatsoever. You have to invest your time and energy and your desire.”



“I think this is where the project makes its mark. If you are suffering from [the different and conflicting traits of ADHD and BPD], that needle flickering going smashing from either side of the dial and not settling on anything for any point of time, when you get to a trench and you’re told ‘This is your job. This is your work. We are looking for this and that’ that needle sort of settles in the middle and you are focused on what you are supposed to be doing with an end result.”

“It does ground you and it absolutely it focuses your mind 100% to the task in hand so you have no opportunity to think about what you are doing. It’s the physical fact that you are out of your house. With a mental illness you are basically quite happy to stay at home, in the dark, in front of the TV and do absolutely nothing. And when you are given a purpose and you have invested not just time but emotion into the thing...I cannot over stress the benefits of doing something like that physically, and above all mentally, the calm and the serenity of it all.”

Doug had so many highlights during his time volunteering: *“Every single handful of dirt, every scrape of a trowel was a highlight. If you do archaeology as a job I don’t know if you soon forget the privilege of that actually you know, I can only think of two other Anglo Saxon palaces in England. The highlight was actually just the experience, I’ve been waiting my whole life for that.”*

Since volunteering at Rendlesham, Doug has continued his journey in archaeology, volunteering in practical ways with other projects. *“It leads on to other things. We joined various other archaeology groups and we were privileged enough to be involved in [Operation Nightingale]. We’ve been on Time Team we’ve met Carenza Lewis and it’s just been, it’s been just a fantastic time.”*

Doug reflected on how his life has come full circle from when he was 15 years old: *“It went full circle from writing a letter to Martin Carver in 1982 to leading a very interesting life and actually meeting Martin Carver last year and that wouldn’t have been possible without the Rendlesham Revealed project and the spin offs from that, joining local archaeological groups and it just opening up tonnes of stuff.”*

“It steers you in different directions and you’re not as isolated anymore and for me its life changing.”





**“I have learnt that
it's possible
to be involved
in something
like this”**

CASE STUDY: SUFFOLK MIND CLIENT A

Client A volunteered with the fieldwork since the very beginning, totalling eight days over three years, and also joined all the workshops offered.

This client has chosen to remain anonymous. They attended the group feedback interview but opted not to share anything at the time. This case study is based on their written feedback and on observations by the Suffolk Mind and Project staff.

Claire Andrade, group facilitator for Suffolk Mind's Waves service reflected: “When this client was first referred to Suffolk Mind, they struggled to engage in the services. I first met this client on the field at Rendlesham and this experience on the field searching for archaeological objects sparked a conversation with the client for the first time. Being at the archaeological site appeared to provide them with a calm and informal space to open up. It could be said that this moment was the catalyst for them to see the Waves service differently and allowing us at Suffolk Mind to support them. Now this client is progressing well through the Waves service”

The *Rendlesham Revealed* Project Delivery Officer reflected: “This client has been volunteering with the fieldwork since the very beginning. They seemed to be in their element excavating and talking about history. They brought a positive energy to the team and were supportive to other volunteers. Even on days where they seemed to be struggling, they turned up and were present in the tasks - this must have been an effort for them so I hope they see this as still an achievement. With each year, the client appeared more relaxed and you could see in them moments of enjoyment and their confidence grow. It was an joy having them as part of the volunteer team.”

RENDLESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER CASE STUDIES: SUFFOLK MIND
CASE STUDY: CLIENT A

We asked the client to tell us about their experience volunteering and what it meant to them:

"I decided to volunteer because how could I pass on the opportunity. I've always had an interest in history so to be able to unearth some 6,000 year old bone or pottery was awesome. My wish was to find human remains as I think they are interesting."

"I've been to Rendlesham Revealed for three years in a row, for two days each summer. The first year I got to learn a bit about soil samples and help get some. I also got to take part in my first dig which I really enjoyed and got to do plenty of."

"It has been great, I have learnt that it's possible to be involved in something like this and I really appreciate being included. I hope to help some more in the future."

"Being around you guys in a lovely environment has been really enjoyable. My wishes were granted on the last day and human remains were found, it's so special that I got to be part of something so sacred I'll never forget."





“having a connection with other people which I didn’t have before meant a lot”

CASE STUDY: SUFFOLK MIND

PAUL

Paul volunteered with the fieldwork since the very beginning totalling eight days over three years, and joining all the workshops offered.

Paul began on site with the river valley survey taking hand-auger samples of soil and recording them, to determine the original course of the River Deben. At first, Paul seemed nervous, only saying one-word answers, but you could see his interest and enthusiasm when doing the tasks. Paul then joined the visit to the geoarchaeology labs at Cambridge University, so he could see thin sections of the soil samples under the microscope. Since then, Paul was hooked, volunteering with all the other fieldwork opportunities and workshops offered to Suffolk Mind clients.

It was wonderful to see Paul each year progressing in his confidence, not only to carry out the tasks but he appeared more relaxed and happier to speak more with others.

We asked Paul to tell us why he decided to volunteer: “When I was younger I always had been interested in history and that, and I’ve always been sort of into it so it’s started from when I was younger. I was recommended this sort of project [by Suffolk Mind] as something that would suit me and that. And so when the first time came and I found out about the river movement and that, it kept my interest so it made me sort of exhilarated.”

For Paul, volunteering with *Rendlesham Revealed* helped him with his anxiety of leaving the house and it was the connection with other people that has been most meaningful.

Knowing how difficult it can be for Paul to leave the house, it was a big achievement catching the train and then the minibus each time to travel to Rendlesham; it really showed how much he wanted to be there.

“You know, it made me want to go out the house a bit more and make the effort and that you know. Take an effort to do something rather than just panicking about what might happen and thinking well it won’t happen. [Before Rendlesham] I stayed in a lot and that, sort of hiding away and that, just walking aimlessly around the streets.”

