

EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives. Report on activities March 2016 – March 2017

Composition of the group, March 2017:

David Bibby (Chair)	Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Baden-Württemberg im Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart, Germany.
Christoph Blesl	Abteilung für Archäologie, Bundesdenkmalamt, Austria.
Duncan Brown	Head of Archaeological Archives, Historic England.
Ann Degraeve	Département Patrimoine archéologique, Direction des Monuments et des Sites, Bruxelles, Belgium.
Manuela Fischer (Administration)	Landesamt für Denkmalpflege Baden-Württemberg im Regierungspräsidium Stuttgart, Germany
Filipa Neto	Departamento de Bens Culturais Direção- Geral do Património Cultural / DGPC, Portugal.
David Novak	Institute of Archaeology ASCR, Prague, Czech Republic.
Agnieszka Oniszczyk (Deputy Chair)	National Heritage Board of Poland
Till Scholz	Archäologische Bodenforschung Basel-Stadt, Switzerland
Marcus Smith (Corresponding Member)	Riksantikvarieämbetet, Sweden

Looking to the future, the EAC-Working Group on Archaeological Archives continues to seek new members, especially from southern, Mediterranean and eastern Europe.

Activities of the EAC-Working Group on Archaeological Archives:

1. Continuation of work on EAC Guidelines Number 1

After the final publication of the ARCHES manual on archaeological archiving in Europe in the 7 languages of the project as EAC Guidelines Number 1 (at least online) in 2014, the group remains active in the dissemination of the ARCHES concept. This year Polish and Portuguese translations have appeared as well as a revised, improved German version.

2. Addendum to ARCHES:

As a valuable addendum to ARCHES, WG member David Nowak has prepared a draft multilingual glossary of archive-terms. This is, at time of writing, in the process of being validated by the Working Group as a whole and will appear soon on the ARCHES WIKI and be announced on the EAC-Homepage and the ARCHES-“linked-in” page. Further translations for this growing glossary are planned for 2017/2018.

3. (Constructive) criticism of the EAC Working Party Rules draft:

The EAC-Working Group on Archaeological Archives analysed the draft rules in some depth and sent its detailed suggestions and points of criticism to the board on 29th March 2016.

The Working Group completely understands the necessity of the board to reform their relationship to the working groups – to ensure that they actually DO something. However, the group was disconcerted by the original tone of the draft document, which it thought to be rather autocratic. The WG felt that there should be more emphasis on “consultation” and working together and take into account that the members of the working groups are idealist-volunteers doing work over and above that actually required of them by their respective institutions, often on their own time. They do valuable, productive, scientific work for the good of the EAC and European archaeology in general.

The EAC-Working Group on Archaeological Archives gave its constructive criticism of the draft rules in good faith and is gratified to find many, if not all, of its suggestions in the reworked Rules which were accepted by the EAC board on 28th October 2016 and are to be ratified by the general Assembly at this Athens meeting. It also greets the explanatory “EAC Working Group Rules information and guidance document”. With these rules in mind, the EAC-Working Group on Archaeological Archives is in good faith that the Board will continue to “authorises its further continuance”, at least for the time being...

4. New name and emblem:

The *EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives* suggests that all working groups of the EAC use the same naming style. i.e.

EAC + Working Group + theme of the working group.

The EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives has made the decision for the future to change its theme-epithet away from ARCHES to a much simpler and direct one “AAE: Archaeological archives in Europe”.

This decision has been made for various reasons:

- The clumsiness of the ARCHES acronym: “*Archaeological Resources in Cultural Heritage: A European Standard*”.

- Conflict potential with the Getty Foundation and their ARCHES-Project.
- Too many “Arches” on the World Wide Web.

The EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives suggests a new logo for “AAE” based on the EAC logo, for a strong corporate identity:



We suggest this approach for all working groups.

5. Making choices:

The EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives will, in the coming term be in a position make a valuable contribution to the, main EAC theme “Making Choices”. In close consultation with the main EAC Working Group on Making Choices the EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives has in 2016 been preparing itself to become active, after the main group has done its initial work. It has been collecting experiences from its own members and working on a detailed questionnaire on choices in archaeological archives to (we suggest) inform a guide on that subject – maybe as an annex to ARCHES or an independent guide(?). This will also be described in more detail in the talk by Duncan Brown and myself tomorrow.

6. Dissemination:

The EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives continues to promote the basic concepts of archaeological Archiving as promoted by the EAC Guidelines No. 1:

In the UK the EAC Guidelines No. 1 has been adopted by the Archaeological Archives Forum, to which all the main cultural heritage bodies belong.

At der CHNT Vienna 2016 a talk under the title: “ARCHES: Archaeological Resources in Cultural Heritage: A European Standard” was successfully held by David Bibby.

The EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives, in the persona of its very active member Duncan Brown, has submitted an abstract to the yearly conference of the European Archaeologists’ Association (Maastricht, May 2107) under the title “The Future of Archaeological Archive Practice in Europe and Beyond”. The ARCHES idea will be further disseminated in the paper, as will the problem of making choices in archiving.

David Bibby

Chair, EAC Working Group on Archaeological Archives, 27th February 2017