



ALGAO-UK HER Committee - Minutes

8th October 2014

English Heritage West Midlands Regional Office, Birmingham

Present:

Committee / Organisation / Region	Represented by:	
Committee Chair. EH Designation/ALGAO HER Liaison. HER Local Engagement Group.	Ben Wallace (BW)	Warwickshire County Council
Committee Secretary. South West HER Forum.	Graham Tait (GT)	Devon County Council
HER Forum	Chris Webster (CW)	Somerset County Council
FISH. West Midlands HER Forum.	Suzy Blake (SB)	Staffordshire County Council
HBSMR Users Group. North West HER Forum.	Moya Watson (MW) (in place of Robert Edwards)	Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service
OASIS management board. London HER.	Stuart Cakebread (SCa)	Greater London Archaeology Advisory Service (English Heritage)
Informing the Future of the Past steering group	Alison Bennett (ABn)	Essex County Council
ALGAO Cymru	Chris Martin (CM)	Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust
East Midlands HER Forum	Mark Bennet (MB)	Lincolnshire County Council
East of England HER Forum	Sally Croft (SCr)	Cambridgeshire County Council
South East HER Forum	Alex Bellisario (ABI)	Hampshire County Council
North East HER Forum. BHUG.	Nick Boldrini (NB)	Durham County Council
Yorkshire and The Humber HER Forum	Louisa Matthews (LM)	North Yorkshire County Council
Observing member	Jane Golding (JGo)	Heritage Information Partnerships Manager, English Heritage
Observing member	Sarah MacLean (SM)	Heritage Information Partnerships Supervisor, English Heritage

Other attendees:

Catherine Hardman (CH)	Archaeology Data Service
Anwen Cooper (AC)	EngLaID ('English Landscape and Identities') project

1. Apologies for Absence

Apologies were received from:

Committee / Organisation / Region	Action	Represented by:	
Scotland SMRs/HERs		Stephanie Leith (SL)	East Lothian Council
North West HER Forum. HBSMR Users Group.	Represented by Moya Watson	Robert Edwards	Cheshire Archaeology Planning Advisory Service
Observing member		Dave Batchelor	Head of Historic Environment Intelligence, English Heritage
Observing member		Dave Barrett	Derbyshire County Council

No apologies were received from:

Committee / Organisation / Region	Action	Represented by:	
ALGAO Maritime Committee		Rebecca Loader	Isle of Wight Council
ALGAO Countryside Committee		Ken Smith	ALGAO Countryside Committee
RCAHMS		Mike Middleton (replacement for Susan Hamilton – on maternity leave)	Royal Commission on the Ancient and Historical Monuments of Scotland

2. Minutes and Actions of the last meeting

No comments on the minutes of the last meeting.

Actions from last meeting:

Action	Remit	Comment	Status
Ensure advice note (Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England) on ALGAO website can be viewed by all.	GT	Waiting on ALGAO Exec to agree changes to website.	Open
Ensure that minutes and agendas posted on ALGAO website can be viewed by all.	GT	Waiting on ALGAO Executive to agree changes to website.	Open
Create ALGAO-UK HER Committee mailing list for attending members.	GT	Done.	Closed

Circulate 'quick wins' presentation.	BW	Via committee or via HER Forum. To be done.	Open
Liaise with the Heritage Lottery Fund over funding heritage data projects	GT	BW has done this via ALGAO Executive (the ALGAO Executive have discussed this with Ian Morrison (HLF))	Closed
Seek support for an HER Strategy for the Future from the ALGAO executive	BW	BW to seek this support from the ALGAO Executive.	Open
Liaise with English Heritage over the action plan for NHPP2, and fitting an HER Strategy for the Future within NHPP2.	BW	BW to do this.	Open
Regional representatives on the ALGAO-UK HER Committee: get approval of this idea from the ALGAO Executive	BW	Done and agreed by ALGAO Executive.	Closed
Draft an update to the ALGAO-UK HER committee terms-of-reference, for comment and approval.	BW	To be done.	Open
All members of the committee representing a region, to agree the appointment of a regional representative from each region.	All	Done by all.	Closed
Liaise with ALGAO Admin over being able to edit ALGAO website, and to ensure that members of the public can see it all.	GT	Waiting on ALGAO Executive to agree changes to website.	Open
Look at the content of http://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her to ensure that content was appropriate.	All	GT to update lfp link on http://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her .	Open
Update advice note (Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England) and take to ALGAO executive for approval.	BW	To be done then to get on HER Forum file store.	Open
Ensure advice note (Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England) is circulated to the HLF.	GT	BW has done this via ALGAO Executive.	Closed
Write a project design for Informing the Future of the Past project, and liaise with English Heritage over the end of the project and to secure funding.	ABn	Done and submitted	Closed
Speak to the Warwickshire GIS team and to the LGA/Defra about what work would be required to go under Annex III of INSPIRE.	BW	BW to do this.	Open
Draft a project design for the HER Outcomes Framework working groups. Then circulate an overview of what is proposed for the toolkit	JGo	Done	Closed