Paul reflected on his first day volunteering on-site: *“At first it was a bit daunting but once I got into it and once I knew I was ok, I was ok. I was more relaxed and that. I was ok. I was more relaxed and I enjoyed it and that. I got into it once I knew what was happening. You know I don’t like the unknown and that worried me”*

Paul’s highlight was: *“Finding all the pottery and that, bones and stuff, and that was the highlight and finding out about the river how the river moved that was interesting. How the river can move, it is fascinating that a river can move place.”*

Paul’s biggest achievement was: *“getting down and doing the digging, digging in the ground and actually getting to do that. Once I had done it once I knew I could do it again. Challenging myself.”*



“Having people with similar interests, having a connection with other people, which I didn’t have before meant a lot. Being quiet but having people around you, having someone to talk to when you want to. It brought me out myself a bit more and I feel a bit more connected. It was nice to be part of a community, a nice group of people as well, so it’s meant a lot”



SUFFOLK FAMILY CARERS

SUMMARY

A summary is presented of the Suffolk Family Carers involvement with *Rendlesham Revealed*, along with feedback from the group leaders and young people collected throughout the Project. Individuals have been kept anonymous.

38 young people aged 12-17yrs and 5 staff from Suffolk Family Carers were proactively engaged and given priority to volunteer with the *Rendlesham Revealed* project over 4 years. They were from Mildenhall, Lowestoft, Woodbridge, Ipswich and surrounding areas.

The Project delivered:

- 3x Bespoke annual residential archaeology course providing 9 dedicated days on-site at Rendlesham. (In 2021, the residential was instead delivered as multiple day trips due to the Covid-19 pandemic).
- 6x Pre- and post-residential trips/experimental archaeology workshops at Sutton Hoo, West Stow Anglo-Saxon Village and Hands on Heritage.
- 3x On-site specialist workshops
- 1x additional experimental archaeology workshop for eleven Year 11 school leavers, as part of the project's Anglo-Saxon kiln activity.

Suffolk Family Carers were consulted during the project's development phase to ensure that Project activities met their needs and addressed barriers to participation. The main barriers were financial and travel, as well as time away from their caring responsibilities. The project provided and funded transportation for all activities, including a mini-bus and onward journey taxi fares. Accommodation at the local youth hostel with full board, and shuttle service to the excavation site was also provided during the residential trips. The duration of the residential was capped to 3 days with the additional pre- and post- trips separately, at the suggestion of Suffolk Family Carers staff, to accommodate the schedules of as many young people as possible.

During the residential archaeology course at Rendlesham, the young people had a tour of the site and a finds handling session, followed by hands-on training in excavation,

RENDELESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER SUMMARY: SUFFOLK FAMILY CARERS

finds processing and fieldwalking. All training was formally recorded in British Archaeological Jobs Resources Archaeological Skills Passports. Additional on-site specialist workshops were delivered to compliment the learning focus of each season, including artefact conservation, animal bone identification, careers in archives.

During the residential archaeology course at Rendlesham, the young people had a tour of the site and a finds handling session, followed by hands-on training in excavation, finds processing and fieldwalking. All training was formally recorded in British Archaeological Jobs Resources Archaeological Skills Passports. Additional on-site specialist workshops were delivered to compliment the learning focus of each season, including artefact conservation, animal bone identification, careers in archives.

The pre- and post-residential trips were organised to ensure the young people were fully engaged and benefitted from the Project beyond just the excavation experience. All trips were hands-on and interactive. Pre-residential trips helped the young people to connect socially and gain an understanding of the project's context. The Project Team to introduced new topics and the young people could meet each other for the first time. The post-residential trips gave the young people an opportunity to reconnect with their new friendships and extended their learning through different hands-on activities.

The Suffolk Family Carers support staff were key to the young people's positive engagement and subsequent successful outcomes. The staff knew each participant well, had their trust and respect, and were fully engaged in ensuring everyone made the most of their experience.

The *Rendlesham Revealed* project was an opportunity to give these young people a unique opportunity to access practical training, experience new career options, learn life skills, improve wellbeing, build friendships and achieve their own aspirations.



SUFFOLK FAMILY CARERS SERVICE

Supporting unpaid carers aged 5-13yrs (Young Carers), 14-25yrs (Young Adult Carers), as well as adults, parent carers, UK armed forces. *Rendlesham Revealed* specifically engaged with people aged 12-17yrs.

A family carer provides practical help or emotional support to someone with a long term illness, disability, mental ill health or addiction, who could not cope day to day without this help.

In 2022/2023, Suffolk Family Carers supported 6050 unpaid family carers who deliver between 1 hour to 50 hours of unpaid care a week, with 798 new young carer registrations and 2,667 new adult carer registrations. [*Suffolk Family Carers Impact Report 2022/2023*]

1 in 5 young people have caring responsibilities. These young people may be withdrawn, lack confidence and be overlooked in society.

Suffolk Family Carers complete assessments on behalf of Suffolk County Council and offer advice and guidance, workshops and courses, emotional and wellbeing support, support in hospitals and helping people take a break.

Becoming an unpaid family carer is often a gradual process which impacts their daily life. Many do not recognise that they are carrying out a caring role and this can be a real barrier to accessing vital support.

For the Young Carers and Young Adult Carers, this can be particularly difficult impacting on their childhood. Caring for a parent with a physical condition, for example, may involve physical help such as getting dressed or doing the cooking, but caring for a parent with a mental health problem, or who misuses drugs or alcohol, involves more emotional guidance and support. Sibling carers may feel the need to keep an eye on the brother or sister they care for or worry about them when they are in school.

FEEDBACK

Four main themes consistently appeared in the feedback across all four years: social benefits; being responsible for and involved in real archaeology; learning new skills; challenging their perceptions of what they are capable of achieving.

SOCIAL BENEFITS

Firstly, the social benefits of meeting new people and making friends, was a significant outcome for this group, as for many this is usually nerve-racking and made difficult by being family carers. The Project activity was a place for these young people to be themselves and all share new experiences together, without worrying about their caring responsibilities or school work.

“Socially, introducing them to a new group of people and being away from home- it’s learning all those life skills. Some of them had been on a residential before, but some of them hadn’t. Some of the young people had never been on a train before, some of them have never been away from home for more than a couple of hours apart from being at school. It’s getting them to learn how to be in a social situation.”

“I think the key thing was the social side and being comfortable getting to know each other, some of them were saying they were friends for life afterwards.”

