

Community Archaeologist of the Year 2026

Guidance Document

Please read this guidance document in full before submitting your nomination.

This Award recognises an individual volunteer or professional who is going above and beyond their role to contribute to community archaeology. The winner will receive £500.

Eligibility

Entrants must be aged 18 or over.

All volunteers or professionals actively involved in community archaeology in the UK are eligible for the Award. The work cited in the nomination must have been undertaken during the previous three years, although earlier work can also be included as additional supporting information. The work must have been carried out within the United Kingdom, including its coastal and offshore waters.

An individual can nominate themselves. If you are nominating yourself, you must include a testimonial from someone else who knows you and the work you have undertaken.

The nominee's work can be undertaken in a paid or unpaid capacity.

Judging

The winner will be selected by Brian Marsh OBE of the Marsh Charitable Trust, the sponsor of the Award, from a shortlist drawn up by a selection panel chaired by the Executive Director of the Council for British Archaeology.

Criteria

The Award will be made on the criteria outlined below. Nominations must demonstrate **at least one** of these criteria has been met.

Below we have provided some examples of things to think about when writing the nomination. These are not exhaustive but are meant to help you identify where the criteria has been met.

- **The winner will have inspired others to get involved in archaeology.**

Things to think about: Archaeology has many facets. It's not just about digging in a trench or washing finds. The nominated individual may have taken a creative approach to broaden participation by developing activities and/or projects that look at the wider skillset required to undertake archaeological investigation or developed creative approaches that utilise arts-based teaching, for example. The nominated individual may have explored non-traditional topics to widen the appeal of their project and/or worked with the community to co-create something that appeals to them.

Inspiring others may also include their own personal journey. Have they overcome barriers to their own participation, led by example or supported others to participate?

- **The winner will have helped others to develop skills and knowledge in archaeology.**

Things to think about: *Can you demonstrate that the nominee has developed and/or delivered opportunities for participants to expand their knowledge and/or skills through their work? This may be excavation and post-ex skills and knowledge, but it can also be much broader. They may have taught participants to use social media to share their discoveries, computer software to create 3D models of artefacts and landscapes or how to use a DSLR camera to create a project film. It may be as simple as getting to grips with Excel to maintain a project budget!*

It's also worth considering whether the nominee has worked with groups and individuals to identify a particular need or interest, e.g. a young person may wish to build their CV and needs particular training and support.

- **The winner will have broken down barriers to participation in archaeology.**

Things to think about: *not everyone has equal access to opportunities to participate in archaeological activities or even access to the knowledge of what archaeology is and why it might matter to them. Sometimes this is due to socio-economic reasons or because they do not see themselves represented in the narratives that are present or the opportunities that are provided.*

Has the nominee demonstrated that they have addressed some or all these considerations in their work? They might have undertaken consultation and/or worked with individuals and groups to develop ideas and approaches that appeal to non-traditional audiences. Has their work explored untold or forgotten narratives and shared them with the local community? Have they forged new relationships with established community groups outside the sector? They may even have undertaken training themselves to be able to provide appropriate support and care for new audiences.

Entry procedure

Nomination forms should be submitted to awards@archaeologyuk.org by 12 noon on the closing date of Monday 25 May 2026.

The application form can be downloaded from the CBA website here:

<https://www.archaeologyuk.org/our-work/archaeology-awards/the-marsh-community-archaeology-awards/marsh-awards-guidance-and-nomination-forms.html>

All enquiries should be directed to the CBA by emailing awards@archaeologyuk.org.

Example of the Online Form with Instructions

1. Name of the nominated individual:

You can add a work address and telephone number if more appropriate.

2. Is the individual aware of the nomination? Yes / No

If the nominee is shortlisted, we will contact both the nominee and the nominator to let them know.

If the nominee is not shortlisted and you have answered no above we will only contact the nominator to let them know.

3. Name and contact information of the person nominating:

This is so we can inform you of the outcome and, on occasion, follow up regarding contacting the nominee.

4. Would you like the identity of those nominating to be kept anonymous? Yes / No

You may wish to keep your nomination anonymous. If not, we will inform the nominee who nominated them when we announce the shortlist.

5. Please tell us in no more than 500 words why they deserve the award and how they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The winner will have inspired others to get involved in archaeology
- The winner will have helped others to develop skills and knowledge in archaeology
- The winner will have broken down barriers to participation in archaeology

Text can include website and video links and other content.

Please do not exceed the word count, we cannot guarantee judges will take into consideration any content provided over the 500 word limit.

6. If the nominee is entering themselves, please include a testimonial of no more than 500 words from someone else who knows them and their work, such as an archaeologist or fellow volunteer.

This section should support the details given in Q3 and include any other relevant information. Please ensure that the name and contact details of the person giving the testimonial are included in this section.

Please do not exceed the word count, we cannot guarantee judges will take into consideration any content provided over the 500 word limit.

7. Accompanying material:

Please submit a minimum of 1 and a maximum of 5 high-resolution (1-2MB) images to support the nomination and for use in the publicity of the Awards.

Images should be sent as separate files either as email attachments or via a file sharing service such as SharePoint or We Transfer.

Please provide an image description and details of who to credit for each image here:

Please ensure these are named so we can identify which project they belong to, e.g. Chester

Amphitheatre 1. If you would like us to acknowledge any of the individuals in the images please provide their names.

Please ensure you have permission to share the photos as, if shortlisted they may be used in promotional content online and in print by the CBA and Marsh Charitable Trust.

- a. Please provide details of any relevant social media channels or websites here:

This might include a project blog and platforms such as Twitter or Facebook. These links may be shared in promotional content online and in print by the CBA and Marsh Charitable Trust.

8. Authorisation:

☐ I confirm that I have read the Nomination Guidance document and that the nominated project meets the eligibility criteria.

☐ I confirm that the image(s) supplied with this application can be used by the CBA and Marsh Charitable Trust to promote the Marsh Community Archaeological Awards.