and working groups, the workshop notes and a draft project design to all participants at the HER Benchmarks and Audits workshop; and ask for people to take a lead in organising and running the working groups.			
Go back to ALGAO executive to discuss the idea of regional representatives of the ALGAO-UK HER Committee helping to create a 'Traffic light list' of HERs.	BW	BW discussed this at the ALGAO Executive. It was requested that regional ALGAO HER reps should pass information on lack of HER provision through to the HER committee to the ALGAO Executive.	Closed
Suzy Blake (Staffordshire HER) to submit an exemption for Staffordshire HER to Ordnance Survey; which, once approved, could be used as a template for other HERs across the country. Then to inform ALGAO-UK HER Committee and HER Forum when this is successfully done.	SB	SB has had an initial meeting to discuss this. SB to chase this up further.	Open

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

Following the last meeting, BW sent an update highlighting what platforms HERs are on, and the ALGAO-UK HER Committee has been invited to a 'specialist board meeting' on 17th October 2014. It was suggested that the project gets data from Devon and Hampshire, but only data from Devon has been requested. The project wants to use NRHE data, and will check data against Heritage Gateway. The point was made about the Rapid Coastal Zone Assessment data having out-of-date HER data, and that many HERs are not on Heritage Gateway. It was noted that annual and end-of-project dissemination is still a huge amount of work for HERs. SCa and GT suggested that there is a need to look into methods of getting data to HERs in the long-term – whether this is by an updated Heritage Gateway, or some other method. **Action: BW to ensure that someone attends the future 'specialist board meeting'**

3. HER Outcomes Framework and revised HER Audits

A proposal for English HERs to set up an 'Outcomes Framework' has been made, and this work will be funded by NHPP.

It was noted that in Wales benchmarks are being revised, and these will link through to outcomes. **Action: JG to get in touch with David Thomas (RCAHMW) to get this information and circulate within the committee.**

JG stated that the proposal was that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee produces the outcomes frameworks. JG shared a Project Proposal for this project "Historic Environment Records – Development of an outcomes related framework", as well as a 'next steps' toolkit for working groups. It was noted that day costs and expenses would be available for group leaders and group members involved via the project. The Project Proposal would need to be written by around December 2014, and the project funded and carried out under NHPP2 in 2015/16 and finished by 2015/16.

The committee agreed that one project with four sub-groups would be taken forward. **Action: JG to re-write the Project Proposal in this format (i.e. one group project).**

NB agreed to lead on this project, and to get Project Proposal together by January 2015. The committee will assist with this, and will discuss this at the next meeting.

Action: NB to write Project Proposal by January 2015, for further discussion at next ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting.

4. English Heritage research projects on understanding significance and character of religious and funerary sites

JG gave an overview on various English Heritage research projects on understanding significance and character of religious and funerary sites, to raise awareness of these projects. Projects are commissioned, fully grant-aided or partly grant-aided partnership projects. The projects include:

1. National Survey projects
 - a. Quaker Meeting Houses Heritage Project
 - b. Roman Catholic 'Taking Stock' project
2. Sampling and characterisation projects
 - a. Jewish Cemeteries
3. Projects to support volunteers and local guardians
 - a. Assessing a significance framework for cemeteries
 - b. Toolkits for recording cemeteries
4. Designation projects
 - a. Registered Cemeteries
5. National overviews of assets
 - a. Nonconformist places of worship
 - b. An architectural and social history of the British mosque
 - c. Buddhist faith buildings in England

HERs will be approached for data (including Local List and Heritage At Risk data) (it would be appropriate to charge enquirers for this), and will be sent reports (for previously known and new sites).

