

# ANNUAL

## REPORT



**HEADLAND**  
**ARCHAEOLOGY**

an **RSK** company

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# OUR VISION OUR ETHOS

## *What Drives Us*

Founded in 1996 by four like-minded archaeologists committed to delivering high-quality, commercially focused services, Headland Archaeology has grown into one of the UK's leading privately owned heritage consultancies. In a sector historically dominated by not-for-profit organisations, we stand out for our pragmatic, professional approach, earning us multiple industry awards and a strong reputation for delivering on time and within budget.

We provide a full spectrum of archaeological services, from consultancy and desk-based assessments through to fieldwork, analysis, and reporting. Whether supporting fast-track infrastructure projects, large-scale housing developments, quarries, or remote renewable energy schemes, we bring the same level of commitment, expertise, and efficiency to every project.

In 2018, our success and respected reputation led to our acquisition by the RSK Group, an environmental and engineering organisation that shares our values and people-first ethos. As part of this larger network, we continue to lead the way in archaeological service provision, driving innovation and collaborating with RSK companies to deliver integrated solutions for our clients.

Operating from five regional offices, Edinburgh, Manchester, Luton, Hereford, and Cleckheaton, we combine national reach with local insight. This structure allows us to provide consistent, high-quality service across the UK while drawing on deep knowledge of regional planning, heritage, and environmental considerations.



# LETTER FROM THE MANAGING DIRECTOR

Hello all, after a short hiatus I'm delighted to be writing the foreword for Headland's annual report. It's been a year that has embodied all our core values, archaeology, business, and careers, and my first 12 months with Headland have flown by. I'd like to thank everyone for making me feel so welcome; it's a privilege to work with such a talented and engaged team.

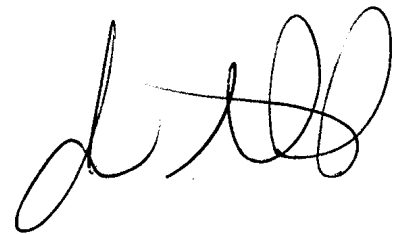
The award of the HS2 post-excavation contract was undoubtedly the highlight of the year. It has cemented Headland's position as both the largest privately owned archaeological practice in the UK and one of outstanding academic achievement. The contract win is a testament to the dedication of our bid team and the wider Access+ joint venture. We now have a new warehouse in Yorkshire to store the archives from all Phase 1 archaeological works, and we are beginning to receive the first of these archives. The coming years will be challenging but following the success of the A14 Huntingdon to Cambridge monograph, I have every confidence in our team's ability to deliver. From yesterday's largest archaeological infrastructure project to the next one, congratulations also to all those involved with seeing the A14 over the line!

Our contracting programme has been non-stop and as we've expanded our geophysics and fieldwork teams to meet increasing client demand, it's pleasing to see so many internal promotions alongside the arrival of new talent. The Geophysics team continues to go from strength to strength, with innovations ensuring that

our ten survey teams remain both competitive and profitable. The Consultancy team is also now one of the largest in the UK, with turnover having doubled in the last two years. The team is now engaged on a growing number of high-value DCO schemes and continues to support HS2 through its construction phase. This growth would not be possible without the support of our People and Business team, particularly the Learning and Development team's innovative onboarding and training programmes.

Commercially, the past year was one of our most successful to date. With a turnover of £17 million, we exceeded our target and are on track to grow further in 2025 while maintaining profitability. The order book for the year ahead is already filling up, with half of our 2025 target turnover already secured and we are also strongly placed to be appointed to major energy and infrastructure schemes later in the year. We also plan to grow our international offering, providing exciting opportunities for staff to work in new climates, working with fantastic archaeology whilst ensuring Headland Archaeology's future success.

With 2024/25 seeing the addition of two new roles to our team of 200; our International Business Development Manager and our Innovation Co-Ordinator, I look forward to seeing more new faces and roles join the team in 2025/26. Together, we will continue helping our clients deliver their programmes and achieve even greater success.



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*The award of the HS2 post-excavation contract was undoubtedly the highlight of the year.*

ANDY NORTON  
MANAGING DIRECTOR



# SHAPING THE FUTURE



A major milestone during this period has been the successful rollout of a paperless recording system across all fieldwork projects. By transitioning to a digital platform, we now benefit from clearer procedures and workflows that ensure the smooth flow of data throughout the full lifecycle of a project.

In the realm of aerial survey, several members of our Survey Team recently gained their GVC drone qualifications, enabling us to undertake more complex surveys with greater confidence and precision. Headland is now PDRA-01 certified, expanding our ability to support a wide variety of project types through advanced drone-based data collection.

Meanwhile, the GIS Team continues to evolve and diversify its offerings. This year, they developed innovative modules within our mobile mapping application. One standout is Trench Tracker, a real-time management tool which overlays a surveyed base map that is updated daily. This module provides a visualisation tool to track the status of individual trenches. The team has also developed Feature Tracker, an instant and easy to understand planning and communication tool. Pre-excavation surveys are visualised within the app, allowing Site Leads to plan where hand-dug interventions will be targeted, while field staff can instantly view the plan. These modules also allow customised access for clients and other external stakeholders. All data captured within the app is fully traceable, enabling us to monitor changes as the site progresses and providing valuable statistical outputs.

Looking ahead, the Technical Services team remains focused on consolidating and enhancing the suite of tools we provide, while staying agile in response to emerging technologies. We are committed to investing in our people, growing our in-house expertise, and continuing to lead in the development of technical solutions that support high-quality, efficient archaeological practice.

## *Technical Services: Tools of the Trade*

Over the past few years, Headland's Technical Services team has grown both in size and capability, playing a vital role in driving innovation across the business. From enhancing digital workflows to expanding our aerial survey capabilities, the team continues to develop and refine the tools of our trade.



# Rebuilding the Past: 3D Archaeological Reconstructions

In recent years, Headland's Graphics Department has made significant strides in digital innovation, investing in the development of our illustrators and expanding our visual storytelling capabilities. A key outcome of this effort has been the creation of 3D virtual reconstructions of archaeological sites using Blender, a powerful open-source software.

But what's the value in recreating the past? 3D Reconstructions are more than just eye-catching visuals, they are a means of

preserving and sharing lost landscapes, buildings, and lifeways. Archaeology can be challenging to visualise, and by building lifelike scenes rooted in evidence, we can make the past more accessible to the public, our clients, and wider stakeholders. While the end results are visually rich with an artistic component, each reconstruction is firmly grounded in archaeological data and academic research and scaled based on evidence preserved at the site.

From the first conceptual sketch to the final render, each project is informed by collaboration with our in-house specialists. Their expertise guides the accurate portrayal of architectural styles, building materials, environmental features, and even fauna and flora. We aim for realism and authenticity, incorporating small details, like tool marks, weathering, or human activity, that give each scene texture and a genuine sense of place.

Thanks to countless hours of training and practice, we've advanced from rendering a simple prehistoric roundhouse to reconstructing an entire Roman villa complex and its surrounding landscape. With each project, the reconstructions become more sophisticated and efficient. We're also developing a reusable reference library of archaeological elements, allowing for consistency and efficiency across future models.

Looking forward, we're excited to scale up. We are currently exploring larger, more complex reconstructions featuring increased character interaction and narrative detail, as well as integrating photogrammetric models to improve accuracy. Even more exciting, we are beginning to develop animated sequences, bringing these reconstructions to life in ways that will engage and inspire a broad audience.

By combining digital technology with archaeological expertise, our 3D reconstructions offer a dynamic way to experience the past, and ensure that it continues to inform and inspire into the future.



MARC ZUBIA-PONS  
ILLUSTRATOR





## *Beneath the Surface: Post-Strip Geophysics (Innovation)*

At Headland, innovation is at the heart of how we evolve as a business, deliver greater value to our clients, and enrich the working experience for our teams. Our Innovation Team champions fresh thinking across the company, supporting colleagues in exploring unconventional archaeological methods rooted in traditional principles. This open-minded, evidence-based approach is unlocking new insights that extend well beyond what's achievable through conventional excavation alone.

While there are exciting developments across many areas, one standout innovation we're proud to highlight is Post-Strip Geophysics (PSG). The Innovation Team has invested significant time and effort in promoting PSG as a key advancement. Our work to share our discoveries with the wider sector included presenting papers at both the ClfA Conference and the European Association of Archaeologists' conference in Rome in 2024. Andy Boucher coined PSG as 'Quantum Archaeology', a concept we want to solidify and broaden across the industry.

Traditionally, geophysics has been used for prospecting prior to instructive work, identifying

areas of archaeological interest to guide mitigation strategies. At Headland, however, we aim to generate higher-quality datasets and deeper understanding of sites without extensive intrusive investigation. Since 2018, we have found through multiple excavations that data from gradiometer surveys can inform and refine our excavation strategies to answer our questions directly. This supports a more stratified, question-led approach to archaeological sites, improving analysis and interpretation.

The benefits are tangible. PSG has allowed us to detect features invisible to the naked eye, such as those hidden beneath colluvium or alluvium, heat-affected areas, and deeply buried iron artefacts. PSG has enabled us to identify features or parts of features where anthropogenic material is most likely to be present, and to identify relationships between features. In future, we may even be able to estimate feature depth prior to excavation. Ultimately, we anticipate that this will allow us to manage project risks more effectively, plan project outcomes with greater accuracy, prioritise high-potential features, and better plan relationship slots while dedicating more time to investigating less disturbed sections of features.

At Headland, innovation is a shared responsibility. Whether you're leading a trial, offering feedback, or simply supporting the idea, everyone is part of the Innovation Team. That collaborative spirit is what will continue to push boundaries and help us discover what lies beneath the surface.





# GROWING COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY AND ENGAGEMENT AT HEADLAND

Developer-led archaeology is the major source of archaeological work and discoveries in the UK, uncovering countless important sites and finds that might otherwise remain hidden.

With every project comes the potential to reveal valuable information that enhances our understanding of the past.

Traditionally, the creation of knowledge has been how archaeologists measured our contribution to the public. However, as a sector, we now recognise that this knowledge often comes with barriers to access or comprehension by the wider public, particularly regarding where and how we publish, and the language and presentation methods we use.

As archaeologists, we have the unique opportunity to tell the stories of our shared human past. But these stories do not belong solely to us, they belong to everyone.

Since our Community Archaeologist joined the company in 2021, we have seen a steady increase in engagement with our clients. We have created educational videos, undertaken school visits, delivered community talks, facilitated public displays, and developed online interactive maps in partnership with one of our specialist departments, Technical Services.



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*As archaeologists, we have the unique opportunity to tell the stories of our shared human past. But these stories do not belong solely to us, they belong to everyone.*

A recent addition to our outreach is our podcast channel, HeadlandArchPod, where we feature series on individual projects, such as the one on the Swindon Southern Connector Road, placing information where people are already consuming it. We also recently launched a series on careers in archaeology to inspire young people and career changers to enter the profession.

Headland Archaeology also benefits from a wide range of specialist departments, which is key to our ability to showcase all aspects of the work we undertake and the contributions each specialism makes to interpreting archaeological sites and

finds. In recent years, we have delivered on- and off-site community workshops in topographical and geophysical survey methods and produced educational videos demonstrating how geoarchaeology helps us reconstruct past environments.

We know that archaeology can be thrilling and fascinating, connecting us to something bigger than ourselves, and to each other. We are excited to continue helping our clients connect with local communities through archaeology and to share the incredible work we do and the discoveries we make.





## PEOPLE AND BUSINESS SERVICES

### *Leading with Agility: The People and Business Services Driving Transformative Success*

*"It is not the strongest of the species that survive, nor the most intelligent, but the one most responsive to change."* These insightful words from Charles Darwin serve as a guiding principle for our People and Business Services division.

In an era defined by unprecedented change and opportunity, we have positioned ourselves at the forefront of our company's transformative journey. Our unwavering commitment to fostering a future-ready organisation is anchored in resilience, adaptive leadership, and strategic foresight. Together, we are not merely adapting to change; we are shaping a vibrant future for our organisation—and, in many respects, for our entire sector.



