

The Festival of Archaeology



Dr Claire Corkill, development manager, and Debbie Frearson, festival coordinator, reflect on this year's festival, share details of how to access the CBA's resources, and look ahead to next year's event

Primary Festival Sponsor



Right: More than 379 events and activities delivered across the UK by 271 organisers, with an incredible range of opportunities to explore archaeology, including skills days, talks, and guided walks, youth events, and hands on creative activities



CBA



The 2024 Council for British Archaeology's (CBA) Festival of Archaeology, sponsored by Headland, ran from 13 to 28 July and this year centred around the theme of Archaeology and Community.

With 379 events and activities delivered across the UK by 271 organisers, there was an incredible range of opportunities to explore archaeology, including skills days, talks, and guided walks, youth events, and hands on creative activities.

The CBA delivered a range of online and in-person events designed to highlight some incredible venues and projects that have community at the heart of their work.

Launching at the Scottish Crannog Centre in Perthshire enabled us to showcase the museum in its new location on the shores of Loch Tay and drew in visitors from around the world, alongside members of the local community.

We also delivered a traditional craft skills day on the techniques used by the community of craftspeople who have come together to create the centre's Iron Age village.

Our online theme day included the announcement of this year's Marsh Community Archaeology Awards winners and a Drink and Draw collaborative event with Broken Frontier and Gosh Comics on X.



Our online delivery continued with a series of talks (see details below) and the annual Youth Day, Ask an Archaeologist Day, and A Day in Archaeology events.

We continued our in-person delivery with a hands-on youth activity day at English Heritage's Chester Castle (see Archaeology 8-25, pp62-63, for more). To close the festival, we once again collaborated with the National Trust to deliver a family fun day at Hardwick Hall, Derbyshire.

We were joined at the event by a range of local and national groups and organisations who helped us showcase the archaeological community in the region, alongside activities linked to the Elizabethan history of the hall, including music and hands-on textile crafts.

Incredible organisers

What makes the Festival of Archaeology so special are the hundreds

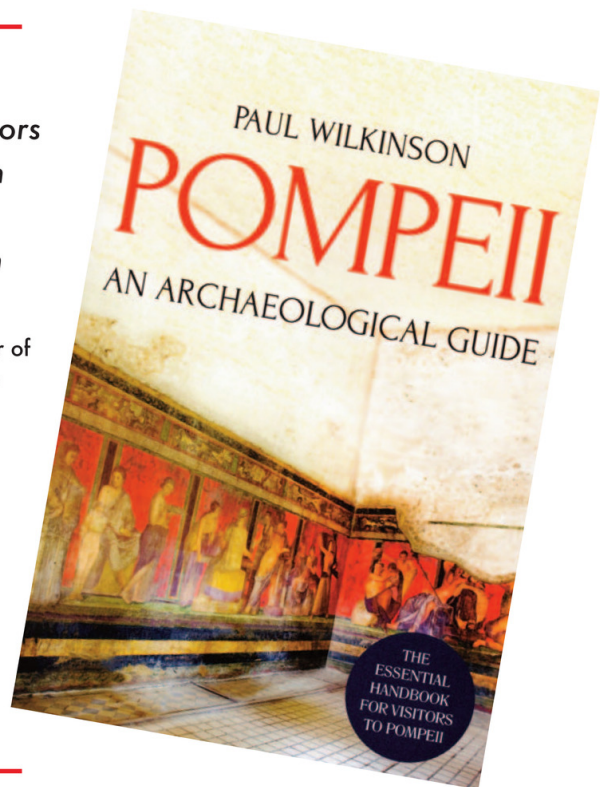
"This book, written by an archaeologist with years of experience of showing visitors around one of the most visited (but often misunderstood) sites in the world, will be warmly welcomed by those who need an up-to date and reliable guide."

- Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, OBE, FBA, Honorary Professor of Roman Studies and Emeritus Director of the Herculaneum Conservation Project, University of Cambridge



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of event organisers from grassroots groups to the museums, commercial archaeology units, universities, and other heritage organisations, who develop and deliver activities each year.