GT suggested that these projects need to think about what search terms are to be used, what formats the HERs want the reports in, and that OASIS entries should be created from these projects.

Action: ALGAO-UK HER Committee regional reps to let their regions know about these projects.

5. OASIS / HERALD (Catherine Hardman, ADS)

CH gave an overview of the OASIS/HERALD project. The initial findings from the survey will be sent to English Heritage by the end of October / beginning of November, and this will be available to all by Christmas / New Year. Some key findings were:

- An inconsistency in setting briefs, validating OASIS records, using identifiers (such as HER IDs, OASIS IDs and other identifiers).
- Very positive responses about making grey literature appropriately archived and accessible.
- Little understanding that OASIS feeds metadata into other databases, such as geophysics database.
- Some users felt that specialist recording should be included into the OASIS schema (e.g. historic buildings recording, pottery and environmental reports).
- There was some correlation between those that are less engaged with online technologies and those that don't use OASIS.
- A need to integrate museums into a new OASIS system
- A perceived requirement from English Heritage that the OASIS systems needs to be extended to include the historic built environment and other specialist areas.

CH then gave a brief overview of possible future OASIS systems. This might consist of different 'levels' of OASIS recording, OASIS LITE, OASIS BASIC and OASIS PLUS, where more detail is recorded at each level.

CH stated that the OASIS/HERALD project has links to the Heritage Information Access Strategy, the results of the TACOS discussions and any emerging HER strategy. Phase II of the OASIS/HERALD project will be costed soon, and development is expected to start in summer 2015 for release in 2017. Funding is also being sought from Historic Scotland / RCAHMS, as well as English Heritage.

6. EngLaID (Anwen Cooper, EngLaID project)

AC gave an overview of the EngLaID project, looking at the English landscape from 1500BC through to 1086AD. They are about ½-way through the project, looking at nation-wide data,

as well as 14 regional case-studies. They have looked at over 900,000 digital records from multiple sources, and have started to bring-together the data with processes such as 'spatial-binning', as well as producing various thematic maps. Publication will be on their website, as well as a monograph. A common publication licence will be produced, and AC is working with Fiona MacDonald (Chair, ALGAO-England) on this. The website will only show data to the nearest 1km square. BW noted that these should link to the relevant HER where they are online. GT mentioned that the website needs to clearly state that this is point-in-time data collected in 2012/13. It was noted that both of these points are in-line with existing plans for EngLaID publication. For the case study areas, the project is considering showing more accurate locations, and will liaise with the individual HERs over licences for these.

AC described that data that they can feedback and asked about the kind / format of data feedback that might be helpful. This would consist of some info on case studies, and info on data concordance, and more information of finds in some case study areas.

7. Informing the Future of the Past

The Project Design for the next stage of this project has been circulated around English Heritage and ABn is hoping to hear soon. Once approved, this Project Design will be circulated. ABn reminded all that they are looking for volunteers to undertake updates to IfP. **Action: all to circulate to their regions that volunteers are required (if not already done so).** It was commented that more information on what volunteers are expected to do would be useful.

It was noted that Scotland will be doing updates to IfP, and Wales will do so in the future. SM has done some work to tidy-up the glossary.

8. INSPIRE

Action: BW to chase-up the Warwickshire GIS team, to produce and INSPIRE 'action sheet', and for SB to contribute to this.

9. 'Data supply & reconciliation between NRHE and HERs' project

GT gave an overview of this project. A Workshop is to be held on 6th November, an online discussion on HER Forum email list will be held from 17th to 21st November, and the report will be written by February/March 2015.

10. Heritage Gateway

BW attended the Heritage Gateway partnership board meeting last week. This included a catch-up on where-we-are with Heritage Gateway, a response from the Data Providers meeting and the recent Heritage Gateway survey. It was noted that any web-development is on-hold. However, there is lots of support for Heritage Gateway within English Heritage.

