

**Minutes of a Committee Meeting of The KAS Fieldwork Committee (FWC) held on
7th October 2023 at 1.00pm in the KAS Library**

Present: Keith Parfitt (KP), Andrew Ward (AW), Chris Blair-Myers (CBM), Sue Oldham (SO)

Apologies/Not Present: Kevin Fromings (KF), Anne Sassin (AS), Clive Drew (CD)

The meeting opened at 1.15pm

1. Welcome

KP opened the meeting.

2. Acceptance of the Minutes of the meeting on June 17th 2023

The minutes of June 17th 2023 were accepted as a true and accurate record.

3. Conferences - November Conference Planning

The Defence committee is advertising a conference in February 2024, and so assumed to not be interested in putting on the November one.

The dates of 25th November or 2nd December have been proposed. KP will contact Steve Willis regarding availability of the university facilities. Chatham Dockyard was proposed as a possible alternative if the university is not available. The point was raised that we should have alternative venues in West Kent; AW will contact both the Police Training college in Maidstone and Rochester Cathedral to see if they would be able to host a conference in future.

The theme will be Neolithic and Bronze Age Kent. KP will contact the speakers as proposed below once the date has been fixed. Dr Lindsey Büster was proposed as one other alternative if speakers are not available.

Possible Programme 2023

(Start)

10.00 – 10.20 Coffee and registration

10.20 – 10.30 Introduction by (?)KAS president

(Morning Session - Recent work on the Lees Court Estate)

10.30 – 11.40 Potential Neolithic monuments in Stringman's Field, Badlesmere,
Keith Parfitt and Richard Taylor (35 mins each)

11.40 – 12.00 Break

12.00 – 12.45 Late Bronze Age metalwork hoards from Badlesmere, John Symthe

(Lunch)

12.45 – 2.00 (Food not provided) - Make your own arrangements.

(Afternoon session, wider Kent)

2.00 – 2.30 Distribution of barrows and ring-ditches in Kent based on aerial
photographs, Chris Blair Myers

2.30 – 3.10 Barrows and ring-ditches of Thanet, Paul Hart

3.10 – 3.30 Break

3.30 – 4.10 The prehistoric monuments at The Meads, Sittingbourne, Tania Wilson

4.10 – 4.50 Taking the Dover Bronze Age boat replica to sea, Prof. Paul Bennett

4.50 – 5.00 Closing remarks

(5.00 Meeting finishes)

4. Fieldwork Forum

The next Forum will be held on March 16th 2024, with the subject of best practice in fieldwork. It will cover how to frame an excavation from both history and archaeological perspective. AW will contact Rebecca and Ann regarding an up-to-date contact list of affiliated societies. Planning for this will be further covered at the January FWC meeting.

5. Budgets

Budgets are agreed for this year. There was no further discussion on this topic.

6. Grant Applications and Payments

Grant for Sts Peter and Paul Church Project - Ken Dark – there was no update since the last meeting.

Grant for Slayhill Saltings Kiln Analysis/Upchurch Pottery Archive – Louise Rayner (UCL)

CBM has indicated to them that they would get support, but the main issue is that they intend to publish in the Roman Pottery Studies group, with a mention to any financial support that KAS would give them, and we cannot support them to the extent they need. The next steps are with them. In the meantime they are also applying to Marc Fitch for funding.

New SPAB Grant Request – Kimberley Gordon – no response has been received from them since we responded to them in June

Follow up on Bilsington Grant Awarded in 2022 – Alex Hibberds – the report still to be received. Alex has indicated it will be submitted by October 11th.

7. Research Groups Update

Flints – this group is no longer functioning

Pottery – Not much further progress has been made on the concordance, and the Oxford Classification needs to be added in. CBM needs storage for the examples which are currently at his home. Gary Bennett is also starting to become more familiar with pottery types through the finds processing for DROP, with Ed Biddulph's help.

The Eccles finds need to be moved because CAT's storage facility in Dover Docks is closing. The is not KAS excavation/material but KAS has supported this project and so has an interest in it.

Marshes Group – AW will re-raise the subject of the Marshes group with Isabel. £10,000 has been ringfenced for support for group but it has not yet been used, so will need to be reallocate this if appropriate.

8. Fieldwork Projects

Lees Court

Keith's ring ditch is probably neolithic, but we need proper dating evidence from the base of the ditch. There is some neolithic pot, and good charcoal was found for radio carbon dating. More site investigation will be necessary, and Lady Sondes is happy for KAS to return. There will need to be further investigation of Keith's ring-ditch, and on the standing barrow site to see if there is a ditch around this mound. Richard may want to do more on his monument. There are 30 boxes of finds that need cataloguing and sorting.

Trottiscliffe

The excavated Bathhouse is in really good condition, identifying an apsidal structure with phased development of plunge pools, plughole and chalk block drain, and a hypocaust 12 tiles high. CD is putting 2 or 3 scenarios to Clare about how to manage the site - whether to backfill or take it out of cultivation (which would affect the contract with tenant farmer). There is already a 40cm restriction on ploughing as the whole land is under Countryside Stewardship.

It was noted that Clive is rather ambivalent about going back, but there are still significant questions about the site which need a longer excavation period to answer. The ground was actually cleared 4-5 weeks

before the project so theoretically there could be a longer time on site. There may be a community back garden project next year as the village is very enthusiastic about the project, but this would be a huge admin task to arrange.

KAS will continue to support SHAL (Lympe) and DROP (Roman Otford) in 2024.

9. Any Other Business

KAS-Accredited Museum

The charitable objects wording needs to be changed, and AW will be in touch with South East Museum Development once the trustees approve the wording, so that the eligibility criteria can be agreed. The museum must be open at least 20 days a year.

Digitisation

Jacob Scott now has control of the website and is working out a solution to deal with some final elements regarding digitisation of Arch Cant. This is expected to be complete fairly quickly.

Secretary

SO had informed KP that she would be stepping down as Secretary after this meeting. KP thanked her for the work of the last 3 years.

10. Next Fieldwork Committee Meeting Date

Saturday January 20th 2024 to be held in the KAS Library at Maidstone Museum at 10.30am.

The meeting closed at 14.22.