Central to this mission is our dedication to creating a resilient and engaged workforce. The People aspect of our division, which includes our **HR** and **L&D** departments, has prioritised initiatives centred on talent development, diversity, continuous performance management, and employee wellbeing. Since our last report, we have increased our workforce by 24%, all while maintaining an impressive record of employee tenure. This growth has coincided with a substantial number of internal promotions, underscoring our commitment to nurturing talent from within. Our proactive collaboration with staff representatives enables us to address concerns and implement innovative ideas that enhance workplace culture. Notably, our staff turnover stands at an encouraging 9.4%, a testament to the effectiveness of our engagement strategies.



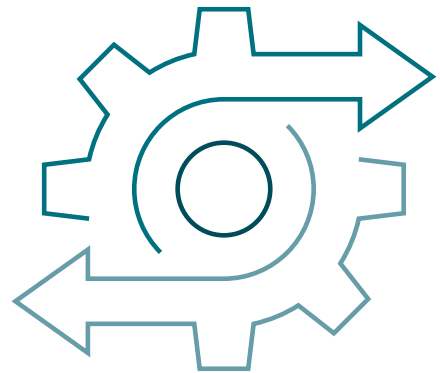


To support wellbeing, we have expanded our team of mental health first aiders to 28 and introduced MIND workshops, empowering employees to prioritise their mental health. Furthermore, our comprehensive training modules encompass a diverse range of both people and technical skills, ensuring our workforce is well-equipped to tackle current and future challenges.

The Business Services segment has amplified our operational efficiency through technological advancements and strategic integration. We have made significant strides in our digital transformation, successfully transitioning to fully cloud-based systems that enhance collaboration and streamline operations. Our emphasis on cybersecurity has fortified our **IT** defences, safeguarding sensitive information and ensuring business continuity. The integration of data analytics has equipped us with strategic insights that inform decision-making across all departments. In **Finance**, robust systems underpin our commitment to accounting excellence, driving effective financial planning that secures our fiscal health. Our **Resource Planning** team has optimised scheduling and workforce processes, ensuring maximum efficiency in resource allocation. Meanwhile, our **Administration** team excels in facilitating essential business operations, including fleet management and travel arrangements, ensuring the smooth running of daily activities. Our **SHEQ** department leads the way in maintaining compliance with industry standards, proudly holding certifications such as ISO 14001, ISO 9001, and ISO 45001, alongside Achilles and other construction accreditations. To further promote SHEQ awareness, we conduct Health and Safety workshops and lessons learnt sessions, supported by our SHEQ Liaisons team. This initiative ensures that safety and quality standards remain a priority, as we rigorously manage supply chains and meet client requirements effectively.

The holistic integration of these services not only supports our internal framework but also positions us as a leader within the sector, consistently delivering value to our people, clients and the wider RSK Group.

As we look ahead, our People and Business Services division remains steadfast in its mission to adapt, transform, and thrive. The challenges of recent years have solidified our commitment to proactive change, nurturing a culture characterised by collaboration and continuous improvement. Together, we are not just participants in an evolving landscape; we are leaders, setting a benchmark of excellence in our sector. By harnessing the collective strengths of our talented workforce and operational excellence, we will continue to drive sustainable growth and success in the years to come.



# EMPOWERING PEOPLE, PRIORITISING SAFETY

## *Learning and Development: Cultivating Talent*

In 2024/25, our Learning and Development (L&D) priorities focused on strengthening our training approach, evaluating the effectiveness of existing initiatives, and refining our methods to better support staff development. This year saw significant progress in consolidating our learning framework, equipping employees, supervisors, and managers with targeted resources and tools that enhanced accessibility, communication, and overall support.

Training delivery remained aligned with key organisational drivers, including legislative and health and safety obligations, role-specific competencies (both internal and client-defined), and broader compliance expectations across the RSK Group. Our initiatives were grouped into three main categories: Role-Specific, SHEQ, and Compliance training. The chart below shows recorded individual attendances for 2024/25 training activities.

CATEGORY	ATTENDEES
Compliance	714
Induction	48
Other	449
SHEQ	815
Technical	652
Grand Total	2682

## Key Achievements

A major milestone this year was the transformation of the Fieldwork Manual, a critical resource on procedures and best practices, into a user-friendly digital flipbook, now accessible via a dedicated app. The updated manual features direct links to RSK's 9 Golden Safety Rules, an interactive map showcasing significant Headland projects since 2007, access to the new Post-Excavation Knowledge Hub and Publication Library, and a training video on photogrammetry. New Project Archaeologists are now assessed on all sections of the manual, with digital assessment sheets embedded for easy download and submission.



## Fieldwork Support

Fieldwork support remains a vital aspect of our training delivery, either initiated through client requirements or in collaboration with Project Managers. Support takes several forms, including on-site learning, needs evaluations based on role expectations, and gap analyses informed by Clear Review data and competence assessments. The L&D team attended four locations during 2024/2025.



*We will continue to adapt our learning offer to meet evolving needs, developing internal talent, reinforcing our strong safety culture, and supporting Headland's continued growth and innovation.*

### **Level 3 Award in Archaeological Practice – A Key Priority**

As a registered training centre with the Scottish Qualifications Authority (SQA) and Qualification Network UK (QNUK), Headland continues to deliver recognised qualifications. This year, several employees began the Level 3 Award in Archaeological Practice via SQA, including a trainee with no prior archaeological training. Through QNUK, we delivered two Emergency First Aid at Work and one First Aid at Work qualification to the Consultancy and Geophysics teams.

### **Quality Assurance and Cross-Team Collaboration**

We continue to maintain ongoing quality assurance across all L&D activities, including training delivered by subject specialists, to ensure consistent methodologies and the inclusion of competence assessments where appropriate. In 2024, as we worked to support the whole business, our focused achievements included supporting Technical Services in developing metal detector training and enhancing Harkl training. We supported Post-Excavation with the development and creation of their Post-Excavation Knowledge Base resource. We collaborated with Geophysics to support their magnetonics training and advised Post-Excavation, offering guidance as they update their existing report writing training, both of which we will continue in 2025.

As we look ahead, we will continue to adapt our learning offer to meet evolving needs, developing internal talent, reinforcing our strong safety culture, and supporting Headland's continued growth and innovation.

IAN HENRY  
L&D AND WELLBEING MANAGER





## Health, Safety, & Environment

### *Safety, Health, Environment & Quality (SHEQ)*

SHEQ continues to play a critical role in maintaining high standards across all Headland operations. Each year, the department delivers strong results, meeting, and in many areas exceeding, the KPIs set by the company and the RSK Group. Our accident and incident statistics have remained notably low, with just one minor lost-time incident under seven days and one incident exceeding seven days recorded since 2021.

engagement, with employees actively reporting Near Misses and Positive Interventions (NMPI), maintaining a culture of vigilance and responsibility.



#### THE RSK KPIS INCLUDE

- NMPI submissions (Near-Miss and Positive Interventions)
- NMPI submissions by managers
- Percentage of the workforce submitting NMPI
- Site inspections
- Vendor reviews
- Project reviews

This reflects the effectiveness of our preventative measures, and the strength of the safety culture embedded across the business. Performance data is used not only to track results but also to identify trends and recurring issues, enabling a proactive approach to improvement. This strategy has driven stronger staff

Ongoing training and development are integral to how we work. From lessons learned to toolbox talks and targeted refresher courses, SHEQ is prioritised in every role across the business. As part of the RSK Group, we contribute to and benefit from group-wide safety forums, training, and workshops. Themes such as “Being Prepared”, “Buried Services”, “Effective Safety Leadership”, and “Slips, Trips and Falls” have been delivered to the entire workforce during RSK Safety Month. In 2025, this enhanced approach led to over 175 NMPI reports in Q1 alone, more than 45% of the annual target, alongside increases in staff participation, site visits, vendor reviews, and project reviews.





SHEQ is embedded into our decision-making, planning, and daily operations, a shared responsibility embraced by every employee. Alongside safety performance, the team champions sustainable practices that reduce waste, minimise environmental risk, and contribute to our net zero goals. Our strong record not only meets legal requirements but sets a higher standard that protects our people, our clients, and the environment.

The department will maintain momentum through monthly bulletins, quarterly newsletters, and an open-door policy that encourages staff to raise concerns, seek advice, or share feedback. This approach ensures continued transparency, engagement, and improvement across all areas of SHEQ performance.



STEVE NICHOLSON  
SHEQ MANAGER



# MEET SOME OF OUR NEW STAFF



**ANDY NORTON**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR

I graduated in Archaeological Science from the University of Bradford in the mid-1990s and began my career as a field technician with Oxford Archaeology. My interests lie in cemetery excavations and late Saxon/medieval towns, so spending ten years working on the Oxford Castle site and contributing to the monograph was a real privilege. I joined Wessex Archaeology in 2011 as Regional Director of the Sheffield office, where I led its growth from a team of 15 to over 100, delivering large-scale schemes including Viking Link, HS2, and Wylfa Newydd. In 2022, I took on a new challenge with Ecus following its acquisition of Northern Archaeological Associates (NAA). I oversaw the integration of NAA and helped develop a national archaeological contracting service, alongside managing the Sheffield-based landscape architecture, arboriculture, and environmental teams. I joined Headland in 2024 as Managing Director and have enjoyed meeting and working with many of our staff. I have been impressed by the innovation and ideas coming from all corners of the business, and I'm excited about Headland's role at the forefront of advancing archaeological practices across the sector. The next five years promise to be busy, particularly in the renewables and infrastructure sectors. To support further growth, we'll be looking to explore new overseas markets and build stronger links across the wider RSK family.

**ANDY NORTON**

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*When I joined Headland and RSK at the start of 2024 I was immediately wowed to meet such a passionate and engaged group of people. Now 18 months into my role, the level of expertise and drive I see on a daily basis has only reinforced my view that Headland has an unrivalled team of specialists, and that we lead the archaeological sector in innovation and good practice. This passion and expertise is mirrored across the wider RSK group, and with your help and collaboration, the next few years will see our collective drive take us into new markets, develop and utilise new technologies, and introduce new methodologies and best practice for the whole archaeological sector. You cannot discover new oceans unless you lose sight of the shore and clearly all at Headland and RSK are natural sailors - I am very much looking forward to making this thrilling journey with all of you!*

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**FILINE WAGNER**  
SENIOR ARCHIVIST

Filine joined Headland in 2025. She brings over 12 years' experience working in archives across cultural institutions in Switzerland, Germany, and England. Her background includes working with collections spanning 2,000 years and comprising a wide range of materials, from paper documents and photographs to digital records, artworks, and artefacts. Filine has comprehensive expertise in all aspects of archival work, including records management, acquisition, preservation, cataloguing and facilitating access.

**JOANNE MIDDLETON**  
QS / ASSISTANT CONTRACTS MANAGER

Joanne began her career in the finance and banking sector before transitioning into the construction industry. Over the past ten years, starting with a Quantity Surveying role, she has held a variety of commercial positions, working with a wide range of clients. Her most recent experience involved managing construction projects in Scotland while also overseeing commercial administration and internal reporting. Joanne has received several industry accolades, including the Society of Construction and Quantity Surveyors Prize in 2018 and the Scottish Building Federation Award for three consecutive years. She was also nominated for a Women in Property award. At Headland, she supports project managers in delivering their projects, drawing on her extensive knowledge and experience.





**KENNETH AITCHISON**  
INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS  
DEVELOPMENT MANAGER

Kenneth joined Headland in 2025, bringing over 30 years of experience in archaeology and heritage. He has worked across academic, government, and commercial sectors, leading projects in the UK, Europe, the Middle East and Africa. His work has included field projects in Syria, Lebanon, Cyprus, France, and Germany, as well as development initiatives in The Gambia, Tanzania, and Kenya. Kenneth has also advised the European Commission and led international aid-funded programmes. He is an Honorary Professor at the University of Liverpool and a regular guest lecturer across Europe. Prior to joining Headland, he founded Landward Research Ltd and held senior roles at key heritage organisations, including ClfA. He currently serves as CEO of FAME. Widely published and an experienced speaker, Kenneth brings both expertise and a strong international network to support Headland's growth and partnerships.