A discussion was had about the contents of the information in the Professional Access section of Heritage Gateway. It was decided that the 'News Items' section should be scrapped, and the HER Forum meeting minutes could go on the HER Forum JISCMail file store. The other sections of the Professional Access section should temporarily stay there, but in the long term these should go on the ALGAO website. **Action: BW to liaise with ALGAO Executive to include these within the ALGAO website.**

It was also suggested that Heritage Gateway should have links to neighboring countries information (e.g. <http://cofiadurcahcymru.org.uk/arch/> and <http://pastmap.org.uk/>).

It was noted that there has been interest from the Welsh Trusts in getting their data onto Heritage Gateway.

11. HER Strategy

Action: BW to send an update on this to the ALGAO-UK HER Committee.

BW met with Sarah Reilly and Jane Golding (from English Heritage) and Andrew Minting (from IHBC). A draft strategy and a terms-of-reference will be formed, and the (now, sector-wide) strategy will form part of the Heritage Information Access Strategy. This team will meet again next week.

12. HER Content and Computing Survey

All agreed that the executive summary should be shared widely, and the detailed document should be made available on-request.

The ALGAO-UK HER Committee all supported the HER Content and Computing Survey, and highlighted how useful and valuable it is. A discussion was had about where the survey goes next:

The committee stated that we need to make people aware of the survey, and the committee would like to comment in-advance on the next survey. There is a need for continuity in questions; but some need dropping or adding. It was suggested that there should be some sort of relationship between the HER Content and Computing Survey and HER Audits.

13. SHINE / NELMS

This was briefly discussed, and the committee again stated that there has been a lack of consultation in this process.

It was noted that ALGAO and English Heritage continued to push for historic environment inclusion in NELMS. Concerns that SHINE data was being used for non agri-environment purposes has been raised and passed to Natural England.

There will be a national HECAS meeting in Birmingham in a couple of weeks. It was noted that Ken Smith (ALGAO Countryside Committee) would provide an update on SHINE/NELMS shortly.

14. Regular updates from other meetings:

It was agreed that in future, all regular updates from other meetings (including reports from regional HER Forums) would be sent to GT for circulation with the final agenda.

Action: All representatives from other meetings (including reports from regional HER Forums), to send an update report to GT one week before the next ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting.

i. ALGAO England Executive

The minutes of the last ALGAO Executive Meeting will be forwarded to the committee separately.

ii. Report from EH HDM/ALGAO HER Liaison Meeting

The minutes of the last EH HDM/ALGAO HER Liaison Meeting (held on 3rd July 2014) will be forwarded to the committee separately.

iii. HER Forum

A successful meeting in London, with 70 attendees. There was a varied programme covering the Palaeolithic, archives and digital data supply in the morning. In the afternoon a talk on the initial results of the EngLaID project was followed by an overview of the minor amendments process to the National Heritage List and for proposals for the Oasis system.

iv. HER Local Engagement Group

Waiting on report from BW.

v. FISH

The last meeting was on 10th June 2014. The minutes are on the FISH website at <http://fishforum.weebly.com/>. This meeting included:

A discussion on MIDAS Heritage. This is to be revised; to strip-back to only include recording and data management of monuments and landscape. Other information groups (e.g. artefacts, ecofacts, archival and GIS) are to be covered by other professional standards. Phil Carlisle and Tanja Watson (English Heritage) to re-write the proposal, to circulate this to FISH members, and then to the sector for comments. A working group will be established for this project; this will look at the issue of HER compliance profile.

Terminology. A proposal to create a 'Thesaurus of Cultural Heritage' which will cover the UK and Ireland.

Websites. FISH websites will be consolidated.

vi. HBSMR User Group Meeting Report

A draft constitution for the user group has been created

The next user group meeting will be 24th November 2014 in Stafford

vii. BHUG Meeting Report

Meeting was held after Summer HER Forum

It was decided the group would meet once per annum after an HER Forum to discuss things, with any other business being carried out on the email list.

The main Purpose of the group was reaffirmed to be act as a Soap Box to remind national projects, organisations etc. that they need to pro-actively engage with Bespoke HER Users and figure us into their plans and costs.

Discussion was made regarding approaching OASIS, PAS for data import information and I have been following that up.

viii. OASIS Management Board

The next board meeting is not taking place until next week.

ix. Report from regional HER Forums

a. East of England HER Forum

Norfolk. Previously set income targets for savings were under review due to a senior management review, a new head of service and a significant change to NCC cabinet. New financial guidelines were to be created. So far, the 2014-2015 targets are manageable.