Comments from Suffolk Family Carer Staff

“I liked making new friends, finding bones and ancient things”

“First I was really nervous cos I was new and now I got to know so many people”

“I have learned that it is so much easier to make friends”

Comments from young carers who volunteered

“Literally for three days some of them didn’t stop talking. I’ve been on lots of trips - Especially on the coach trip in the way home, everyone is shattered and it’s often silent- but the conversation kept going and going and going. It wasn’t just one person- it was everybody. I think that compared to the first trip out [before the residential], where everyone was very quiet and not talking to anybody and they were sitting in rows by themselves and quite spread out- sitting by themselves- and this one [at the end of the three day residential] everyone was in one group at the back, all talking.”

“On the residential the girls all slept in one room, and they ended up putting the mattresses all in one area on the floor, so they could all be together in the same area, rather than on bunk beds.”

“In the evenings they gelled together, they sat and played board games and talked and got on really well. It was a really great experience to see them all gel. Not only that, but I think they have set up a WhatsApp group and I think some of them have stayed in contact with each other since then.”

Comments from Suffolk Family Carers Staff

“There was real improving in confidence. I think it’s those bits you can’t capture- talking on the bus, sleeping in the same area- just being themselves around each other. That is a really big thing for these young people, especially given some of their backgrounds and anxieties and personalities.”

Suffolk Family Carers Staff



REAL ARCHAEOLOGY

Secondly, being responsible for and involved in 'something real' was special and exciting. This was not just an activity, this was archaeological research which brought a higher level of appreciation of and connection to the past.

"They understood the purpose of it, and the value that it is real, which gave a massive sense of responsibility, and you could see when they were digging out bones they weren't hacking away at the bones, they were listening to what the instructor was saying and taking care, especially some of the big bones they got out. They were REALLY excited about it."

"When they had their own little pit and were finding the bones...they did appreciate it was a real life situation. One of them found an amazing copper pin, that was perfectly straight somehow. She was so excited and she realised how old it was. And one of the other young boys started to find some cow ribs, and he wanted to find however many ribs were on a cow- that was his aim- I think he got to twenty ribs, or something like that."

Comments from Suffolk Family Carers Staff



"I really enjoyed digging to search for the finds and cleaning the finds to see all of the patterns"

"I liked finding things like bones/ artefacts and finding out about how it would be like to be an anglo saxon/how they lived"

"At the excavation I found two entire bones and 11 ribs total!"

Comments from young carers who volunteered

LEARNING NEW SKILLS

Thirdly, learning new skills through hands-on learning, giving the young people choice in that learning, was an important and meaningful outcome.

“The instructors and the facilitators were brilliant. They gave the young people the chance to experience what they wanted to experience, within a structured environment.”

“I think [the key benefits for the young people] was learning a new skill, it was experiencing that real life archaeology- that you don't know what you are going to find. You could have found nothing, you could have found a few little bits of bone, or you could have found something else. It was learning a new skill and introducing them to something that they might not have thought they'd be really into.”

Comments from Suffolk Family Carers Staff

“I have learned how archaeologists do their job and the different ways they can find different materials from a long time ago”

“I liked washing the bones to see what they look like. I liked how I could rest if I needed and work wasn't forced.”

“I learned about the different life styles and the reason why there is a darker patches in the soil. It's because there are ditches/pits w[h]ere rubbish and food waste was thrown.”

“I learned about what bones look like / how to identify them underground. The difference between roman/AS pottery. What cbm means”

Comments from young carers who volunteered

ACHIEVEMENT

Finally, these young people learned that they are capable and can achieve new things. This is significant, as their lives are so focused on caring for others that this can potentially overwhelm their own aspirations.

“It’s great that there were activities for different age ranges- I think it might spark some interest...maybe not with archaeology but knowing that they can come to things and knowing they can go out of their comfort zone and it is not as intimidating as they think it might be.”

“It’s a great and invaluable experience for these young people and it gives them something very different to do- who else can say they’ve been finding bones and cleaning them and not just attending, actually being involved in a real life experience -there’s not many carers out there that can say that.”

Comments from Suffolk Family Carers Staff



“To start off with I was a bit nervous, really excited to do something because obviously not everyone has the opportunity to do something like this and I think after I’m really pleased with myself and what I’ve been able to do, just really happy really.”

“When I came here, at first I was a bit nervous, jittery... now I feel like I’ve had probably one of the best two three days away from anyone in a while now.”



Comments from young carers who volunteered

PRIMARY SCHOOLS

SUMMARY

A summary is presented of the school involvement with *Rendlesham Revealed*, along with comments from the children, teachers and parents collected throughout the Project. Individuals have been kept anonymous.

287 children from 5 primary schools proactively engaged with *Rendlesham Revealed* over 4 years and benefitted from:

- 14 dedicated days on-site at the excavations and fieldwalking, engaging 122 children and 15 teachers from three schools from Rendlesham, Eyke and Wickham Market.
- 3 in-classroom workshops for 90 children at Rendlesham Primary School.
- 1 virtual Q&A session for 30 children at Barnham Primary School.
- 3 experimental archaeology workshops for 90 children from Rushmere Hall school in Ipswich making replica pots for the kiln.

[note: 417 spaces offered in total with 287 individual children engaged of which 122 volunteered with the fieldwork (45 children from Rendlesham school participated multiple times)]

The Project initially engaged with two local primary schools, Rendlesham and Eyke, as they were the closest to the archaeological site. These schools were consulted in the Project's development phase to ensure that activity met the schools' needs, logistically and complimenting the KS2 curriculum. This allowed the Project to also address any barriers to participation. The greatest barrier was financial, therefore the Project organised and funded free transport for all schools. Teacher resource was also a challenge, with the schools relying on teachers or parent helpers to volunteer; this highlights the limited resource schools have outside of daily teaching and influenced the level of engagement from each school, which relied on those individuals' enthusiasm.

Rendlesham school became an informal project partner with a volunteer representative on the Project's Partnership Advisory Group. They chose to engage the same class each year, starting as Year 3s (7-8yrs) until Year 5 (9-10yrs). This provided

RENDELSHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER SUMMARY: PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUMMARY

a layered learning experience with repetition of skills and knowledge, providing more impact than a one-off trip. Anecdotal evidence from teachers show that these children retained a lot of the information they learned on site, and also shared this with their families, for example trying to find worked flint together on a walk.