**STEVEN SMELTZ**  
ASSISTANT SUPERVISOR

Steven Smeltz joined Headland in 2024. He holds an Honours degree in Anthropology and Biology from the University of Manitoba and an MSc in Forensic Anthropology from the University of Dundee. Steven has experience working as an archaeologist across Canada, the Arctic Circle, and Britain. A career highlight was his role as the chief permit-holding archaeologist during an unforgettable expedition through the Northwest Passage aboard the MS Fridtjof Nansen. Steven is looking forward to many exciting opportunities at Headland.



**CHARLOTTE SELF**  
ARCHIVES MANAGER

Before joining Headland, Charlotte worked as a Post-Excavation Archaeologist, where she was involved in cleaning finds, processing environmental samples, and preparing archaeological archives for deposition. After discovering a passion for archiving, she joined Headland in 2021 as an Archives Supervisor. Since then, she has played a key role in transforming the Archives Department into one of the largest post-excavation departments. Charlotte was promoted to Archives Manager in 2024 and now leads the team in delivering major archive projects. Under her leadership, the team successfully completed the archiving for the A14, depositing over 700 boxes, the largest single archaeological archive, to Cambridge Museum. The team has now begun working on archiving for the HS2 project.



**PHIL WRIGHT**  
ARCHAEOLOGY & BUILT HERITAGE  
CONSULTANT

Phil has a background in both heritage consultancy and field archaeology, with over 12 years of experience across a wide range of projects. His work has included everything from excavations in central London to walkover surveys in the uplands of South West England. Phil joined Headland at the end of 2024 and has since been involved in the production of desk-based assessments and heritage impact assessments, particularly for renewable energy schemes.



**RUSCHANE JOGINDER**  
INNOVATION CO-ORDINATOR

Ruschane joined Headland in 2025 as Innovation Co-ordinator within the Commercial Operations team. She is responsible for driving innovative ideas from conception to full-scale implementation across the organisation and works alongside Andy Boucher, who oversees innovation at Headland. Her background combines engineering and management, with a focus on water recycling in the built environment, primarily in the Middle East. Prior to joining Headland, she worked at the UK Civil Aviation Authority, contributing to airspace modernisation in collaboration with leading innovators. Ruschane's experience is characterised by a commitment to transforming regions and industries through innovative and sustainable technologies.

**LEI DING**  
SENIOR GIS OFFICER

Lei joined Headland in 2022, bringing a background in maritime archaeology and strong expertise in GIS. She has developed multiple mobile GIS project templates, such as the Trench Tracker, to improve site recording efficiency. Lei creates interactive dashboards for data analysis using Excel and GIS, and her coding skills have contributed to over 40 scripts, eight plugins, and an automated HTML report system. By applying QGIS expressions, Python, PostgreSQL, and HTML, she has optimised geophysical atlas production, streamlined data processing, quality control, output workflows, and improved large-scale data management. Lei also customises mobile GIS functions and GIS-integrated reports to meet specific client requirements.





**BRADLEY CROWSON**  
SHEQ Co-ordinator

Bradley has seven years' experience in quality management, with a background in the automotive industry and, briefly, in construction. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology and was keen to explore an environmental role while remaining within management systems, leading him to SHEQ. Joining Headland in 2024 he recently achieved his NEBOSH General Certificate. Bradley works alongside the SHEQ Manager to maintain all aspects of Headland's SHEQ management systems and serves as a point of contact within the SHEQ team, supporting departments across the company.

**CINDY NELSON-VIJOEN**  
POST-EXCAVATION PROJECT MANAGER

Cindy has over 20 years' experience in archaeology, beginning her career in South Africa, where she completed an MA in Archaeozoology and worked as both an archaeologist and Research Co-ordinator for the Mossel Bay Archaeology Project. This included excavations at Pinnacle Point, now part of a World Heritage Site. She has also served as an Archaeology Outreach Educator and as an Archaeology Advisor. Cindy went on to complete an MPhil at the University of Edinburgh, focusing on the seasonality of shellfish use through oxygen isotope analysis. Before joining Headland in 2025, she held roles as Head of Post-Excavation and Field Project Manager, overseeing a range of archaeological projects.



**CALLUM ALLSOP**  
PROJECT MANAGER

Callum began his commercial archaeology career in 2010, working across the UK on projects ranging from large infrastructure schemes to smaller-scale investigations. He first joined Headland in 2013 as a Site Assistant. From 2015, he progressed to supervising and directing archaeological fieldwork, gaining experience in both excavation and post-excavation practices. In 2021, he began managing projects, including sites of national significance such as Brierley Paddocks, West Mersea, and St Osyth Priory in Essex. He returned to Headland in 2024 as a Project Manager, based at the Silsoe office.

**REBECCA HUNT**  
SENIOR TRAINING OFFICER

Rebecca joined Headland in 2025. She is committed to providing training that equips colleagues with the skills needed for their roles and ongoing development. She brings nearly 20 years of archaeological fieldwork experience across Britain, having developed her expertise through a series of fixed-term contracts before securing a permanent position, progressing from Site Assistant to Senior Project Officer. Throughout her career, Rebecca has prioritised a mentorship-led approach, supporting individuals within her teams to successfully deliver projects of all scales. She looks forward to shaping and managing staff training in a more structured capacity, helping to develop talent across the organisation.



**The growth of our workforce** is an indicator of our company's success and stability, and the **24% increase since 2021** signals a robust expansion strategy. This growth reflects the increasing market demand but also highlights our commitment to **investing in talent**.

Moreover, **since 2021, we promoted 158 employees**, which underscores our internal culture of development and recognition. By promoting from within, we retain valuable knowledge but also **motivate others to aspire to higher roles**.

Our average **staff turnover from 2021 to 2024 stands at 9.4%**, reflecting a healthy balance between retention and renewal within our teams. This rate is well within industry benchmarks and suggests that **our people strategies are fostering both loyalty and agility**. It also indicates that while we retain core talent, **we continue to welcome fresh perspectives that drive innovation and adaptability**.

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*In Headland, we remain committed to creating an environment where people choose to stay, grow, and thrive.*

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*We put a lot of time and effort into developing the skills of our staff, knowing that committing to that effort means that our staff will grow and develop, and fill senior posts when they are ready. We also encourage movement across departments, where staff can bring skills and experience from different backgrounds to their current roles.*



# BUSINESS DEVELOPMENT

Business development is central to Headland's growth, establishing work in new markets while ensuring that our existing clients continue to receive the gold-standard service they expect. Over the past year, the Business Development team has attended several events in the renewables and infrastructure sectors, maintaining relationships with existing clients and forging new partnerships.

This year has seen greater diversification in both our client base and the sectors in which we operate. While there has been a reduction in transport-related opportunities we have experienced significant growth in the energy sector, with around 60% of our work now coming from renewable and interconnector schemes, albeit changes in government spending have resulted in fewer highways projects. We have also seen an increase in work relating to water and minerals schemes, in part due to

frameworks with RSK and others directly under the Headland Archaeology banner.

Collaboration with internal RSK business forums in transport, energy, water, and minerals has created opportunities for multidisciplinary projects, with approximately 30% of our work now originating directly from our RSK colleagues. This group-wide approach to business development provides clients with a single point of contact on larger schemes and ensures a more streamlined delivery process.



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*Collaboration with internal RSK business forums in transport, energy, water, and minerals has created opportunities for multidisciplinary projects, with approximately 30% of our work now originating directly from our RSK colleagues.*

While much of our work remains focused on large-scale projects across the UK, we are actively expanding our portfolio of local projects. The Business Development team has attended local construction forums and client gatherings, which has led to increased opportunities in the housing sector,

particularly in Scotland, the North West, and the South East. We also have plans underway to grow our local presence in the Midlands and Yorkshire.

With the UK market nearing saturation, we believe the future for Headland is further afield, so we are targeting the wider international market. Building on our international geophysics work, we are working closely with the wider RSK business development team to secure additional energy projects in the Republic of Ireland. Our team has attended Irish energy forums and industry fairs and has begun developing relationships with local clients and partners.

We are also looking to establish foothold in the Middle East, working in collaboration with RSK Middle East, Nicholas O'Dwyer, and external regional partners. There is a growing demand for international heritage teams in Saudi Arabia, driven by a boom in mining, energy, and heritage development. To support this expansion, Kenneth Aitchison joined Headland in January 2025 as our International Business Development Manager. He has already made strong progress in establishing partnerships in Europe and North America, as well as deepening our connections in the Middle East.

Additionally, we are working closely with Extent Heritage, our RSK partner in Australia. By combining our resources, we are able to offer an unrivalled international team. We have already submitted joint bids for projects in the Middle East and have a staff exchange scheduled for summer 2025. We look forward to strengthening this partnership and delivering more international schemes together.

Whether in the UK or abroad, a continued focus on business development will ensure that we build on a successful 2024/25 and maintain a diverse portfolio of projects to navigate an increasingly uncertain global future.

**ANDY NORTON**  
MANAGING DIRECTOR





# COMMERCIAL OPERATIONS

Since its creation in 2020, the Commercial Operations Division has become well-established within the company, driving efficiency, structure, and new ideas. At its core, the Division acts as a catalyst for connecting different operational sections and departments within the company. Collaboration between our various services is now the norm rather than the exception. We now see Consultants receiving direct specialist advice from geoarchaeologists/geophysicists, and Post-Excavation having direct input into the design of Contracting projects. The result is a more seamless and higher-quality product. The combined efforts of the three operations sections that sit within the Division are tackled under the reports from Consultancy, Contracting and Post-Excavation. This integrated approach has also led to more flexible career opportunities for staff, with some having the chance to move between sections.

Our commercial role has also reached greater levels of maturity. We now maintain a comprehensive library of all contracts we enter into, along with audit trails relating to these. There is a well-established commercial team who provides essential support to our Project Managers, liaising directly with clients' commercial teams, which has brought us into alignment with the way

our clients operate. We have developed commercial awareness training for all staff at supervisory level and above, enhancing the professionalism of our approach with external stakeholders and improving commercial outcomes on projects. Looking ahead, we plan to expand the commercial team within Headland, and as of May 2025, we will welcome a new Quantity Surveyor, Jo Middleton into our



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*Collaboration between our various services  
is now the norm rather than the exception.*

ranks who will, amongst other things, support managers on projects and with internal reporting.

The Division has also recently integrated the Innovation Department and established an innovation coordinator to drive this forward in a positive direction. We now oversee teams across the organisation who lead, test and integrate new ideas and methods into the mainstream work we undertake. We have showcased two innovations to the wider profession: the first being the use of geophysical surveys to assist with planning and interpreting excavation sites, presented at both ClfA and ALGAO.

We are also pioneering a new approach to targeted geophysics for interpreting archaeological sites, which was presented at the European Archaeologists Association conference in Rome.

The Division is helping Headland to become a modern, forward-thinking organisation that strives to engage staff at all levels in shaping an efficient structure for delivering projects while exploring new ways to better understand the past. It has grown to the point where it now employs its own staff, demonstrating the company's commitment to underpinning the services we deliver and supporting the people who make it all happen.



# CONSULTANCY

Headland's 24-person Archaeology and Built Heritage Consultancy team is a dynamic and growing part of the business. Formed through the merger of teams from within RSK and Headland, it now includes many new recruits and a diverse mix of experience, from seasoned field archaeologists to early-career consultants. All share a commitment to delivering clear, practical heritage advice.

Our work spans a wide range of planning and development support: due diligence, route studies, desk-based assessments, built heritage statements, historic building recording, settings analysis, and Environmental Impact Assessments. Alongside this, we provide expert witness services, liaise with curators, oversee contractors, and support clients commissioning archaeological work. Whatever the task, our overarching goal is to help clients manage heritage risk efficiently and effectively.

Central to this is the delivery of robust technical advice that guides clients through the planning process. This requires not only a sound understanding of heritage assets and planning policy, but also a sensitivity to the priorities of those we support. We aim to communicate the implications of heritage findings clearly, offering balanced

options and realistic assessments of risk to inform confident decision-making. While final choices rest with our clients, we take full responsibility for the clarity and quality of the advice we provide.

To ensure consistency and depth in our service, the Consultancy team works closely with other departments across Headland. We frequently draw on the expertise of our geophysics, excavation, and post-excavation teams to provide joined-up support from early planning through to discharge of conditions. At the same time, we are fully equipped to act independently, managing procurement processes or overseeing other archaeological contractors as required. Our strong relationships with clients and our respected reputation in the sector enable us to operate with a high degree of trust and transparency.