They are the lifeblood of the festival, bringing opportunities to engage with archaeology to their local communities and the CBA would like to say a huge thank you to all the event organisers for their hard work and enthusiasm.

To help make things as easy as possible for event organisers we provide regular newsletters, drop-in sessions, and a host of guides and resources on subjects including safeguarding, communications, and developing your event.

We are always keen to hear about new ways we can support event organisers so if you have an idea, or are able to offer some guidance or a training workshop, then please get in touch.

Festival on demand

While the festival might be over for this year, there is still plenty of content that you can access online at any time.

Above: The CBA team in the ground of Hardwick Hall

Right: CBA Youth Advisory Board Member, George Ellison, learns how to grind flour







The CBA delivered four online lectures:

- Redefining National Amenity for the 21st Century;
- This Is Archaeology – Roots in Time: Shaping Woodland for the Future;
- This Is Archaeology – The Baths Conceal So Many Secret Joys: The Uncovering Roman Carlisle Project So Far...;
- An Evening with the Portable Antiquities Scheme – with recordings available via the CBA's YouTube channel (<https://bit.ly/3Xg1fxR>).

Our festival resources (<https://bit.ly/3TjZFdb>) also offer a wide range of on demand activities. Some of this year's highlights include:

- Beyond Notability – an introduction to the project exploring the women active in archaeology, history, and heritage in Britain between 1870 and 1950. Dr Amara Thornton guides you through the project database and shares some of the women's

Top: Medieval fresco painting in the Agricola Tower

Above: An aerial view of the Chesters House and Agricola Tower festival site

Right: a wool dyeing demonstration

Opposite top: A young visitor explores pottery at the Peak District YAC stand at Hardwick Hall

Opposite bottom: Hands-on craft skills events proved popular at Chesters House



fascinating stories (<https://bit.ly/3Mxlj8T>).

- Heritage and Cultural Property Crime – a guide and poster on what is Heritage and Cultural Property Crime, how to report it and how TIAA Ltd could help you (<https://bit.ly/3XyOT5k>).
- Bringing the Wet Stuff to a Sofa Near You – a guide from Historic England's National Listing & Maritime Team with information and links on underwater cultural heritage, specifically shipwrecks (<https://bit.ly/3XemjES>).
- Self-guided walks and audio tours such as Jordans Village Heritage Walk (<https://bit.ly/3Tk5ZB8>) and an audio tour of Witley Camp (<https://bit.ly/3Zewn3b>).

Our *A Day In Archaeology* blogs (<https://bit.ly/4edkSgF>) also continue to be available year round and are a fantastic window into the daily life of archaeologists.

Opportunities to explore archaeology beyond the festival

There are a number of other ways you can engage with archaeology throughout the year and the CBA's event listing pages highlight activities taking place around the UK, from fieldwork opportunities to talks and conferences, and from workshops to site visits.

Many of the groups and organisations contributing to the festival deliver events and activities throughout the year. Why not find out about your local archaeology or heritage society, or CBA group, and either sign up for their newsletter or become a member.

The CBA delivers a range of events and activities throughout the year, including our monthly online *This Is Archaeology* lectures.

The talks are online and free to attend and highlight the wide range of different approaches to archaeology, drawing on the latest research. Visit the CBA website to find out about all of our upcoming events.

Save the date

The 2025 Festival of Archaeology takes place from Saturday, 19 July, to Sunday, 3 August, and we are delighted to announce that our theme is 'Wellbeing and Archaeology'.

If you are interested in delivering an event, then please visit the event organiser area of our website where you will find plenty of information, including resources and guides designed to help you develop, deliver, and evaluate your event.

If you are interested in attending an event near you, we'll be sharing more information on the 2025 festival and opening event listings on Saturday, 8 February, as part of the CBA's online AGM (see CBA website for tickets).

The CBA also welcomes enquiries from organisations interested in sponsoring the Festival of Archaeology, or collaborating with us to deliver our core event programme.

If you have any questions about the festival, please contact the Festival Team at festival@archaeologyuk.org. ■