

Analysis of the text [by assistant, with some AI frequency analysis], suggests the following highest priority issues. They are listed approximately in popularity order, although the free-text nature of the survey means this is not exact.

Very few specific suggestions of what EAC might do to address the questions/ issues raised were made, but they are included where appropriate. The Assistant notes that some of these issues are already addressed in existing EAC guidance, and promotion and implementation of the guidance may be the most effective way to support members in some areas.

Sustainability and climate change

'What can heritage bring to the table in the midst of the climate crisis?' asked by one respondent; comments generally focussed on either:

- (1) the need to improve sustainability in archaeological sector e.g. net zero, carbon accounting practice, Green Deal, also 'how to build environmental sustainability into investigations', 'understanding how the EAC archaeology community is addressing reducing its carbon footprint? what measures are they using? how is the profession going to be more sustainable?'
- (2) proactive management of archaeological heritage within changing climate context, e.g. 'archaeological heritage and climate change - managing the loss'; 'eroding heritage'; 'the effects of the climate emergency on the archaeological resource and the knock on effect on archives, already stretched resources.'

Suggestion for guidance: 'Challenges regarding climate, biodiversity and nature restoration can have a great impact on archaeological heritage and are not always covered by national policies or legislation. Guidelines and good practises might mitigate this (partly).'

Landscape management and spatial planning

This featured less strongly than climate change as a single-issue phrase, but collectively, a lot of the comments addressed this topic. Many comments overlapped with point (2) addressing the position archaeology increasingly finds itself in as one of a number of competing or complementary priorities during broader decision-making processes. They included: heritage and biological net gain; peatland restoration and archaeology; archaeology's role in landscape characterisation under Valletta and Faro; relationship to European Landscape Convention; urban development/ densification/ sustainability; archaeology and spatial planning.

Metal-detecting and heritage crime

This was one of the most common issues raised, e.g. questioning 'how to deal with' metal-detecting, looting and sales of heritage items as illegal activities. Also, the need to find a 'solution for the citizen science usage of metal-detectors' and the issue of public metal-detectors 'disturbing in situ preserved archaeological sites'. Noted that this was topic of 2009 EAC meeting.

Public benefit: community engagement, participation, well-being

Comments generally focussed on these areas:

- (1) Improving the dialogue between heritage management, other professions and the general public, e.g. one commenter asked 'how do we educate people about archaeology?' Others noted the need to 'support strong narratives', develop storytelling, and cooperation with other professions, the wider public and local historical groups to strengthen the foundations for managing archaeology.
- (2) Community participation in archaeology and archaeological decision-making, e.g. 'citizen science', 'becoming genuinely open to public view (without compromising professional integrity)- a challenge'. Youth participation was raised as a specific need [Assistant notes current EU emphasis on youth participation in decision-making].
- (3) Health and wellbeing – 'how can archaeology contribute?', how can archaeology unite people to deliver inclusion and placemaking.

There were specific suggestions for addressing these issues, including a 'community engagement working group' and a 'guide for educators, researchers and heritage managers, with issues of promotion, media, public perception, etc', 'guidance needed on ethics and methods' for public participation.

Sector sustainability, education, training and skills

A number of commenters addressed skills shortages and sustainability of profession, e.g. 'creating networks of specialists given the current shortages across environmental and artefact specialisms'; considering 'archaeological qualifications in context of Valletta requirements, as part of a wide discussion on sustainability of the profession and capacity building'; skills shortages in field archaeology; need for school curriculum improvement; mapping the gaps of where 'community archaeology' is taught in universities noted as specific issue.

Advocacy for heritage, alignment with national policies and priorities

Although not featuring strongly as a single-issue phrase, a wide range of comments noted the pressures facing heritage management, and the need to advocate for archaeology in the context of broader political and social pressures [see also landscape management and spatial planning].

Examples of comments include the importance of: 'advocating for the role of archaeology in helping answer the large questions for the future (on migration, biodiversity, climate, wellbeing)'; 'demonstrating the economic value of archaeological heritage to ensure continuing future investment'; 'increasing pressure to justify our existence and our ethical responses'; the need for 'ethical frameworks for heritage management decision-making'; 'alignment with national priorities - netzero, health and wellbeing, place-making - so that it's clear to policymakers how archaeology contributes and why continued support for the archaeological heritage management is vital'.

One commenter noted the 'expected impacts of EU and UN policies on social economy, such as rules for social procurement and sustainable procurement, the corporate sustainability reporting directive (CoE). These policies and strategies will surely influence development-led archaeology, need to be aware and prepare.'

Research, archiving, data and AI

A number of commenters raised [non-specific] concerns around archaeological archiving, particularly 'big data management' and artificial intelligence and machine learning. Remote access and automated decision-making for geospatial data was a specific issue raised.

Related to this, the need for 'intelligent investigation' and 'data sharing' to 'make the results of archaeological research public as much as possible' was noted several times, as was 'quality assurance for archaeological research in a commercial setting'.

Human remains

Noted several times as a specific and increasing issue, e.g. 'improved ethical management of excavated human remains', 'pressure to justify our ethical responses particularly human remains'.

Other specific issues

Conflict zones- archaeology and archives/ data and also emergency planning. Related to this: 'UKRAINE- how do we support the cultural heritage sector in rebuilding/ consolidation? skills/ specialisms?'

Conservation science- how to process, what is retrieved, skills, cost, archive

Preservation in situ- two comments pondering on the need to revisit what is meant by this, and if it should be preferred.

Improving EAC- two comments suggesting expansion of EAC.