*Our strong relationships with clients and our respected reputation in the sector enable us to operate with a high degree of trust and transparency.*





This level of professionalism is underpinned by the qualifications of our team. All are corporate Members of ClfA, and several also hold membership with IHBC and ICOMOS. Many staff also contribute actively to the wider heritage sector through ClfA committees, audit work, and representation at industry forums, demonstrating our commitment to both professional standards and sector development.

While the majority of our consultancy work is UK-focused, our reach is increasingly international. In the past year, we've delivered or supported projects in Ireland, Georgia, Uganda, Tanzania, Angola, Greece, Albania, and Italy, and we have recently tendered for work in Saudi Arabia. Domestically, we've worked across every region of the UK, highlighting our adaptability, capacity, and national reach.

To remain responsive and forward-looking, we routinely analyse market activity across heritage, renewables, infrastructure, and property sectors. These insights inform business strategy, recruitment, and training initiatives, and are shared across the company to support coordinated and sustainable growth.

Internally, we maintain a strong culture of openness and reflection. Regular feedback and peer discussions help us

address technical and ethical challenges, learn from both successes and mistakes, and continuously improve our practice. Consultants are encouraged to share knowledge and seek input from colleagues to ensure we uphold the highest standards in our work.

This culture is supported by flexible working practices, which allow us to accommodate a variety of schedules and locations. Strong communication and mutual support ensure that flexibility never comes at the expense of team cohesion or delivery standards.

Many team members also play an important role in business development, often working alongside RSK colleagues on pitches and at industry events. Our position within the RSK Group provides access to a broader client base and project portfolio, creating further opportunities for growth and collaboration.

Looking ahead, we are entering a period of continued expansion. With a strong pipeline of work already in place, we plan to grow the team to meet rising demand and extend our reach into new markets, both within the UK and internationally.



# CONTRACTING

When I wrote my contribution for our last report, back in 2022, I remarked that the previous year had been a record-breaker. We had begun delivering large projects independently, rather than as part of a joint venture; we were developing new systems, technologies, and methods to complete them; and we had started branching into new sectors, such as solar. In hindsight, that record-breaking year marked the beginning of the 'new normal' for the Contracting team, leading to follow-on work on major projects and significant repeat business.

While I cannot adequately cover all the major projects we have commenced or completed over the last three years, I must highlight a few. These include the Norfolk Vanguard project, which involved three seasons of mitigation work; our work on HS2 for EKFB; and our work on the National Highways Archaeology Framework, covering

the A12 and two parts of the A47 upgrade project at Wansford and Tuddenham. These projects involved not only the whole of the Contracting team's range of skills, but also close collaboration with the Consultancy and Post-Excavation teams, demonstrating the strengths that Headland has as a full-service heritage provider.





Every member of our team is valuable, and I am proud that individuals who joined us at the most junior levels as far back as 2022, or earlier, have continued to develop their skills and, in many cases, taken on positions of greater responsibility. I am optimistic that those who have joined us more recently will continue this trend. I am also pleased that over the past few years, we have welcomed several experienced team members from across the archaeological industry, which demonstrates that Headland is becoming a true magnet for talent.

Our three departments have continued to grow and evolve. Sam and the Geophysics team have made significant strides, adopting quad-based surveys and GIS-based illustrations. This shift was made to reduce the physical demands of geophysical surveys and to provide more opportunities for junior team members to engage in data interpretation. The scale and number of geophysics projects continues to increase year on year, with no signs of slowing down. Headland has rightfully established itself as a leader in this field.

In the Fieldwork department, Luke and his team have made great progress in revitalising our portfolio of non-infrastructure projects. Notable projects include the significant urban excavation at Park Street, Cambridge, several major solar evaluations, and a recent return to the aggregates sector. Luke has also developed a strong team capable of working across the UK on projects ranging from major infrastructure to housing and renewables. Maintaining and growing this diversity of work remains a key goal for us.

Finally, Katie and her Technical Services team have cemented themselves as the support structure of our data collection and management. We now have team leaders for the Survey, GIS, and Data teams, who have developed rigorous quality control procedures for their outputs. The full operational launch of our HARK! paperless recording system in 2024 was a major milestone, complemented by the innovative development of our GIS capabilities and the expanded use of UAVs on fieldwork and standalone projects.

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*Close collaboration with the Consultancy and Post-Excavation teams, demonstrates the strengths that Headland has as a full-service heritage provider.*



# POST-EXCAVATION

At the time of the last annual report in 2022, the Post-excavation Section had reached the fabled 'period of consolidation', growing to 30 staff members following a rapid three-year phase of expansion. Since then, the Section has focused on improving its internal structure and processes, while continuing to develop new skills and branch into alternative and exciting specialist areas.



A reorganisation of the Section's structure led to the expansion and rebranding of the Research and Reporting department. Emma West was appointed as the dedicated manager, with new project officers and managers joining the team. The Archives department also appointed its first dedicated manager, Charlotte Self, and has grown significantly over the past six months in response to major project requirements. The Finds department, under Julie Franklin, has welcomed new, experienced specialists and is actively training staff in additional specialisms, such as lithics. Kate Turner has successfully led the Environmental department in broadening our range of expertise, most notably in animal bones, while also developing our geoarchaeology team into a highly effective unit, with ambitions to expand further. The Graphics team, led by Beata Wieczorek-Oleksy, has recruited new staff to complement its already diverse visual skill set and is now producing impressive reconstructions and videos, among other outputs.

There continues to be a firm emphasis on training and collaboration across the post-excavation section. Much of our training is internally delivered, though we also support staff on external specialist apprenticeship schemes and maintain strong links with academic institutions, most notably through a regular intake of student placements from the University of Reading.

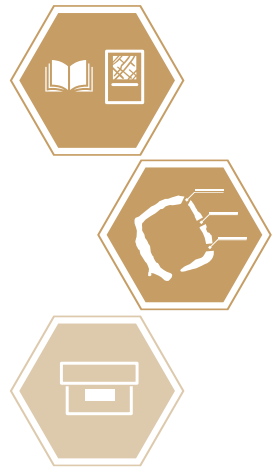
The rapid growth of the Post-Excavation Section brought with it a need to refine our systems and processes. As part of this, we developed **FERGAL** (Finds Environmental Reporting Graphics Archives Log), a tracking system for locating archives both within and outside the company. We also created the Post-excavation Knowledge Base (**PXKB**), a comprehensive online guidance and reference manual aimed at clarifying the post-excavation procedures we follow at Headland. The PXKB is set to be rolled out to all relevant staff in 2025.

## NEW SKILL



In recent years, we have worked on a wide range of fascinating projects, including some of the largest and most complex in

the UK. Highlights include the completion of a major six-year programme of post-excavation work on the **A14 project**...



...and the beginning of the even larger and more ambitious **HS2 post-excavation programme** (both covered in detail elsewhere in this report). Other projects have ranged from a complex medieval urban site at **India Buildings in Edinburgh** to Iron Age and Roman salt production in the Fenland at **Triton Knoll, Lincolnshire**, and a **Roman villa in Norfolk**. Over the past few years, we've produced more than 30

publications, including monographs for the A14 and Lower Callerton, journal articles, and popular publications, as well as a wide array of outputs such as display boards and digital interactive story maps. With HS2 and other major infrastructure projects set to be the mainstay of our post-excavation programme over the next few years, we are well-positioned to present the past in ever more innovative and engaging ways.

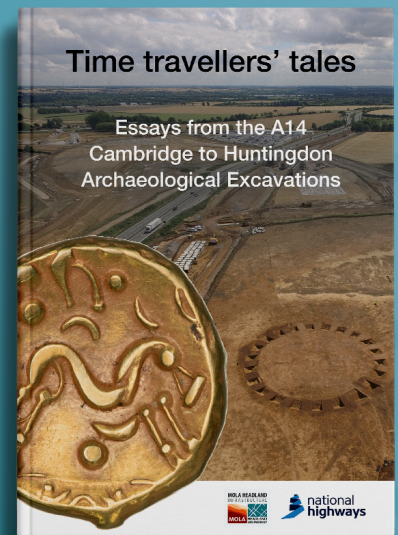


*With HS2 and other major infrastructure projects set to be the mainstay of our post-excavation programme, we are well-positioned to present the past in ever more innovative and engaging ways.*



# NEW PUBLICATIONS

Over the past few years, Headland has published over 30 works, including monographs, journal articles, and popular publications. Highlights include a series of publications on the six-year post-excavation programme on the A14, monographs on Morley Hill and Lower Callerton, and the Viking Link Substation, as well as publications on investigations at Lower Slackbuie and Clyde Wind Farm.



## *The A14 – Monograph*

The A14 project's outputs are many (over 220 separate reports/publications) and diverse, catering for a variety of audiences. The principal overview of the project, the Internet Archaeology monograph 'A Route Well Travelled', synthesises the results from all eight Landscape Blocks in a series of period-based chapters, with additional levels of interactivity including videos, flythroughs, and clickable maps. It also links through to the ADS digital

archive for further details of specific features or finds. A companion print monograph, 'Time Traveller's Tales', presents a series of five period-based essays, based upon certain aspects of the A14 results, but placing them in their wider geographical and (where relevant) historical contexts. Some of these provide more in-depth discussions of specific themes, such as the middle Saxon settlement 'revolution', while others focus on the wider landscapes of Cambridgeshire, such as the Iron Age colonization of the claylands and socio-economic development in the rural hinterlands of Roman Godmanchester

and Cambridge. There have also been several interesting finds, features and other aspects of the project that have been the subject of additional specialist journal articles, ranging from methodological considerations, the application of scientific techniques, to detailed considerations of the newly found Roman pottery industry. There are also specific articles on discoveries that have attracted national and international interest such as the 'Sarmatian' Roman burial. To provide a more accessible legacy for wider audiences, a number of additional outputs have been created. These include a printed volume, 'Unearthing the A14: 50 objects from one of Britain's biggest digs', as well as a series of digital interactive 'storymaps' enabling users to delve into a number of different aspects of the A14 archaeology and its wider environment. See [A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire Improvement Scheme: Digital Archive for Archaeological Works: Overview](#) for all project outputs.

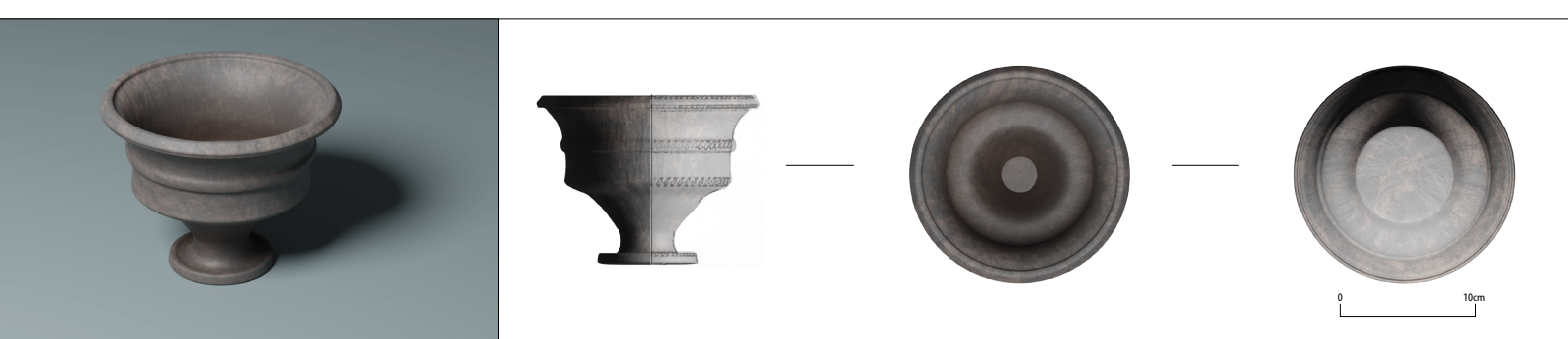


## Morley Hill and Lower Callerton - Monograph

Gaunt J, Christie C & Hatherley C (2022) **Defining Spaces in Iron Age Northumberland** Excavations at Morley Hill and Lower Callerton Oxford: Oxbow

Excavations on the Northumberland coastal plain uncovered two key later Iron Age enclosed settlements. At Morley Hill, rectilinear boundaries surrounding clusters of roundhouses were identified, with evidence for earlier prehistoric phases. At Lower Callerton, more than 50 roundhouses were uncovered, built over earlier activity, indicating long-term and evolving occupation. The publication uses Bayesian modelling to establish a detailed chronology, alongside specialist analyses of artefacts, environmental data, and isotopes. Together, these findings shed light on Iron Age settlement organisation, architecture, agriculture, and landscape interaction, including during the Roman period, and enhance understanding of Iron Age communities in northern Britain.