Eyke school had limited staff resource therefore sent a different class Year 4 (8-9yrs) class each year.

As the Project progressed, requests were received from other primary schools and the Project additionally involved Barnham with a virtual Q&A session, Wickham Market for 1 day of fieldwork, and Rushmere Hall with experimental archaeology workshops.

While at the archaeological site and during the workshops, the children benefitted from learning more about their local area, making a link to recognising that people lived here before them. Being on-site gave them a different perspective; they could see the scale and picture the settlement more so than if reading in books. All children were treated as part of the on-site team, giving them responsibility to conduct the same archaeological activities as the adult volunteers, working alongside and learning from professionals. The children were taught complex ideas and learnt new terminology. They received the same information as the adult volunteers, such as the history of the site or instructions.

Impact was measured through feedback forms each year, which informed Project activity the following year. The selection of comments presented in this document, especially when read in conjunction with the data presented in the Project's annual evaluation reports, illustrate how projects like *Rendlesham Revealed* can enrich traditional education, providing cross-curriculum learning, communication and questioning skills as well as learning practical skills and using tools.

Below is a short profile of each school based on data from the Office of National Statistics:

- Rendlesham Primary School is part of a multi-academy trust "The Consortium Trust", with an Ofsted rating of 2 Good. There are 300 pupils of which 5.7% are in relative low-income families. 50% of pupils finishing KS2 are meeting the expected standard in reading, writing and maths, this is 10% lower than the national average. 9.7% of pupils have SEN Support. The overall and persistent absence is much lower than England state-funded schools, 4.2% and 5.7% respectively vs 5.9% and 16.2%. For 6.2% of pupils English is not their first language.

RENDLESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER SUMMARY: PRIMARY SCHOOLS SUMMARY

- Eyke Primary School is a Church of England state school, with an Ofsted rating of 2 Good. There are 103 pupils of which 13% are in relative low-income families. 72% of pupils finishing KS2 are meeting the expected standard. 14% have SEN Support. The overall absence and persistent absence are 4.4% and 7.5% respectively. For 1.9% English is not their first language.
- Wickham Market Primary School is part of a multi-academy trust “East Anglian Schools Trust”, with an Ofsted rating of 2 Good. There are 167 pupils of which 20% are in relative low-income families. 57% of pupils finishing KS2 are meeting the expected standard. 13.9% have SEN Support. The overall and persistent absence are 5 % and 13.5% respectively. For 0.6% English is not their first language.
- Rushmere Hall Primary School in Ipswich is part of an academy trust “The Eko Trust”, with an Ofsted rating of 2 Good. There are 563 pupils of which 17.3% are in relative low-income families. 67% of pupils finishing KS2 are meeting the expected standard. 16.7% have SEN Support. The overall and persistent absence are 5% and 10.2% respectively. For 16.5% English is not their first language.
- Barnham Primary School is a Church of England state school with an Ofsted rating of 2 Good. There are 157 pupils of which 15.5% are in relative low-income families. 57% of pupils finishing KS2 are meeting the expected standard. 22.9% have SEN support. The overall and persistent absence are 5.4% and 11.2% respectively. For 0.6% English is not their first language.





PUPILS (7-10YRS)

Comments that demonstrate learning:

“Today I learned about holding the trowel sideways.”

“It made me think about how the Anglo-Saxons lived.”

“Understanding how the site works and how the soil colours in the layers.”

“Anglo-Saxons lived 1,500 years ago.”

“I loved shaking the sieve and finding the artefacts.”

“I loved finds washing because we get to see all the objects and wash them with a tooth brush.”

“It was real fun and collabriliv.” (collaborative)

“People made the pots 1,000 year ago”

“It made me think about how archaeologists dig things up”

“It made me think about being an arcialojees [archaeologist] when I am older.”





**“We need more
of this in
education”**

CLASS TEACHERS: RENDLESHAM

“The opportunity we were offered as a school in Rendlesham to take part in such an internationally significant excavation, alongside the most inspiring professionals was unlike anything we had ever been part of before. It is incredibly rare to be offered a chance like this and to be invited back year after year, we are incredibly grateful.

To also have the opportunity to be involved professionally in the partnership group and offer insight into what would be beneficial to the pupils, while learning so much about an area I have grown up in will stay with me forever.

I decided to take the same group of about forty children each year so they could build on their skills over the three years of excavations. This enabled them to really develop their understanding of how a site is excavated and the care and attention to detail.

In particular for me, watching a child who can at times struggle in the classroom with behaviour and concentration and seeing the excitement and focus, questioning and understanding everything, throughout a whole day of active learning was amazing. Certainly something I took back to the classroom as a way to ensure they were given opportunities to be as engaged in learning as possible.

If even one child develops a greater passion for history and/or archaeology as either a hobby or a career then this project will have helped shape a life forever and I think it is inevitable that this will happen due to the conversations that took place both on site and back at school. It has also opened conversations about visiting local sites such as Sutton Hoo and West Stow with their families and the excitement of seeing their own photos in the exhibition was often talked about in school.”

Class teacher at Rendlesham Primary School

RENDELESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER SUMMARY: PRIMARY SCHOOLS CLASS TEACHERS

“It was a brilliant experience for the children and the staff – everyone learned so much. Seeing the dig – how it is conducted, gave the children a real insight into how we uncover History. It made the Anglo Saxon era come to life as they handled and cleaned real artefacts. Because our children visited over three years they got to see the journey of the site and our understanding of it. We need more of this in education.”

Class teacher at Rendlesham Primary School

“It was such a brilliant experience for both the children and the adults. I was involved for two years and I was amazed at how the children had remembered so much. All the staff on site were brilliant with us all and allowed everyone to get really involved. It was such a fantastic experience and I got so much out of it as well.”

Grandparent helper volunteer at Rendlesham Primary School



“The children shared many details with their peers when they returned to school. I also had fantastic feedback from parents. The children had remembered the time period, the size of the settlement, methods of construction used with the houses and buildings. They could explain the importance of keeping the finds and how they are cared for.”