Overall, the number of enquiries and revenue from enquiries has increased.

The ICT department is currently undertaking a large 'refresh' programme. NHER are preparing to digitise their grey literature with a view to completing the scanning by spring 2015. Upcoming projects include digitising aerial photographs for the Brecks and several projects have been proposed as part of a Norfolk Broads Landscape Partnership bid.

The Palaeolithic and Mesolithic enhancement project is reaching the end of the enhancement phase and will be concluded with an analysis phase and a programme of community engagement.

Suffolk. The Suffolk HER has had a turbulent six months up to the last regional meeting. Colin Pendleton retired in December and Rik Hoggett took up post in February. James Rolfe is still in post. SCC upgraded to v.4 and SQL server. Prioritised tasks included creating outline records for monument numbers previously allocated but not entered, alongside the standing back-log. Digitisation was in progress, and approximately half of the grey literature had been scanned. The digitisation project was driven centrally by the need to move offices in the future. The Suffolk Heritage Explorer is now on-line at heritage@suffolk.gov.uk.

Hertfordshire. Hertfordshire HER is still on HBSMR v. 3 and is still waiting for an upgrade to Windows 7. In June 2014, ICT had migrated about 600 of their 4000 employees to the new operating system. There has been some reorganisation within HCC, and the HER is now part of the Natural, Historic, and Built Environment Team.

All grey literature has been scanned, but the HER is hoping to maintain the paper copies as a reference collection instead of depositing them with the Records Office. Isobel Thompson contributed to the OASIS consultation.

Cambridgeshire. CCC is currently 2.5 years into a 6 month IT upgrade project and the HER is now in desperate need of this. We are hoping to upgrade to Windows 7 and HBSMR v.4 soon. The new charging system is in place and has been working. However, there is some concern that new income targets won't be met and there may be some staff reductions in the next 18 months to 2 years. An office move is very likely, but nothing is certain at this point. We are currently experiencing an enquiry rate of approximately 3 per day and archaeological archiving process also demands a significant amount of HER staff time. Upcoming projects include full integration of the Cambridge UAD into the HER.

Central Bedfordshire. CB migrated to Citrix 6.5 at the end of 2013, largely working, but with some issues still to be resolved with HBSMR. Charges will be increased by 2% in January and enquiries are up. The office move has been completed, which has resulted in a lot of home working. Portions of the back-log have been organised and sent to archive, so that it can be retrieved in manageable portions for data entry. The recording manual has been completed and will be made available on the home page (in HBSMR).

The parish surveys have been scanned and current enhancement work is focusing on mapping former Grade III listed buildings with the aim that this will form the basis of a local list.

Peterborough. Data transfer into the new database will commence next week. This is a bespoke, in-house system. No threat of cuts for this current financial year and charges currently under discussion. A graduate volunteer is working with the team during the summer.

Essex. Restructured since last meeting, they have to now support themselves and generate profit. It was judged that Place Services, of which the HET is part of should be downsized (losing 7.5 of the 32.5 FTE posts). Luckily, the HET only lost two vacant posts, currently standing at 5.5 FTE staff. Adrian Gascoyne is now the manager of the Historic and Built Environment Group, which includes Historic Environment, Historic Buildings and Sustainable Environment Assessment. Currently using HBSMR v4 and ArcGIS 10.

b. East Midlands HER Forum

Derbyshire. The council is restructuring the Economy, Transport and Environment Department. At the moment the HER will continue in Environment and Transport, but Planning Services will be moved to Economy and Regeneration. The council has to meet a £157m cut to its budget by 2018. There will be around 3,600 fewer jobs over the next three years, although it is hoped that job losses will be minimised by not replacing staff who leave, voluntary redundancy etc. An undergraduate HER placement student, for a year, has been appointed and will be starting soon.

Leicestershire. The HER remains within the CC planning team alongside Ecology. Some budget concerns remain in the short to medium term (2-3 years). Finalising a Project Design for an externally delivered Extensive Urban Survey of Leicestershire and Rutland's historic towns. The project will run for 3 years.