## Viking Link Substation - Monograph

Gaunt K, van Tongeren T & Christie C (2024) **Fenland Fields: Evolving Settlement and Agriculture on the Roddon at Viking Link Substation, Bicker Fen, Lincolnshire** *Internet Archaeology* 67

Excavations at the Viking Link Substation site, located in the Fenland landscape, revealed two main phases of activity: a mid-2nd century AD Roman farmstead with interlinked enclosures, iron smithing, bone working, and a beef-focused economy; and a 6th–10th century Anglo-Saxon field system marked by curvilinear boundaries and seasonal pastoral use. Environmental and archaeobotanical analyses show a shift from hulled wheat in the Roman period to barley, bread wheat, pulses, and wetland plants in the Anglo-Saxon phase. The publication provides valuable insight into long-term agricultural change in the Fenland, contributing to broader discussions on rural settlement and economy in eastern England.

## Lower Slackbuie

Claire C, Dalland M, Bailey L, Scholma-Mason O & Anderson-Whymark H (2022) **The Excavation of a Prehistoric Settlement at Lower Slackbuie, Inverness** *Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports* 100

Excavations at Lower Slackbuie, Inverness, revealed substantial prehistoric activity in an area long recognised as a hub from the Neolithic period onward. Evidence included Neolithic occupation through artefacts and features, alongside later prehistoric activity from the middle to late Bronze Age and into the Iron Age, marked by seven roundhouses and a palisade enclosure. Key finds, such as Grooved Ware, a Carinated

Bowl, a bangle, an axe, a scraper, and traces of flax and linseed, suggest domestic and agricultural activity. These discoveries, linked to nearby sites, offer a detailed view of settlement, material culture, and land use across multiple periods south of Inverness, enriching our understanding of the prehistoric landscape.

## Clyde Wind Farm

Cox S, Marshall N, Bailey L, Franklin J, Hunter F & Walker A (2023) **'Sae lofty and wide': the archaeology of the Clyde Wind Farm** *Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports* 104

Investigations at Clyde Wind Farm and its extension in the Upper Clyde Valley, one of Europe's largest onshore wind farms, revealed multi-period occupation from the Mesolithic to medieval periods. Features such as pits, platforms, settlements, enclosures, hillforts, and routeways reflect a dynamic and evolving landscape. The publication explores themes of transition, illustrating how communities adapted evolving environments and social structures. Its scale enabled a review of archaeological methodologies, offering insights for managing large-scale infrastructure projects. Analyses across four landscapes, Clyde Valley North and South, Camps Valley, and Midlock Valley, enhance understanding of regional settlement patterns, material culture, and land use.





## But that's not all!

Headland has also been working on several major publications, including a complex urban site at India Buildings in Edinburgh, an Iron Age/Roman salt production site at Triton Knoll in the Fenlands, and St Peter's Church and graveyard in Blackburn. These will be featured in more detail in next year's Annual Report. Other smaller publications from 2022–2024 cover a wide range of topics, from Iron Age and Roman agriculture at Jubilee Park, to post-medieval farming and industry in Coleford, and the origins of Merseyside's pubs. See our publication list for more on these and other fascinating projects.

Adams MH (2024) *The Origins of Merseyside and Lancashire's Pubs and Inns: Historic Building Recording and Excavation at the Stork Inn Billinge* Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society 17, 38–55

Adams MH, Towle A & Harris SJ (2024) *Evidence for Neolithic Settlement and a Funerary Monument from Dale Hall, Mossley Hill, Liverpool with a Consideration of Field Evaluation Strategies on Merseyside* Journal of the Merseyside Archaeological Society 17, 1–9

Christie C & Bain K (2023) *A Middle-Late Iron Age settlement at Hampton Drive, King's Sutton* Northamptonshire Archaeology 42, 273–288

Cross M, Dalland M & Moretti D (2024) *Cowhides and motorcars: the history of Beaverbank Tannery* Scottish Archaeological Internet Reports 106

Franklin F & Cox S (2022) *Loaves and fishes in St Andrews: excavations at 100 North Street. Tayside and Fife* Archaeological Journal 28, 35–64

Gaunt K & Scholma-Mason O (2023) *Kettering, Land at Symmetry Park* South Midlands Archaeology 53

Gaunt K (2024) *An Early Iron Age Roundhouse at Gartnass Road, Drymen, Stirling* Scottish Archaeological Journal 46

Gaunt K, Turnbull L & Claire C (2023) *Life Lines of Industry: excavation and exploration of the 18th century Walbottle Moor Waggonway* Post-Medieval Archaeology 57

Machin S (2022) *A Middle Iron Age roundhouse at Rusper Road, near Ifield, Crawley* Sussex Archaeological Collections 159

Machin S & Scholma-Mason O (2023) *Maulden, Iron Age metalworking at Old Farm, Clophill Road South* Midlands Archaeology 53

McGalliard S, Christie C & Gaunt K (2023) *Post-Medieval Agriculture and Industry at Lower Lane, Berry Hill, Coleford* Transactions of the Bristol and Gloucestershire Archaeological Society 133

Scholma-Mason O, Bailey L & Dalland M (2022) *The archaeology of a dynamic landscape: archaeological excavations at Keadby windfarm* Lincolnshire History and Archaeology 52

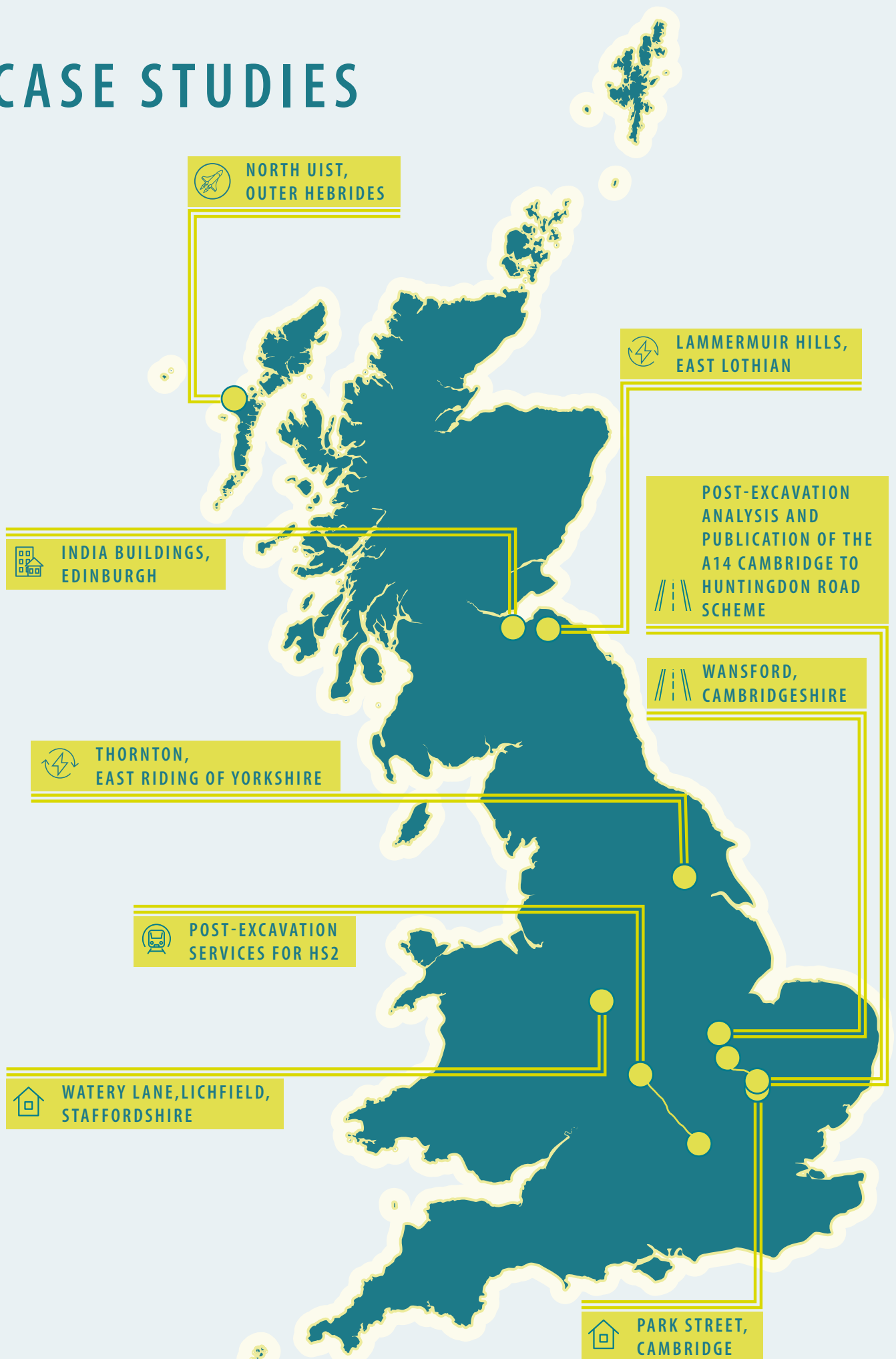
Scholma-Mason O & Machin S (2022) *Tilling the land, Iron Age and Roman agriculture at Jubilee Park: Excavations at Jubilee Park, Kings Road, Ripton, Huntingdon, 2019* Proceedings of the Cambridge Antiquarian Society 111. Cambridge: Cambridge Antiquarian Society, 95–102

West E, Edgeworth M, Tierney M & Smith A (2022) *New light on Iron Age and Roman Alcester: excavations on land north of Allimore Lane* Transactions of Birmingham and Warwickshire Archaeological Society 124, 1–32

West E, Smith A & Shaw G (2022) *Late Iron Age, Roman and Saxon Communities at Hanchett End, Haverhill* Proceedings of the Suffolk Institute of Archaeology and History 45, part 2



# CASE STUDIES





## CASE STUDY

# SPACEPORT 1 – SCOLPAIG FARM, NORTH UIST

*Headland Archaeology undertook archaeological investigations at the proposed Spaceport 1 site on North Uist, the UK's first dedicated sub-orbital launch facility. Working in partnership with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar and Atlantic 58, the team recorded the historic 19th-century farmstead at Scolpaig and had the rare opportunity to excavate the remains of a traditional Blackhouse, offering valuable insights into the island's vernacular architecture and agricultural past.*

Kate Bain



### LOCATION

North Uist, Outer Hebrides

### SECTOR

Aerospace

### CLIENT

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar

### CONSULTANT

Atlantic 58

### SERVICES

Consultancy; Historic Building Survey; Trial Trenching; Excavation

## Project Details

Spaceport 1 is a proposal to build the UK's first dedicated commercial sub-orbital launch site. The project forms part of the Islands Growth Deal Programme, a ten-year initiative jointly funded by the Scottish and UK Governments, in collaboration with the three Island Councils and partners from the public, academic, community, and business sectors.

Fieldwork was undertaken as part of the mitigation strategy identified in the Supplementary Environmental Information (SEI) addendum to the heritage chapter of the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) (Headland 2022). The historic building recording was carried out in October 2022, with trial trench evaluation and excavation taking place between August and November 2024. Given the site's remote island location, the work required careful logistical planning. Effective coordination and communication with the local planning authority advisors, the client, consultancy team, and subcontractors were vital to the project's successful delivery.

Scolpaig House was originally constructed in the early 19th century, with several later phases added between 1879 and 1904. The associated farmstead and walled garden also date from this period. Scolpaig Farm was one of a number of "Tack farms" established during the Victorian agricultural improvement movement in the area. However, it is unique in that it remained a lived-in and actively farmed property until relatively recently, and it is the only one of its kind to survive largely unaltered by 20th-century developments.