RUSHMERE HALL, IPSWICH

“The impact of the day has been seen most visibly in the children's attitudes towards creative and practical work. They are more confident to give creative and practical work a go because they experienced such a boost in self-esteem during their Anglo-saxon day and all the new and tricky skills they learnt there. Our children experienced a day which to them felt vastly different from a normal school day, but still they learnt so much. They were all focused for the entire day, and thrilled by everything they did. Our only stumbling blocks were the initial logistics. For us, cost is always a big issue as we serve a community with a high level of social disadvantage.”

Class Teacher Rushmere Hall Primary School

EYKE

“The children were very enthused by the visit and were able to link their new knowledge to learning we had previously completed in our history topics.

We have a lot of children interested in history - specifically archaeology and with the site being so local, I think this also appealed. As a school we thought it was wonderful to be offered the opportunity to go to the site again as we were very pleased with the trip last year. The needs of the class were met well. The sessions were pitched at the right level and kept the children engaged at all times.

Children came away from the trip wanting to dig the school field! They basically came away very interested to learn more about archaeology and unearthing special finds. The hands on approach allows the children to experience history in a different way.”

Class Teacher Eyke Primary School



“Being involved in something that is real, really helps to enrich the curriculum.”

PARENTS

“My daughter has been down to the dig site a few times and every time she has come back so happy and buzzing. The first time she went a few years ago to now she still talks about each time and how much she loved it and things they found each time. She has expressed that this is something she would like to look into one day when she’s older.”

“My daughter has been to the site several times and has always loved it. She really enjoyed getting involved, cleaning and dusting items and the possibility of discovering something for herself.”

“My granddaughter went to the site with her school and had a very interesting time. She loves History and to have such a hands on experience was fantastic.”

“Really engaging and interactive that fed the childrens imagine. Really educational and fun for the children.”

“As a parent of a child who took part in the excavations, I was fascinated to hear from her what she had experienced and the amazing chance she had been given. Being given the chance to return to the site caused great excitement each year and I was so interested in hearing how hands on she was allowed to be on the site. She loved having the chance to work with archaeologists and experts and was particularly enthralled by digging up bones and washing them afterwards.

Whenever we walk across the fields now we are always looking for teeth, flint and everything has to be picked up and checked! I cannot thank you enough for giving her this opportunity. For now she recognises that she has been very lucky to experience it and talks very animatedly about the dig; she is too young to truly understand the significance of what she has been part of, but wow, it will be something that she can talk about for years to come!”

GENERAL PUBLIC

SUMMARY

311 members of the general public were engaged to volunteer with *Rendlesham Revealed* through the fieldwork programme over three years, plus additional workshops and talks, as well as post-excavation at the archaeological contractor's warehouse and experimental archaeology.

Three case studies of volunteers from the general public are presented, based on feedback from interviews. Two 1-1 interviews and one joint father/son interview were held. These volunteers have committed a different amount of volunteer time and had different motivations for volunteering. The interviews were held 4 months after the end of the final fieldwork season.

- Paul Crossman is a full time Orthopaedic Surgeon for the NHS. He volunteered for 36 days over 3 years. (1-1 interview)
- Gill Barnett volunteered for 20 days over 2 years. Gill started volunteering with the Project while she was making the decision whether to take early retirement after 37 years in a high-stress full time office job. (1-1 interview)
- Dave and Charlie Hughes, father (full-time engineer) and son (student) volunteered for a total of two days. (joint interview)

Although all four people had different personal motivations for volunteering, they all had a strong interest in history. The practical experience digging archaeology and learning directly from academics and professionals made the experience special and of real value. It took their understanding of heritage beyond books and TV to a much more real and profound experience. They all talked in detail about their new practical skills and confidence to continue with archaeology in the future.

Community was a common theme in the interviews. Not just meeting new people but becoming part of a network where everyone had a common interest and being accepted. They have all joined the local amateur archaeology group since the project, and two of them have volunteered with other projects already.

Making connections with the local area was also important. Community is a big part of achieving this, along with understanding more about the local heritage itself. This was a strong motivator for Paul in particular, especially as full time work can be an

RENDELSHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER CASE STUDIES: GENERAL PUBLIC SUMMARY

obstacle. Gill and Paul both talked about how being on site excavating was respite from incredibly stressful and demanding jobs.

They all learned practical skills in field archaeology; those who volunteered for multiple days built on their knowledge, consistently using these new skills, progressing onto more complex tasks such as recording - taking measurements, drawing diagrams and completing context sheets.

For Charlie, the Project helped his career aspirations fall into place as he came to the realisation that he wanted to pursue archaeology as a career after finishing his history degree at the local university. This realisation for him was a big achievement and a turning point; his interest could become a practical occupation. By volunteering, he was able to get a taste of what it might be like to be an archaeologist, he also benefitted from speaking to and learning from other volunteers, some quite experienced, as well as professional archaeologists and academics.

Sharing their experiences with others was important to all of them, the online blogs and booklet were especially useful to help them do this. It cemented their experience and deepened their bonds with family and friends. For Dave and Charlie, volunteering was something they could do and enjoy together as father and son – for Dave having something to do with his son now he is older was important for their relationship.





CASE STUDY: GENERAL PUBLIC

DAVE & CHARLIE HUGHES

Dave and Charlie are a father and son team who volunteered for two days at the excavations in 2023.

The conversations we had with them during their first day on site really stood out and we wanted to take the opportunity to talk to them some more. We caught up with them both for an online video chat in March 2024.

Dave works as an engineer and has worked in Telecoms. He has always had an interest in history and this love has been passed to his son Charlie who is in the final three months of a history degree at Essex University.

Charlie used to volunteer at Framlingham Castle where he saw reenactors which inspired him to join 'Wuffa', a local costume re enactor group. *"It is a form of experimental archaeology as you're exploring what might have been used and what works with costumes."*

They both loved watching Time Team together, which got them "hooked" onto archaeology.

"Finding out I want to have a go at archaeology as a potential career. I would consider that an achievement."