Lincoln. Following staff retirements and a reorganisation the historic environment posts remain in the planning department. The post to look after the Lincoln Heritage Database remains as a full time post but downgraded. The present officer John Herridge will be retiring but there is intended to be an overlap with the new post to assist with the succession planning.

Lincolnshire. Lincolnshire County Council is undergoing restructuring. The authority is being split into a commissioning side and a delivery side. The HER is currently remaining with planning on the commissioning side. Senior managers have been appointed and the restructuring is currently working downwards.

c. London HER

SC stated: the announcement has been made, this week, on the splitting of the current EH into English Heritage and Historic England next April. Other than that, things are rather quiet apart from my HER Officer, Mel, going in secondment for a year, which we're currently recruiting cover for, and I'm waiting to hear if we can extend the contract of our part-time HER Assistant.

d. North West HER Forum

Cumbria. Ken Davies from Lancashire HER is now on a part time secondment to Cumbria to assist with Grey Lit backlog.

Lancs. As above and there is currently uncertainty regarding the SLA situation for funding DC.

Merseyside. Dana Campbell has started work as the HER project officer on the digitisation project, work is progressing well.

LDNPA. Staff have been re-interviewed for their own posts. Eleanor Kingston is now Strategy & Partnership Adviser – one of 4 generic posts for all the specialists

Cheshire. Awaiting a report on the future of the service, following a public consultation that ends in November, also awaiting news on an office move.

Manchester. GMAAS are organising a Greater Manchester Industrial Archaeology Day on Saturday 29th November, to be held at The Old Fire Station, University of Salford.

e. South East HER Forum

- A number of members of the SE HER committee have outlined concerns regarding HERMES project and have asked the ALGAO HER Committee for clarification on HERMES.
- Many HERs have identified that a number of units are using the Heritage Gateway as a data source for the construction of DBAs. One of the HERs in the region has implemented an enforcement policy to deal with the issue that would appear to be working.

- Berkshire has added a new permanent archaeological officer member to the team and a temporary HLC post to the team
- East Sussex are undergoing a new restructure and they have had two volunteers through the job centre which paid for their travel expenses, this proved to be positive and East Sussex have suggested that perhaps other HERs may consider this.
- Greater London HER is preparing for the split of English Heritage which will hopefully happen in the background rather than effecting front line services. There has been a marked increases in searches of the HER in the recent year and new data has been reissued for the HS2 project.
- Hampshire has appointed Alex Bellisario as the Historic Data Manager and are currently recruiting for the posts of Assistant Archaeologist and Senior Archaeologist to increase the team from two permanent members back up to four. This has been possible as the restructure was implemented in October allowing the posts to be unfrozen. Hampshire has also just completed a pilot assisted Audit which proved to be very successful.
- Isle of Wight upgraded to HBSMRv4 this year and is working towards the SHINE dataset for the September 2014 deadline. The local list has also been revived and is being administered by the record officer rather than the conservation team.
- Kent HER is still faced with a future of 1.6FTE and as a result there has been little report entry onto the HER. However the main area of concern is the reduction of a Canterbury archaeological officer from 1FTE to 0.4FTE.
- Milton Keynes – no significant updates
- Oxfordshire continues to record high levels of HER consultations and the scanning of all DC reports has also been completed. A new charging policy has been implemented by Oxfordshire County Council.
- Portsmouth HER has now signed and sealed a SLA with Hampshire County Council for the DC advice.
- Southampton Archaeology now has two posts, the HER and DC officers and a restructure is currently underway within the council. HER Audit data review was due to begin in August but has had to be postponed due to staffing.
- Surrey HER has recently been experiencing lack of staffing but the positions have been recruited to and new members are due to start shortly.
- West Berks are still at 2 FTE with volunteer assistance and HER enhancement now focuses on public houses and beer houses within the county.
- West Sussex HER has been advised that as of April 2015 the county council will not be renewing SLAs with districts and boroughs. Eon off Shore wind farm has been approved and the cable routes runs across a sensitive archaeological area – pre determination work is on-going.
- Winchester HER is likely to be reviewing its charges and Tracy has been working extensively with the Winchester Urban Archaeology Assessment and is now at the publication project stage. Silver Hill seems to be moving ahead with geoarchaeological work being carried out during the Geotechnical evaluation.

f. South West HER Forum.