Evaluation and excavation work related to the planned access routes and infrastructure for Spaceport 1 also uncovered remains of two 19th-century structures: a Blackhouse, likely associated with the former township of Ardanroin, and a byre directly linked to the evolution and eventual abandonment of Scolpaig Farm.

The results of the work, in particular the excavation of the Blackhouse, represent a rare opportunity to fully investigate this traditional building type and add significantly to the corpus of vernacular architecture studies in the Outer Hebrides.

## Project Highlights

- » Delivered a full package from initial consultancy through to mitigation fieldwork.
- » Rare opportunity to excavate a Blackhouse in its entirety.
- » Successfully overcame the challenges of working in a remote island environment on North Uist.

## CASE STUDY

# ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA): NEWLANDS HILL WIND FARM, EAST LoTHIAN

*Headland Archaeology's Consultancy Team supported Belltown Power in delivering a robust cultural heritage assessment for the Newlands Hill Wind Farm EIA in East Lothian. Through early engagement, field visits, and collaborative design input, the team helped minimise impacts on archaeological remains and sensitive historic landscapes. The final design was assessed as having no more than a negligible effect on cultural heritage, with support of the project from Historic Environment Scotland.*

*Owan Raybould*



### LOCATION

Lammermuir Hills, East Lothian

### SECTOR

Renewable Energy (Onshore Wind)

### CLIENT

Belltown Power UK Ltd

### CONSULTANT

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd

### SERVICES

Cultural Heritage Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA); Public Local Inquiry (PLI)

## Project Details

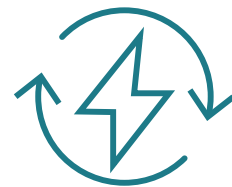
Since 2021, Headland Archaeology's Consultancy Team had been working on the Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) for a proposed wind farm in East Lothian, which was submitted to the Energy Consents Unit (ECU) in November 2023. The proposed development site measured approximately 1,000 hectares and comprised 17 wind turbines of up to 8MW each (generating up to 136MW), with a maximum tip height of 200 metres. The proposal also included battery storage of up to 136MW, alongside associated access and infrastructure.

The cultural heritage EIA included a baseline desk-based assessment and walkover survey to determine archaeological potential. Setting assessments were carried out following the approach set out in Managing Change in the Historic Environment:

Setting (Historic Environment Scotland, 2020) and the Environmental Impact Assessment Handbook (Version 5, NatureScot & HES, 2018, Appendix 1).

Direct impacts involved the potential physical alteration or destruction of heritage assets and could have arisen from the construction of turbine and crane bases, new or upgraded access tracks, substations, transformers, buried cables and construction compounds. A total of 29 heritage assets were identified within the site. Working with the project's design team, an infrastructure layout was developed which avoided all known heritage assets within the site, except for a historic trackway which was crossed by internal access tracks and could not be avoided.

In addition, potential impacts along the 19km route required for delivery of the Abnormal Indivisible Loads (AIL) from the A1 to the site were assessed. Solutions were developed to avoid a Scheduled Monument, and areas of high archaeological potential along the route were assessed and defined. The route would involve direct impacts on four heritage assets, including a bridge over a culverted watercourse. These would be mitigated by appropriate levels of survey, excavation, recording, analysis, and publication of results in accordance with a Written Scheme of Investigation (WSI). This included provisions for accidental damage to historic fingerposts along the AIL route, and the WSI was to be agreed with East Lothian Council in advance of construction.



Impacts on the setting of heritage assets could also arise due to the scale of the proposed turbines, their potential to detract from key views to or from a heritage asset, or changes affecting how a heritage asset was experienced. Screening therefore considered each potentially affected asset to identify those within the zone of theoretical visibility (ZTV) and to assess whether their cultural significance was likely to be harmed by the development.

Field visits were undertaken to the nearby highly designated and sensitive landscape Yester Estate in Gifford, which is protected as an Inventory Garden and Designed Landscape and Conservation Area, and contains Scheduled Monuments and numerous Listed Buildings. Early engagement with Historic Environment Scotland (HES) was undertaken, and photomontage visualisations were provided for key locations within the Estate identified as most relevant for assessing the potential effects of the proposed development.

Significant adverse effects were identified as likely at this stage. In response, the client (Belltown) undertook a redesign, repositioning the turbines further from the Yester Estate. This redesign also reduced the impact of the development on the setting of several Iron Age forts located along the base of the Lothian Edge.

The final design was assessed in the EIA as resulting in no more than a negligible overall effect on

cultural heritage. HES agreed that the revised proposal would be unlikely to cause significant adverse effects. However, East Lothian Council disagreed and indicated their intention to object to the development. As a result, the project is due to proceed to a Public Local Inquiry (PLI) in 2025, for which Belltown has retained Headland's Consultancy services.

## Project Highlights

- » Successful design mitigation with all known heritage assets within the wind farm area avoided, except one unavoidable crossing over a historic trackway
- » Proactive heritage protection with solutions developed to avoid impacts on a Scheduled Monument and other sensitive areas along the Abnormal Indivisible Load route
- » Strong collaboration and client-led redesign to reduce adverse effects on highly designated landscapes and Iron Age forts
- » Effective visual impact assessment with Photomontage visualisations and field visits informing robust setting assessments for key heritage assets

## CASE STUDY

# INDIA BUILDINGS, EDINBURGH

*Excavations at Edinburgh's India Buildings revealed one of the city's most remarkable archaeological sites to date. Dating predominantly to the medieval period, the site included rare wooden structural remains, leather goods, wine barrels as well as huge assemblages of finds and animal bone, evidencing industry and trade. Headland Archaeology's expert team is now undertaking post-excavation analysis, helping to reshape our understanding of Edinburgh's origins and development.*

*Julie Franklin*



### LOCATION

*Edinburgh's Old Town,  
between Victoria Street and the Cowgate*

### SECTOR

*Non-residential Construction*

### CLIENT

*India Buildings Ltd*

### SERVICES

*Post-Excavation Assessment and Project  
Design; Post-Excavation Analysis and  
Publication; Public Outreach*



analysis is now underway, with plans to publish the results in an Oxbow monograph in 2027.

The dating programme, combining dendrochronology and radiocarbon analysis, revealed rare evidence of Bronze Age activity in Edinburgh, alongside timber construction dating to the 12th century, around the time of the burgh's foundation. This was in an area previously believed to have been developed several centuries later. Forthcoming analysis of the dating and stratigraphy is expected to allow for precise chronological phasing, with potential implications for broader regional typologies and timelines. It may even be possible to link some archaeological features with known historic events, for example, a destruction layer caused by fire might correspond to Edward I's visit during the Wars of Independence.

Analysis of four barrels found as pit liners revealed them to be reused wine barrels originating from the Loire and Meuse valleys. The site's pottery and animal bone assemblages are notably large, and the excavation yielded several remarkable small finds, including a rare complete leather costrel (water bottle), a ceramic votive figurine of the Virgin and Child, and a perforated scallop shell, a medieval pilgrimage symbol from Santiago de Compostela, Spain.

There was abundant stratigraphic and artefactual evidence for medieval tanning, leatherworking, and associated industries such as butchery. The leather assemblage, comprising around 2,000 pieces, and

## Project Details

Excavations within Edinburgh's Old Town have been numerous over the years, but the India Buildings site, located between Victoria Street and the Cowgate, proved exceptional. The site preserved a well-stratified sequence of deposits from the present day down to at least the 12th century. Waterlogged areas led to the survival of large quantities of wood, leather, textiles, plant remains and other organic materials, an unprecedented assemblage for Edinburgh.

Headland Archaeology secured the contract to undertake the Post-Excavation analysis, based on the strength of our experienced team, broad expertise and local knowledge. The specialist assessment and Post-Excavations Research Design (PERD) were completed in 2023. Post-excavation



the animal bone assemblage, weighing nearly 800kg, are significant. These industries depended heavily on the incoming cattle which gave the Cowgate its name. Isotope analysis is underway to trace the origins of these cattle, did they come from the local hinterland or further afield? Similarly, ICP analysis of ceramics may illuminate pottery and tile trade routes.

Headland's post-excavation team includes in-house specialists in animal bone, pottery, glass, small finds, shell, and plant remains. We also work closely with a broad network of external experts in wood, textiles, leather, and documentary research, and maintain academic partnerships to conduct scientific analyses that explore the provenance and composition of materials.

Together, this collaborative team is helping to shed new light on Edinburgh's early development, economy, and industries, bringing the city's burghal origins into sharper focus.



## Project Highlights



- » Rare survival of organic materials including leather, textiles, wood, and plant remains
- » Discovery of Bronze Age activity
- » Early timber construction predating previous estimates for urban development
- » Exceptional artefacts recovered, including a complete leather costrel, a ceramic Virgin and Child figurine, and a pilgrim's scallop shell
- » Evidence of medieval industries such as tanning, butchery, and leatherworking in the Cowgate area
- » Wine barrels from France reused as pit liners
- » Scientific analyses (dendrochronology, radiocarbon dating, stable isotopes, ICP-MS, ZooMS, parasites) promise further insights into chronology, trade and supply networks
- » Planned Oxbow monograph publication in 2027 and series of podcasts to share results with the wider public and scholarly community

## CASE STUDY

# THORNTON SOAY SOLAR FARM AND GREENER GRID PARK

*At Thornton SOAY Solar Farm in East Yorkshire, Headland Archaeology uncovered a rich Iron Age to Roman landscape, including settlements, agricultural activity, and extensive metalworking evidence. Working closely with Statkraft and other stakeholders, the team excavated over 300 trenches and two mitigation areas, revealing far more archaeology than anticipated. The project not only protected important archaeological remains but also helped shape a sensitive and cost-effective development strategy. A publication on the findings is underway to share these exciting discoveries.*

*Josh Gaunt*



### LOCATION

Thornton, East Riding of Yorkshire

### SECTOR

Renewable Energy (Solar)

### CLIENT

Statkraft

### CONSULTANT

Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd

### SERVICES

Consultancy; Mitigation Excavation; Trial Trench Evaluation; Environmental Assessment and Analysis; Finds Assessment and Analysis

## Project Details

Headland Archaeology was commissioned by Statkraft to undertake archaeological evaluation through trial trenching and an area of Strip, Map and Record (SMR) excavation ahead of construction works associated with the Thornton Solar Development. The investigations revealed a significantly greater density of archaeological features than had been anticipated based on the available evidence.

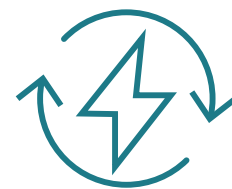
A total of 333 trenches were excavated across 23 fields, along with two areas of SMR totalling 2,400m<sup>2</sup> located within and adjacent to National Grid non-operational land. Cropmark evidence across the scheme had suggested a high potential for settlement and agricultural activity, which was

confirmed by the results of both the trenching and SMR works, which exceeded reasonable expectations. This increase in archaeological findings were managed effectively by the Headland team in close coordination with the client, enabling timely completion of the fieldwork, a full site evaluation, and the continued engagement of all stakeholders. The smooth delivery of the project was supported by the coordination of three trenching teams and a dedicated group of archaeologists, ensuring an efficient pace of work throughout.

The site revealed a complex landscape of Iron Age to Roman period archaeology, with some indications of earlier settlement activity and medieval agricultural use. The most intensive activity was dated to the 2nd–3rd centuries AD and included well-defined settlement areas containing a large assemblage of pottery and environmental material, along with several zones of metalworking activity, yielding over 200kg of industrial waste.

A publication has been agreed to disseminate the results of the trial trenching, with a focus on understanding the landscape and further analysis of the finds and environmental materials recovered. Additional publications will follow, based on future mitigation works.

The high quality of the excavation work facilitated a smooth interface between Headland, the client, and the archaeological curator. This collaboration supported the development of a clear programme



for further archaeological mitigation and agreement on alternative construction techniques to avoid damaging areas of highest archaeological potential. These negotiations minimised additional costs to the client, while providing robust protection for subsurface remains and enabling the discharge of the planning condition, subject to the completion of agreed follow-on works.



