

REPORT OF THE GROUP MANAGER PLANNING

TEN YEARS OF COMMUNITY ARCHAEOLOGY IN NOTTINGHAMSHIRE

Purpose of the Report

1. To provide an update on Nottinghamshire County Council's Community Archaeology programme.

Information and Advice

2. Nottinghamshire had a strong tradition of community-led archaeology long before the term Community Archaeology was coined. Two of our earliest community archaeologists were Dr Robert Thoroton and Major Hayman Rooke. Dr Thoroton (1623 – 1678), a physician from Car Colston, published the first history of the County in 1677 under the title *Antiquities of Nottinghamshire*. Major Rooke (1723 – 1806) undertook archaeological investigations across the county, including excavating the Northfield roman villa at Mansfield Woodhouse and recording the ancient oak trees of Sherwood. The Major Oak or “Major’s Oak” in Sherwood was renamed by locals in his honour.
3. The Thoroton Society, named in honour of Dr Thoroton, is the County historical and archaeological society and was formed in 1897. Its annual *Transactions* reports on the research into local history and archaeology carried out by amateur enthusiasts and increasingly by professional archaeologists and historians.
4. Public interest in archaeology has grown rapidly in recent years and there are 74 local history and/or archaeological societies across Nottinghamshire, many of which are very active. With major advances in the protection of archaeological remains through planning policy over the last 25 years, however, and the need for archaeological investigations to work alongside (and within the time constraints of) development, the opportunities for communities to be actively involved have declined. Community Archaeology programmes are designed to help local people to reconnect with their heritage, working alongside and supported by professional archaeologists.
5. The Nottinghamshire County Council Community Archaeology programme started in 2002, and was set up to deliver the archaeological aspects of the Heritage Lottery funded Sherwood Initiative through a series of community projects and training programmes. It has since helped local people across the county to develop and deliver a wide range of heritage projects and has supported two further major Heritage Lottery funded programmes in Sherwood and Trent Vale. The programme employs two Community Archaeologists and these posts are entirely funded by the projects they help to deliver.

6. Nottinghamshire County Council's Community Archaeology programme is one of the most active in the country, delivering over 225 separate projects and events involving hundreds of volunteers over the last ten years, including:
- 45 family heritage events including Time Travel Trent Vale at Newark Castle, which attracted thousands of visitors;
 - 45 public workshops and training days, ranging from flint knapping and prehistoric pottery to training volunteers in archaeological survey techniques;
 - 9 geophysical surveys of sites such as King John's Palace in King's Clipstone;
 - Walkover surveys of 9 areas, ranging in size from Lowdham motte to the banks of the Trent through 16 parishes, and involving hundreds of miles of walking by staff and volunteers;
 - 9 topographic earthwork surveys to record upstanding archaeological features such as Willoughby deserted medieval village near Norwell;
 - 3 test pit excavations looking for evidence of, for example, the fire that destroyed Mansfield Woodhouse in 1304;
 - 4 field walking sessions, including Mattersey and Southwell;
 - 9 graveyard surveys, including North & South Clifton, Awsworth and Woodborough;
 - 12 large scale community excavations ranging from a Romano-British site at Raymoth Lane, Worksop in advance of a housing development, to the excavation of a medieval manor house at Kirkby Hardwick.

Other Options Considered

7. Not applicable.

Reason/s for Recommendation/s

8. The County Council's Community Archaeology programme has been very successful in helping local communities and groups to understand and protect their historic environment, attracting significant amounts of investment into the Nottinghamshire and helping to make the County a more attractive place to live and work.

Statutory and Policy Implications

9. This report has been compiled after consideration of implications in respect of finance, equality duty, human resources, crime and disorder, human rights, the safeguarding of children, sustainability and the environment and those using the service and where such implications are material they are described below. Appropriate consultation has been undertaken and advice sought on these issues as required.

RECOMMENDATION/S

- 1) To note the success of the County Council's Community Archaeology programme.

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For any enquiries about this report please contact: Heather Stokes, Conservation Team Manager (0115 969 6508)

Constitutional Comments (NAB 18.12.12)

10. The Culture Committee has authority to consider the matters set out in this report by virtue of its terms of reference.

Financial Comments (DJK 18.12.2012)

11. The contents of this report are duly noted; there are no financial implications.

Background Papers

None

Electoral Division(s) and Member(s) Affected

All