The South West HER Forum met on 1st October at the Wiltshire and Swindon History Centre in Chippenham.

There were concerns expressed about SHINE and NELMS.

General issues raised were about restructuring in many authorities (particularly in Somerset, where the Historic Environment Service (including the HER) is being transferred to the South West Heritage Trust), and the requirement to raise revenue.

The Know Your Place project is expanding to South Gloucestershire, Gloucestershire, North Somerset, and Bath & North-East Somerset. This will include 1st, 2nd and 3rd edition Ordnance Survey maps (from the British Library), tithe and enclosure maps, town plans, and a community engagement layer. No HER information at the moment.

It was agreed that Graham Tait would act as representative for the South West.

g. West Midlands HER Forum

The last ALGAO West Midlands HER meeting was hosted by Clwyd-Powys Archaeological Trust in Welshpool on 19th May 2014.

Regional Updates: Summaries of recent projects being undertaken by all regional HERs were given, along with updates as to the current situation within each authority. Worcestershire County Council's service is still under review and potentially facing a further 64% reduction in the overall budget for the archives and archaeology service. Hereford are in the process of relocating to new offices and should be moving in September 2014. The Mike Shaw announced his retirement as the Black Country HER Officer / Archaeologist as of September 2014. Ellie Ramsey has been working on a part time basis as HER assistant for Wolverhampton. Warwickshire have separated from their archives and field team and are now based within Economic Growth. Staffordshire County Council's historic environment service is still under review and are awaiting a decision as to whether they will transfer (with their Highways function to AMEY).

Regional representation at the ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting: It was agreed that Suzy Blake would act as representative for the West Midlands (as she already attends the HER Committee in her capacity representing FISH), with additional support from Ben Wallace (who attends as chair of the HER Committee) and Melissa Seddon and/or Lucie Dingwall from Hereford who also sometimes attend the meetings.

Project Updates: Project updates on OASIS /HERALD, the guidance paper on Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England, the CITIZAN (Coastal and Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network) project, the revision of Informing the Future of the Past were provided by Ben Wallace. An update on the revision of the HER Benchmarks and Audits was also given by English Heritage

INSPIRE: Inspire was also discussed in some detail, with a very mixed response from the region as to whether HER data should be included INSPIRE and how INSPIRE was being approached at each local authority.

Following the meeting Jeff Spencer of Clwyd Powys Archaeological Trust gave a guided tour of Beacon Ring, discussing ongoing management of the site.

Since the meeting Mike Hodder has now retired as Birmingham City Council archaeologist (and currently there is no archaeologist in post. Mike Shaw has now retired from Wolverhampton City Council, with Ellie Ramsey taking over as HER Officer/Archaeologist. Staffs County Councils Historic Environment service did not transfer to AMEY with the Highways function on the 1st October, although the service is still under review and this may still occur in the future. Ollie Russell is leaving Worcester County Council in early November; his post will be covered in the immediate future by Aisling Nash.

The next ALGAO West Midlands HER Meeting will be held in Stafford on November 7th 2014.

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

However, as our Regional HER meeting is for both regions in York, I'll report for now.

Meeting was held on 17th September @ York

Main discussions were around HER digitisation projects – tips and ideas shared; SHINE and NELMS – general concerns over this; Data Protection and HER information – various suggestions for dealing with this suggested; and Performance Indicators for HERs – mainly to do with the issue that eg a 5% target for enhancement per annum becomes increasingly difficult to meet as the number of records increases, and ways to come up with PI's so they don't become millstones.

A round up of activities and status's revealed that

WYAS had lost 2 out of 3 DM posts, and one temporary HER post not renewed

Northumberland expect to be reviewed in the next 6 months or so, as the rest of the teams around them have already been done, but they haven't yet

Durham are expecting a re-structure in the next year or so (i.e. next financial year) – but no indications of what that means

Humber are expecting a re-structure this financial year – but impacts unknown

15. Country updates.

i. ALGAO Cymru HER report

CM provided this update:

HER funding. From the 1st April 2015 direct funding of HERs in Wales will pass from the RCAHMMW to Cadw. While this is not expected to increase the basic amount on offer, it may open up the possibility of applying for additional Cadw project funding for specific HER

projects – which has not been available while the funding has been administered by the RCAHMMW.