## Project Highlights

- » Excavation of 333 trial trenches and two mitigation areas
- » Work carried out on National Grid non-operational land
- » Publication agreed to disseminate trial trenching results
- » Significant uplift in archaeology identified and successfully managed
- » Discovery of an Iron Age to Roman landscape including settlement, agriculture, and metalworking

## CASE STUDY

# EXCAVATION AT WATERY LANE, LICHFIELD

*At Watery Lane in Lichfield, Staffordshire, Headland Archaeology uncovered the remains of a small Romano-British farmstead during excavations ahead of a new housing development by Redrow Homes Ltd. The discovery of a roundhouse, granary, and an exceptionally well-preserved stone-lined well offered a fascinating glimpse into life in the Midlands. With a strong focus on collaboration, careful recording, and creative public engagement, the project turned a routine planning requirement into an exciting opportunity to share local history with the wider community.*

*Michael Tierney*



### LOCATION

Watery Lane, Lichfield, Staffordshire

### SECTOR

Housing

### CLIENT

Redrow Homes Midlands

### CONSULTANT

The Environmental Dimension Partnership Ltd

### SERVICES

Excavation; Public Outreach



discarded by the original masons, had been repurposed as foundations, capable of supporting the weight of a full granary.

From the outset, Headland Archaeology maintained strong communication with the client and consultant. Our field team responded professionally to the specific challenges of the site, which included the safe recording and dismantling of the well. The well was carefully removed and stored on-site while decisions were made by the County Archaeologist and the Potteries Museum regarding long-term preservation.

Initially, the client expressed interest in reconstructing the well for public display. However, discussions with the County Archaeologist shifted after the project's stone specialist concluded that the type of sandstone used was unsuitable for public display, as it would decay relatively quickly. It was agreed there was limited value in the museum retaining the well stones as part of the archive. Instead, Headland proposed a different approach. Each of the 79 stones was recorded in detail using photogrammetry by our survey and data team. The result was a highly accurate digital record, which allows for virtual reconstruction and analysis of Roman stonemasonry and construction techniques. This approach not only ensured long-term accessibility of the record to professional archaeologist, historians and members of the public but also highlighted the potential of digital technologies in heritage preservation.

## Project Details

As part of a new housing development to the north of Lichfield, 1.4ha of archaeological mitigation was undertaken following the results of a broader campaign of trial trenching. The excavation uncovered largely Romano-British remains, including field systems and a small farmstead. These remains contributed significantly to our understanding of rural settlement in this part of the Midlands, where similar sites are relatively rare.

Particularly noteworthy was the discovery of a compact farmstead that included the remains of a roundhouse, a granary, and a stone-lined well, all within enclosing ditches. The level of preservation across the site was good. The same type of sandstone had been used to construct both the well and the foundations of the granary, suggesting they were contemporary. Partially worked stones,



This legacy was further enhanced by the commissioning of a public information display, which included an overview of the excavation findings and a reconstruction of the site, capturing the moment in its history when the well was being built. Supported by the County Archaeologist, this initiative helped fulfil the public engagement aspect of the planning condition and brought the site's story to a wider audience.

Effective collaboration and clear communication, hallmarks of Headland's projects, were crucial in successfully navigating each stage of the planning and archaeological process and showcased how innovative thinking can transformed development-led archaeology into a valuable opportunity for public engagement.



## Project Highlights

- » Discovery of a well-preserved Romano-British farmstead, including a roundhouse, granary, and stone-lined well
- » Use of repurposed masonry showing insights into Roman construction techniques
- » Innovative solution to preservation issues: digital preservation of the well when physical reconstruction proved unfeasible due to sandstone fragility
- » A bespoke public information display created to fulfil community engagement goals and share the site's story with local residents

## CASE STUDY

# POST-EXCAVATION ANALYSIS AND PUBLICATION OF THE A14 CAMBRIDGE TO HUNTINGDON ROAD SCHEME

*Headland Archaeology were proud to announce that, in January 2025, the incredible results of the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Road Scheme, funded by National Highways, were published. This represented the culmination of nearly a decade of work on what was one of the largest archaeological excavations ever to have taken place in the UK.*

*Emma West*



### LOCATION

Cambridge to Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire

### SECTOR

Infrastructure (Road Scheme)

### CLIENT

National Highways

### SERVICES

Curator Liaison; Post-Excavation Assessment and Project Design; Post-Excavation Analysis including specialist and scientific analysis; Publication; Outreach

detailed stratigraphic and specialist reports, as well as specialist overviews providing broader syntheses of material culture and environmental remains, plus Scheme-wide specialist reports on particular aspects of the assemblages.

The principal overview of the project, and acting as a gateway to its findings, was the Internet Archaeology monograph, *A Route Well Travelled*. This synthesised the results from the whole Scheme in a series of period-based chapters, with additional levels of interactivity including videos, flythroughs, and clickable maps. It also linked directly to the ADS digital archive for details of specific features or finds. An additional print monograph, *Time Traveller's Tales*, took a different approach, presenting five period-based essays based on aspects of the A14 results, but placing them in wider geographical and historical contexts. Particularly interesting finds, features, and other aspects of the project were also the subject of additional specialist journal articles, covering topics such as the 'Sarmatian' Roman burial and the newly found Roman pottery industry.

To provide a more accessible legacy for audiences beyond academia and the archaeological profession, several additional outputs were created. These included a printed volume, *Unearthing the A14: 50 objects from one of Britain's biggest digs*, which brought together a selection of artefacts and ecofacts chosen for the stories they tell about life in this part of Cambridgeshire. There were also digital

## Project Details

In January 2025, Headland Archaeology (UK) Ltd, alongside the Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA) as part of the Joint Venture 'MOLA Headland Infrastructure' (MHI), published the results of the archaeological excavations along the A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon Road Scheme, funded by National Highways. It was clear from the start that the dissemination of the results from this project could not be done justice through one or two traditional monographs. Instead, the project's outputs were many, over 220 separate reports and publications, and diverse, catering to a range of audiences, with an emphasis on accessibility. At the heart of this was the digital resource hosted on the Archaeology Data Service (ADS), which contains the entire digital archive. All of it is accessible through database queries and spatial mapping. Alongside this were the



resources aimed at engaging wider audiences, including digital interactive ‘storymaps’.

One of the key factors behind the success of the A14 analysis and publication phase was the involvement of an ‘academic panel’. This group of specialists from various UK universities reviewed and commented on the project design and all major outputs, helping to ensure the work was directed towards the most current research questions. Another success was the creation of four Master’s studentships, funded through the A14 project and hosted at the University of Reading. Four students carried out research on particular aspects of the A14 project, in collaboration with MHI specialists. All provided exceptional contributions to the project’s academic outputs and have since gone on to make further contributions within the wider heritage sector—making at least some small dent in the continuing skills gap within the archaeology profession.

## Project Highlights

- » 232 ha of land archaeologically investigated over the 22 km road corridor
- » Archaeological remains included Pleistocene woolly mammoths; Neolithic and Bronze Age ceremonial and burial monuments; dozens of Iron Age and Roman settlements; a whole new Roman pottery industry; Saxon settlements with royal connections; a deserted medieval hamlet; nineteenth-century railway remains, and everything in between
- » Significant collaboration during the Post-Excavation phase with four companies, five universities, and numerous external specialists and scientific institutions. A bespoke public information display created to fulfil community engagement goals and share the site’s story with local residents
- » Over 220 different outputs, including an interactive Internet Archaeology Monograph, Print Monograph, and popular book
- » The whole archive, including primary records, is available and fully searchable via ADS: <https://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk/archives/collections/view/1003796/metadata.cfm>

## CASE STUDY

# WATCHING BRIEF & EXCAVATION AT PARK STREET, CAMBRIDGE

*Excavations at Park Street in central Cambridge revealed a previously unknown Roman road and rich evidence of Roman occupation, including complete pottery vessels and signs of domestic and industrial activity. Despite challenging conditions, including flooding and unexpected finds, Headland Archaeology successfully delivered the project in close collaboration with the contractor and developer. The results offer important new insights into the development of Roman Cambridge and its eastern hinterland and provide further information of the probable location of the medieval 'King's Ditch'.*

Stuart Milby



### LOCATION

Park Street, Cambridge

### SECTOR

Mixed Use (Public Car Park and Aparthotel)

### CLIENT

Marick Management Limited

### CONSULTANT

RSK

### SERVICES

Excavation; Watching Brief

## Project Details

Urban archaeological sites are often particularly complex due to deep stratigraphy, restricted working space, and dense overlying development. Park Street, Cambridge, was no exception; further complicated by the dynamics between the archaeological contractor and the development stakeholders, who were working to tight programmes and constrained budgets. From November 2021 to February 2023, Headland Archaeology worked closely with the contractor, Gilbert-Ash, and the developer, Marick Management Limited, to deliver the programme of works.

The aim of the mitigation strategy was to determine whether the King's Ditch, a defensive earthwork constructed in 1267 by King Henry III during his conflict with the Barons, was located within the development area. While previous excavations around Cambridge had suggested that the ditch ran parallel with Park Street, its precise line had not been definitively recorded.

The main works were divided into three areas: Area 1 (western end), Area 2 (centre of the site), and Area 3 (eastern end). Excavation began in Area 1, informally known as 'Curry King Corner' due to its proximity to the Curry King restaurant. This was expected to be the area of lowest archaeological risk, having previously been occupied by large post-medieval buildings and a modern car park. However, this assumption proved incorrect, as multiple phases of Roman activity were soon identified. These included numerous rubbish and latrine pits, along with a previously unrecorded section of Roman road.

The road extended roughly east-west from Area 1, through the middle of site and across Area 2, running for approximately 15.5m. It was flanked by two large ditches, one to the north and one to the south, and measured c. 6.8m in width. Composed of three layers of compacted gravel interleaved with road debris, maintenance material, and make-up deposits, the road showed signs of long-term use and repair. Pottery from adjacent ditches dated the road's use from the 3rd to the 5th centuries AD. Similarly dated finds were recovered from surrounding pits, including a complete 'chimney-style' vessel found in a latrine pit.

In Area 2, northeast of the Roman road, modern intrusions had caused heavy truncation, and there was a clear change to the landscape, the eastern part of Area 2 and all of Area 3 were dominated by wetland deposits. Roman-period activity continued in these areas, with evidence including a possible oven, a timber-lined well, an attenuation pond, and a large ditch. The attenuation pond had cut into the



large drainage ditch, which in turn had truncated a palaeochannel aligned with the supposed location of the King's Ditch. As excavations progressed, it became increasingly apparent that the King's Ditch lay either at the extreme edge of the site or just beyond it. To investigate this further, a section through the palaeochannel and attenuation pond was excavated, measuring around 18m long and over 8m wide at the top. Although the channel had been repeatedly cut by drainage and water management features, there was no conclusive evidence for the King's Ditch.

Despite this, the excavations at Park Street yielded valuable insights into the eastern expansion and development of Roman Cambridge. The newly discovered Roman road, along with evidence for butchery and possible metalworking, contributed

significantly to our understanding of this poorly understood area. By the 4th century AD, occupation appeared to have contracted, with activity shifting beyond the site. The area was maintained as wetland through the medieval and post-medieval periods by means of drainage and water management ditches.

The project was not without its challenges, including flooding, programme and logistical challenges, and the frequent appearance of unexpected archaeological features. Central to the project's success was the close working relationship with Gilbert-Ash and Marick Management Limited, both on site and at project management level. This partnership allowed Headland to consistently adapt to the evolving demands of the site, the archaeology, and the client.



## Project Highlights

- » Discovery of a previously unrecorded, well-preserved Roman road, providing new insight into Roman activity in Cambridge
- » Recovery of several complete Roman vessels, including a large domestic cooking pot containing a complete flagon
- » Improved understanding of the development of Roman settlement around Cambridge, and its relationship with the River Cam

## CASE STUDY

# A47, WANSFORD TO SUTTON DUALLING SCHEME

*Headland Archaeology undertook archaeological investigations in advance of dualling work on the A47 Wansford to Sutton scheme for Galliford Try on behalf of National Highways. A team of 52 archaeologists and 20 civil engineers completed work on 12 excavation sites over seven 7 months. Among the discoveries on the scheme were a Roman cemetery featuring a stone coffin containing a gypsum burial which was excavated offsite by specialists and featured on BBC's Digging for Britain.*

Jessica Lowther



### LOCATION

Wansford, Cambridgeshire

### SECTOR

Transport

### CLIENT

Galliford Try

### SERVICES

Geophysics, Excavation



## Project Details

The dualling of the A47 from Wansford to Sutton, cancelled in July 2025 following a government spending review, was part of a series of upgrades to the 115-mile stretch of the A47 between Peterborough and Great Yarmouth, forming part of a multi-billion pound investment to improve journeys on England's major A-roads and motorways.