- Charlie

Charlie said: *"The idea of finding the little bits and pieces from 1000 years ago that has just been thrown away and it's not been touched at all until I have touched it fascinated me. I'm hooked."*

Dave's wife booked them both in to volunteer for the *Rendlesham Revealed* excavations, as Dave and Charlie were interested to learn more about the archaeological process. *"We thought it would be just good fun."*

Charlie and Dave enthusiastically reminisced about their experiences and the wide range of highlights to choose from after working in such a different environment at the excavations.

"We did hoeing, excavating and sieving. We learnt so much from others." - Charlie

"We worked hard, you definitely knew you had done a days work." - Dave

In a very short amount of time volunteering in the excavations, Charlie and Dave feel that they have a much a greater understanding of the skills needed to work in archaeology. Charlie explained what he learned: *"Definitely how to get the measure of soil. Or more specifically how the colours of the soil can tell you whether it has been tampered with by humans or not. The other experience that we had was learning how to use the tools. I also liked to know about the context of where we were digging".*

An unforgettable moment for Charlie was making his first discovery:

"When we started the hoeing and I found a massive piece of bone. The first time you find something and it's pretty cool. You can feel it. You realise the significance of how long it has been there".

They were both amused about the way archaeology sparks some really interesting debates between professionals. *"Another thing I liked was understanding that if you asked two experienced archaeologists you could guarantee to get different answers because they certainly didn't agree. Linzi was sure I'd found the rim of a cup and Chris assured me it was charred bone."*

They also highlighted their learning about wider aspects of the techniques used on site and the conversations that they were able to have during breaks to develop their knowledge further. *"I found the use of drones fascinating too. It makes aerial views so accessible. We just learned so much more about what was involved."*

Meeting new people and being alongside so many different characters all with differing backgrounds was also an important experience.

"Another real highlight for me was being in the trench with the other two very very experienced amateur archaeologists. Just because the brains that I could pick and gain so much information about archaeology and how it is done. Telling them about my love of history and their enthusiasm to hear my experiences." - Charlie

Charlie told us about his biggest achievement from volunteering. *"Finding out that I want to have a go at archaeology as a potential career, that was definitely something that I discovered. I would consider that as an achievement."*

Dave discussed very openly the way this volunteer experience has impacted on Charlie's outlooks and next steps in life. *"You're thinking 'what are you going to do with your life' and what you found was a mix of things that really interested you. Working outside, doing something practical, doing something with history, thinking about the past and how you review it. It might be hard to get a job there, but we've already got some irons in the fire now. It is an achievement, it's important to find something that you want to target for your career."*

We remember speaking to Charlie and Dave on their first day volunteering, after hours of being on-site windswept and drizzled on, and hearing about what this experience had meant to them. Months later, hearing Charlie still talk with the same passion and excitement about how eight hours of volunteering could have changed the course of his career really shows the power of a project like this.

Since volunteering, both Dave and Charlie have spoken to the archaeological contractor about other potential volunteering, and they have also joined the local amateur archaeology group 'Suffolk Archaeological Field Group'. *"We haven't done much with them yet, but with the pressure of University and things we haven't had the time but they were two very practical things that we did after the excavations."*

"There is something about bringing different groups of society together for a common project. So you've got the uber nerdy archaeologists and you've got the newbies like us and kids and mental health groups and because you mix everyone together you're not having to read a book about it. You can just explore it hands on and be left with a pretty good idea of how field archaeology works. There were three father and child teams there when I was there, and I think having something to do with your child when they are older really made me smile."

- Dave



CASE STUDY: GENERAL PUBLIC

PAUL CROSSMAN

Paul volunteered for a total of 36 days over three years. He started in 2021 for one day *“I did some of the post-excavation work, mainly cleaning and labelling”*. He then signed up to the excavations in 2022 for 13 days and 2023 for 18 days. Paul also volunteered 2 days with the geophysical survey and 2 days with the fieldwalking survey.

Paul has worked in the public health services for 30 years and is a Consultant Orthopaedic Surgeon for the NHS at Ipswich hospital – this came in handy when human remains were unearthed at Rendlesham in the final year.

While he finds his job rewarding, it is incredibly stressful especially with the background of challenges relating to management and service organisation. *“I love the work and I enjoy the practical side of surgery, obviously there are stresses and strains. The way the NHS is set up its sometimes difficult to do the work”*.

“It helps me as an individual to make connections with the locality.”

While talking to Paul, it was obvious that he is very dedicated to his work in the NHS, which has been such a strong focus in his life. However, it has left him a little isolated from the place where he lives. Paul talks about community and identity in his locality being difficult to find outside of work. *Rendlesham Revealed* has given him a new path to feel more connected to where he lives by learning about its history, and meeting a new group of people and becoming part of a network of people that share his interests.

Paul tells us why he chose to volunteer with the Rendlesham Revealed project in the very little spare time that he has. *“There are a number of reasons. I am interested in historical things in general and I am also interested in the local area [of Ipswich and Suffolk] as I grew up in Sussex. I’ve worked in lots of different places, which negates your interest in locality and prioritises work. This was a good opportunity to find out more about Suffolk. This project gives a wider perspective to the headline historical things like the Sutton Hoo ship burials. And Ipswich itself is connected [to Rendlesham]. It helps me as an individual to make connections with the locality. I haven’t lived in Sussex for 30 years, but I still retain that connection – the South Downs is like a museum you walk from one hillfort to another. Having done Rendlesham you can enjoy a similar experience here.”*

It was the practical experience in real-time that made volunteering fulfilling.



“You are doing something that is good for you, it’s a practical achievement. You’re not just reading books or watching telly, actually doing it is immeasurably more fulfilling. I still have it very much in my mind.”

Paul explains about his new skills in archaeology *“It’s given me an introductory level and equipped me to volunteer for future projects of this sort. [I learned] how to get a neat, straight section and do a section drawing and record it.”*

Paul now feels more confident for future volunteering *“if they say ‘here’s your line for the section, you can excavate this in spits’ I think I can participate in that sort of thing. I’ve acquired skills I’m going to use for the rest of my life.”*

Meeting new people was also an important part of Paul’s volunteering experience. *“You meet other people in a situation that isn’t Dr/Patient or colleague to colleague. You can step out of the roles that you have, it’s a sort of respite, there’s a refreshment about that.”*

We asked Paul to tell us his biggest highlights volunteering with the project and he described several moments that were meaningful to him:

“There were lots of things. I think right at the end, the discovery of the foundations of a building, that’s got to be one of them.”