Heritage Bill. Work on the Wales Heritage Bill progresses, with the Bill now timetabled to go before the Assembly in 2015 and to receive Royal assent and come into effect in 2016. One of the purposes of the Bill will be to make the maintenance of an Historic Environment Record a statutory function of Local Authorities, albeit one exercised through a third party. With this in mind work has begun to revise the existing HER benchmarks, to establish what is required of a statutory HER, and to revise the Guidance on Historic Environment Records for Local Authorities first issued in draft in the wake of the abortive England and Wales Heritage Bill.

Glastir – the all Wales agri-environment scheme. Work continues on the production of polygonal management area data to inform this scheme. Recent discussions between Cadw and the Rural Payments Division of the Welsh Government has opened up the prospect of this data set being taken into the Cross Compliance, which has hitherto only acknowledged the presence of scheduled monuments. Potentially this will offer protection to over 38,500 hectares of historic environment features on agricultural land.

OpenHER software. Development of the OpenHER software system has continued with the introduction of a GIS led constraints checker and development control threat tracking system. Work has also been done to improve batch loading and cataloguing of digital photography.

ii. **Scotland SMRs/HERs**

There's not much news to report from Scotland. Inverclyde still has no archaeology service provision. Otherwise waiting to see how the merger between HS and RCAHMS pans out over the next year, and the implications for local authorities.

16. Any Other Business

17. Date of Next Meeting

It was agreed that the ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting should start at 11am (rather than 11:30am), so more time is available for discussion.

11am to 4pm on Wednesday 21st January 2015. English Heritage West Midlands Regional Office, Birmingham.

Appendix 1: The following table describes the OPEN ACTIONS.

Action	Remit	Comment	Status
Get ALGAO Exec to agree changes to website to ensure advice note (Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England) on ALGAO website can be viewed by all.	BW		Open
Get ALGAO Exec to agree changes to website to ensure that minutes and agendas and all other HER content on ALGAO website can be viewed by all.	BW		Open
Circulate 'quick wins' presentation.	BW	Via committee or via HER Forum.	Open
Seek support for an HER Strategy for the Future from the ALGAO executive	BW		Open
Liaise with English Heritage over the action plan for NHPP2, and fitting an HER Strategy for the Future within NHPP2.	BW		Open
Draft an update to the ALGAO-UK HER committee terms-of-reference, for comment and approval.	BW		Open
Look at the content of http://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her to ensure that content was appropriate.	All		Open
GT to update IfP link on http://www.algao.org.uk/subject/her	GT		Open
Update advice note (Historic Environment Record Services and Research Projects in England) and take to ALGAO executive for approval.	BW	To be done then to get on HER Forum file store.	Open
Speak to the Warwickshire GIS team and to the LGA/Defra about what work would be required to go under Annex III of INSPIRE.	BW		Open
Suzy Blake (Staffordshire HER) to submit an exemption for Staffordshire HER to Ordnance Survey; which, once approved, could be used as a template for other HERs across the country. Then to inform ALGAO-UK HER Committee and HER Forum when this is successfully done.	SB	SB has had an initial meeting to discuss this. SB to chase this up further.	Open
Ensure that someone attends the CITIZAN 'specialist board meeting'	BW		Open
Liaise with David Thomas	JG		Open

(RCAHMMW) to get information on Welsh benchmarks and outcomes and circulate within the committee			
Re-write the Outcomes Framework Project Proposal as one project (rather than 4 separate projects).	JG		Open
Write the Outcomes Framework Project Proposal by January 2015	NB	For discussion at next ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting	Open
Let regions know about EH research projects on religious and funerary sites.	All English regional reps		Open
Let regions know that volunteers are required to undertake updates to IfP (if not already done so).	All English regional reps		Open
Liaise with ALGAO Executive to include the Professional Access section of the Heritage Gateway website incorporated within the ALGAO website.	BW		Open
Send update on HER Strategy to the ALGAO-UK HER Committee.	BW		Open
Send update reports to GT from other meetings (including reports from regional HER Forums) one week before the next ALGAO-UK HER Committee meeting.	All		Open

Appendix 2: Abbreviations and links

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