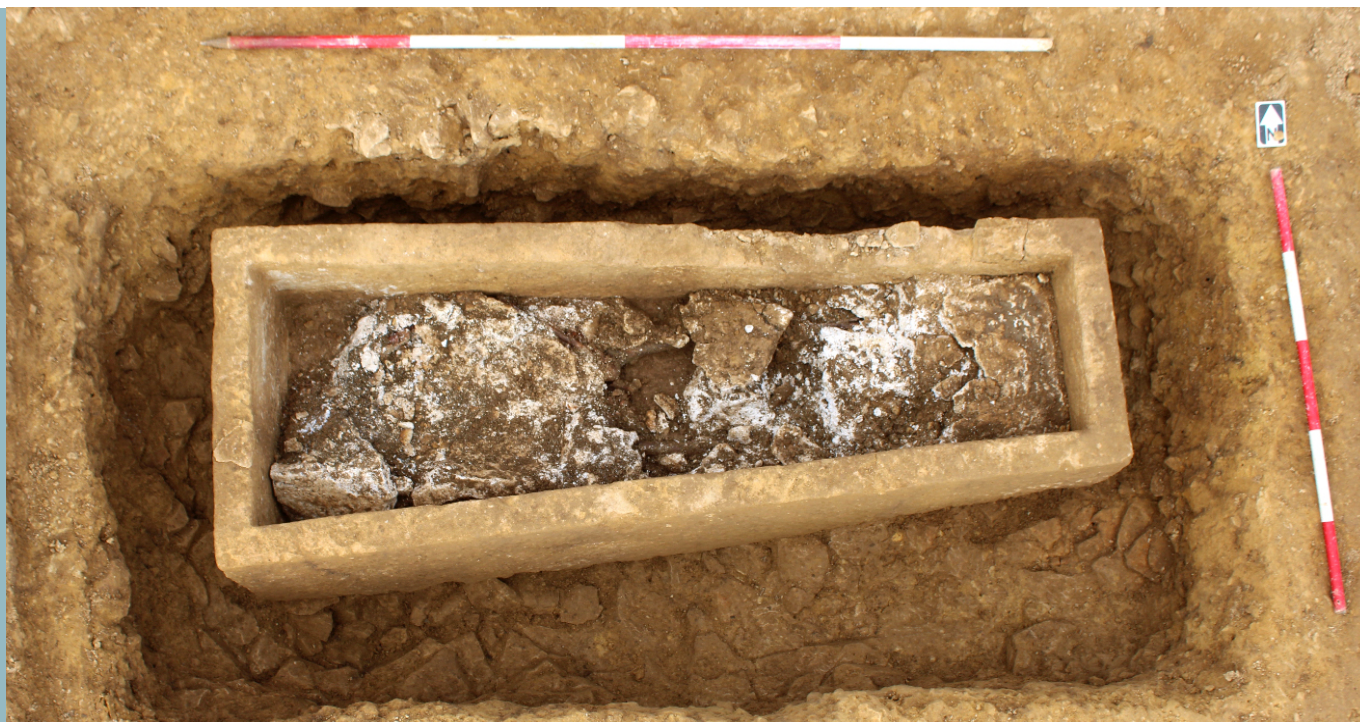
Headland Archaeology were contracted by Galliford Try on behalf of National Highways to undertake a programme of archaeological work to create a complete and permanent record of archaeological sites and historic buildings which might be impacted by the construction of the A47 Wansford to Sutton Dualling Scheme.

The work covered geophysical surveys, historic building recording of a Royal Observation Corps Bunker and a disused railway station, and archaeological excavation. Excavations were carried out between November 2023 and April 2024 comprising 12 open area excavations

and 12 trial trenches. These archaeological works brought to light evidence of human activity dating from the Neolithic to the post-medieval period, between approximately 4000 BC and AD 1900.

The discovery of a Roman roadside cemetery on the scheme was of particular interest and regional significance. Inside the cemetery were 14 graves, with a further seven graves outside of the cemetery's boundary ditch. The grave at the centre of the cemetery contained a stone coffin, hand carved from a single block of solid limestone. The deceased within had been encased in gypsum, representing a kind of high-status burial practice usually associated with urban centres. Some of the surrounding graves contained beautiful jewellery and glass objects, deposited as grave goods.

The discovery of the coffin presented logistical and safety challenges to overcome to allow the team to uplift the coffin, and its contents, for excavation



and conservation to be undertaken in a controlled environment to ensure its preservation. This also required sector collaboration with specialists from Museum of London Archaeology (MOLA), York Archaeology, Heritage360, Conservation Resources and Cliveden Conservation. Additionally, to ensure this incredible discovery was shared with the public, the specialist excavations were filmed and featured on BBC's Digging for Britain.

The excavation and analysis of this unique burial practice along with the other burials in the cemetery will allow us an insight into the life and death of this Romano-British community, adding to a rich picture of life in the past along this stretch of the A47.

## Project Highlights

- » Successfully dealing with logistical and safety challenges to protect the stone coffin
- » Sector collaboration to deliver specialist conservation and excavation in a complex situation
- » The cemetery site and specialist excavations featured on Season 12, Episode 1 of BBC's Digging for Britain, reaching several thousand people with the exciting discoveries

## CASE STUDY

# POST-EXCAVATION SERVICES FOR HS2

*Headland Archaeology, as the lead organisation within the Access+ consortium, were awarded the Post-Excavation Services contract for HS2 Ltd in September 2024. This is the largest such contract ever awarded in the UK and represents a hugely exciting opportunity to work within a wide collaborative team to re-shape how we analyse and present the past to diverse audiences.*

*Alex Smith*



### LOCATION

London to Birmingham

### SECTOR

Infrastructure (Rail)

### CLIENT

HS2 Ltd

### SERVICES

Post-Excavation Project Design; Analysis (including specialist and scientific analysis); Publication; Outreach; Stakeholder Liaison; SEE; EDI; Archives

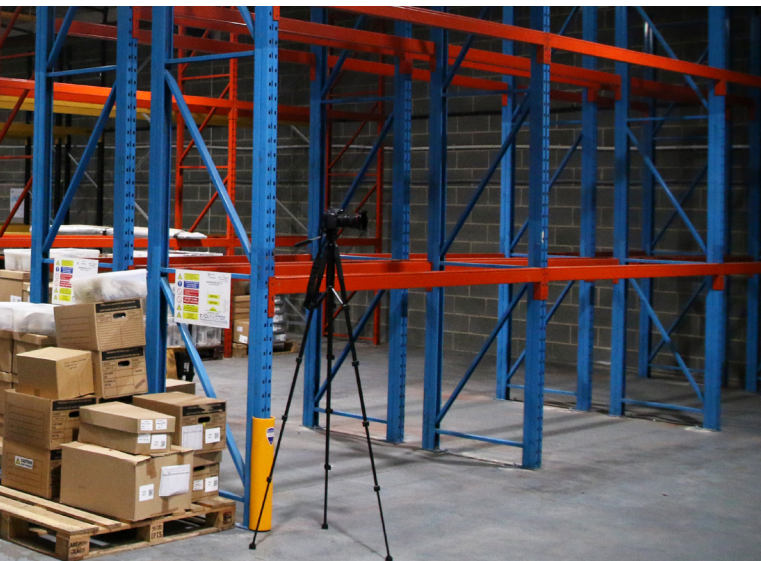
## Project Details

In September 2024, Headland Archaeology, as the lead organisation within the Access+ consortium, was awarded the HS2 Post-Excavation Services contract. The Access+ consortium comprises a highly experienced and multidisciplinary team, including Arup, 4AD, DigVentures, Copper, and MOLA, among others. The first phase of work involved gathering the entire physical archive from existing contractors across the country and relocating it to our new premises at Brighthouse, close to our existing offices in Cleckheaton; this will form the HS2 hub for the next six years. We have also begun consolidating the vast amount of digital data generated to date to conduct a comprehensive review which will inform the scope of future work. A fully developed project design is scheduled for completion in 2026, setting out the aims, methods, and many, varied outputs to be



produced during the project delivery phase, which will run from 2026 to 2030.

This is a hugely exciting opportunity to push the boundaries of academic research, working alongside five university partners, and to develop and test innovative solutions to working practices and methods within the heritage sector. We are collaborating closely with the client and a broad range of stakeholders, from local communities to established heritage and non-heritage organisations, to create opportunities for meaningful engagement. The project aims to produce a wide array of outputs designed for different audiences and to leave a lasting legacy for the sector and beyond.



## Project Highlights

- » 225km Linear transect from London to Birmingham (Phase 1 works)
- » Extensive programme of geophysical survey, trial trenching, topsoil sampling, geoarchaeological and paleoenvironmental sampling, and mitigation from 2018 to 2025 undertaken by many different archaeological contractors
- » Archaeological remains included Mesolithic flint scatters, Neolithic and early Bronze Age monuments, Bronze Age burnt mounds, extensive Iron Age and Roman settlement, including major cemeteries and a villa estate centre, early medieval burials and settlement, a medieval moated manor, post-medieval historic buildings, railway heritage and three huge burial grounds
- » Post-excavation analysis programme to run over six years involving a wide consortium grouped as Access+, led by Headland Archaeology

# OUTLOOK FOR 2025-26



The outlook is bright for Headland; having exceeded last year's targets and with a full programme until the autumn, we expect to build on our success and to expand into new areas and products in 2026. Our varied range of projects across sectors and clients allows us to navigate future uncertainty, and this security provides the platform to further grow the team and our services. Our internal training processes and structures allow us to onboard new staff quickly and ensure that they integrate within our teams, these processes also ensure that trainee staff soon meet the high standards of their longer established colleagues.

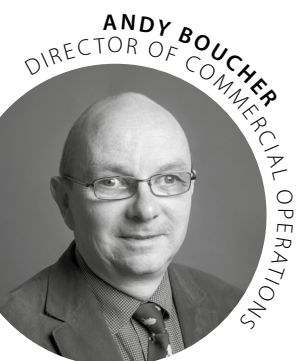
Our One Team ethos of the past few years has come to fruition, and our structure is such that any expansion will allow our staff to develop and take on more diverse roles, with support brought in to ensure workload is managed and efficiencies are not lost. The opportunities within Headland and the wider RSK group allow our teams to work on exciting projects both within the archaeological and wider environmental sectors.

The addition of Innovation and International Business Development teams in 2025 marked the start of a new era for Headland, and we look forward to building on this growth and further diversification in 2026. Our Innovation Team is making great progress with driving forward our ongoing research, particularly with magnetic susceptibility fingerprinting and post strip geophysics. With staff continually canvassed for new ideas, the team has an expanding array of potential new products and innovation activity is accelerating links and ideas across the RSK family. We are on track to be at the forefront of developing new standard site techniques

that will result in more efficient and targeted evaluation and mitigation strategies, allow us to carry out surveys even when sites are inaccessible, and more importantly look to help advance our understanding of the past for the whole profession.

Having recently published our work on the A14 as part of MHI, our highly regarded Post-Excavation team's attention is now on ensuring the success of the publication of all HS2 works as part of Access+. The next six months will see the continuation of preparing archives, methodologies and staff so that analysis is targeted, innovative and efficient. We will work with project partners, develop our existing Post-Excavation departments and establish new teams to ensure that a One Team approach continues for the life of the project, and foundations are laid to ensure the similar success of future high-profile publications.

The year will not be without challenges, but I'm confident that with such an engaged staff and robust structure we are well placed to weather any storms.



# HEADLAND ARE GO



REGISTERED  
CIFA  
ORGANISATION

 **HEADLAND**  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
part of the **RSK** Group

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**SOUTH & EAST**  
LUTON 0152 586 1578

**NORTH WEST**  
MANCHESTER 0161 236 2757  
**SCOTLAND**  
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