“In 2022, the first morning I went there, Chris and Linzi were giving their briefing talk at the beginning and we stood at the end of the hall [foundations] and could see the outline of the hall. I think that was almost breath-taking. It was a real privilege to be able to see it in person to be able to stand on the edge of a trench, you can see photos but to be able to be there, that’s how I feel that the volunteering was an incredible opportunity for people like me, I’m not just reading a book, I’ve actually seen it.”

“At the end of the hall was a Neolithic pit and I dug the other half. I don’t know how to describe it. It was a profoundly moving experience, another example of something that probably wouldn’t mean very much if I saw it in a cabinet in a museum, but seeing where it was in the ground in the middle of the hall and seeing the bits of pot and worked flint, that was very profound and an interesting and moving experience.”



“The copper alloy pin I found in the midden in 2022, its surprising how a tiny little pin can be exciting, you see these things in a cabinet in a museum, but when you see it in the ground among an astounding mass of animal skeletal material and oyster shell, it felt like a sort of connection, it was something which hasn’t been disturbed for that period of time and had just been dumped there and it felt like an end result of an action which had taken place 1,400 years ago and it made you wonder how does a dress pin get in among all the animal bone, there must be a story.”

RENDLESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER CASE STUDIES: GENERAL PUBLIC
CASE STUDY: PAUL CROSSMAN

We talked about the working model of volunteers supported by a small team of professionals *“It was a tremendous privilege [to work with] academic archaeologists at the top of their game and ask them questions, and professionals like Linzi and Matt so skilled in what they do, and all the organisation from the county council. My experience was superb”.*

Paul reflects on how enjoyable it has been to share his experience *“I have a big family, lots of nephews and nieces, and they all enjoy hearing about this sort of thing, as do the people at work”.*

Paul has gone on to volunteer with another project doing some post-excavation work at Freston, and he has joined the local amateur archaeology group ‘Suffolk Archaeological Field Group’. *“I’ve done the magnetometry survey at Freston, Bullcamp and Tatingstone. It is definitely something I am going to pursue.”*

“The project enabled me to get more of an insight as a lay person. Museums are fantastic but this has an impact that is several orders of magnitude greater. It makes you feel something about the people that were there, something about human activity, what it means to be human”.





“It was such a privilege to dig on a site like that, that you never think you’ll be able to do.”

CASE STUDY: GENERAL PUBLIC GILL BARNETT

Gill volunteered for a total of 20 days over three years, starting with four days in 2022 and 14 days in 2023 at the excavations and 2 days with the fieldwalking survey.

We last met Gill in the middle of a muddy field, trowel in hand, excavating archaeology. Today we are in the warm offices having a chat over a cuppa to hear about her experience volunteering for *Rendlesham Revealed*.

We asked Gill about herself and why she decided to volunteer. “When I left school in the early 80s I wanted to be an archaeologist, but it was a time where there was lots of unemployment so I had to just get any job and I went into banking.”

Gill tried to keep in touch with her passion and in her mid-40s she enrolled on a distance learning course in archaeology with University of Leicester while still working full time.

“I left school with no A-levels, only O-levels, so to be able to do that was massive...but to complete the course I had to get fieldwork experience which was tricky with a full-time job and the fees were put up so I couldn’t justify it.”

Last year, Gill chose early retirement after working a high-stress office job for 37 years. “Rendlesham was a good stepping stone away from the stress of work while I made the decision to finish working. I didn’t realise how much pressure work, and the stress of working through covid, had put on me until after I stepped away. I knew I had to finish working. The dig [at Rendlesham] gave me time to do something completely for me and be a bit selfish with my time. It was a nice breather after all that stress.”

Gill first heard about the Rendlesham Revealed project from the local amateur archaeology group. *“I used to belong to the group 20 years ago, and so after I retired I rejoined and then heard about Rendlesham through them.”*

Gill compared her time volunteering at Rendlesham with a previous experience where she did a few days digging at Hungate in York *“it was a birthday present for me from my husband years ago, but the cost of it! A lot of other projects charge a lot and people wouldn’t have been able to afford that. Rendlesham was really good value, it wasn’t expensive, so it was more accessible.”*

Gill described her experience volunteering with the fieldwork at Rendlesham:

“I didn’t have confidence [at first] and felt like everyone else would know more than me, but you weren’t thrown in the deep end. The first year I could only do a couple of days as I was still working – it was so popular, I didn’t realise how popular it was so I grabbed what [volunteer days] I could. The second year I booked so many more days.”

“A big worry for me was seeing the different colours of the soil. I couldn’t see the different colours initially or if the light changed in the afternoon, but you could feel the difference when digging.”

“Linzi, Matt and Bethan [the staff with the archaeological contractor] were incredibly helpful. They supervised with every stage of each section [of the ditch I was digging], they were telling you how far to dig with each spit. [The next year] I dug some of the ditch again so I remembered and had continuity. I remembered the shape of the ditch and what to look out for. It was really useful to do the same ditch further along the second year and felt like I got more confidence.”

“Getting back into archaeology and volunteering locally has been brilliant. Rendlesham was just so good because you felt like you were actually being trained at the same time and felt like you were really learning how to do it properly.”





“Gill was also taught how to complete drawings of the sections which she had excavated and recorded the context sheets for the first time. *“I had never done any [archaeological] drawings before, I took the measurements and drew the diagram. I did the same in my second year so there was some familiarity and I built on this by learning how to also do the context sheets.”*

“I booked so many sessions [in my second year] so I felt like I was getting consistent knowledge and I saw the knowledge build. It was very intense at the end. I loved it, loved the people.”

Gill explained how her experience at Rendlesham taught her best practice and the etiquette of working on an archaeological site, which has helped her when volunteering in other similar projects. *“Chris [the site director and academic advisor] was strict with how it was all done, but that was good training, and the etiquette of being on site such as clearing up when you have breaks, this was really good best practice.”* Gill went on to volunteer with a different project elsewhere in Suffolk the following year, she said *“I remembered everything [from Rendlesham] and so it wasn’t daunting, as I knew more so didn’t feel out of place on site.”*

We discussed the working model used to run the site, which operated with a large cohort of volunteers conducting the actual fieldwork, with support and training from a small team of professionals. *“Yes, it worked because you went into it feeling like you weren’t the only beginner, one of many rather than the only one that didn’t have a lot of experience. Everyone was so patient of the volunteers, endlessly patient, all the questions we were asking...yes I felt supported.”*

Gill reflected on the social aspect of volunteering and this new community of which she is now part. *“Socialising was an important part for me. It was really nice at the breaks to meet other people and I met other members of the [local amateur] field group that I hadn’t come across before. Our paths have crossed again at other things.”*

“The more knowledge you build up the more confident you feel doing other things. For me it’s the confidence of being an amateur but building up that knowledge so you don’t feel like you’ll be a hindrance and you feel like you can help them.”



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Since volunteering at Rendlesham, Gill has had the confidence to volunteer elsewhere, including the county’s archaeological archives repacking artefacts, and at a research dig at Freston in Suffolk led by MacMaster University, where she joined a team of students, other volunteers, and commercial contractors to dig a Neolithic causewayed enclosure.

Gill tells us about the wider network she has become a part of since volunteering at Rendlesham: *“I met Sam [the SCC Archaeological Archives Officer] at Rendlesham and I am now volunteering in the archive once a week. I met Megan [Finds supervisor for the archaeological contractor] on site at Rendlesham and she was at Freston doing the environmental processing [when I volunteered there].”* Gill also volunteers with the AONB and Suffolk Wildlife Trust.

Gill talked about a “ripple effect” and sharing her experience with her family. *“Everyday Mum and Dad want to know [what I had been doing]. They live in Sheffield and are in their 80s and 90s and are just as interested and I was sending them the weekly blog articles and the book. My uncle is in his 90s. He always asks me about what I’ve been doing. I talk to him on the phone but for him to get something [the book] through the post he can picture and visualise it all. Even my husband who is not into archaeology at all asked me all about it when I got home each day. My parents came down for Christmas and we went out and came back via Rendlesham and I showed them the field.”*

“I felt really honoured to have been part of it because it was so special and to let loose volunteers on a site that is so special is a once in a lifetime chance. I wonder if people outside [the Project] think ‘how are volunteers allowed to be on site if it’s that important?’ but it’s very structured with training and mentoring. You don’t feel like someone is looking over your shoulder while digging but there is tight control, if that’s the right word, its professionally done in a nice way to a high standard.”

UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

SUMMARY

In 2023, ten undergraduate students and three professors from Institute of Archaeology, University College London (UCL) joined the volunteer team at Rendlesham for four weeks. This was the first time UCL students have been able to participate with the *Rendlesham Revealed* project, as the Covid-19 pandemic and related internal policies prevented them from attending the fieldwork in previous years as originally planned.

UCL contributed in-kind contributions equivalent to the value of £7,950 for the students' accommodation and travel. They also contributed over 1,000 volunteer hours, valuing £25,500 [*based on National Lottery Heritage Fund volunteer time values].

All students were year 1 and year 2 undergraduates, aged 19-50yrs, most in their 20s and a few mature students. There was a mix of international and UK students. They had some experience of fieldwork previously, most having at least undertaken a 10-day field school as part of their degree.

On-site at Rendlesham, the students focussed on one of the large trenches; they had continuity of features, excavating and recording from beginning to end. UCL staff trained and supervised the students directly day-to-day, with overall archaeological direction from the Project team. In time, the right balance was struck between integrating the students with the rest of the site and giving UCL space to deliver the student training in excavation, which was their priority.

The Project team offered opportunities for involvement in finds processing and fieldwalking. Career-themed lunchtime talks were delivered by the Project team, such as the planning system, commercial archaeology, archives and how to use finds handling in community archaeology, as well as specialists talks on Anglo-Saxon artefacts and metalworking analysis.

The UCL Fieldwork Co-ordinator described the experience at Rendlesham: *“The work at Rendlesham was of a different nature and took in more elements of archaeological fieldwork – especially having the chance to work with volunteers and undertake fieldwalking – neither of which any of the students had done before. It helped them to develop their key excavation skills, fieldwalking, post excavation and working with a range of other people.”*

Team work and collaboration was an important aspect for the students:

“The team! Everyone is nice and willing to offer help. The specialists and staff are professional and friendly.”

“I still need to speed up when hoeing. The situation was improved when having people work together with me.”

“Fieldwork techniques, team collaboration skill all got improved.”

Both UCL staff and students identified some unexpected benefits of being part of a community project:

“It certainly gave the project a different feel, a more cohesive feel, to other projects they have been on”.

UCL Fieldwork Co-ordinator

“I loved to talk with the community. Some of them are local people whom also shared knowledge about the local history and their own feelings about the project to us. I think this is better for us to understand the local historical and archaeological background and better contribute to this community project.”

Student



RENDELESHAM REVEALED VOLUNTEER SUMMARY: UNIVERSITY STUDENTS

When asked what could be improved, the UCL Fieldwork Co-ordinator suggested: *“If the students could stay longer and be more involved with maybe the post excavation side of the work and be more integrated into the community/volunteer side of the project”*.

Involving UCL with the *Rendlesham Revealed* project could be considered a successful pilot trialling the idea of integrating community archaeology with university student fieldwork.

Since their time on-site at Rendlesham, UCL has shown enthusiasm to formally develop on this new partnership with Suffolk County Council Archaeological Service and have proposed to bring the student annual fieldwork programme to Suffolk. This could bring a unique opportunity for SCCAS to develop further community engagement opportunities and would in-turn expand UCL’s core learning requirements.

“As a year 1 student at that time, I learned how to do the trowelling and section drawing and finished the context sheet, also, since we find pottery, I learned how to lift the artefact properly.”

- Student

