

Community Archaeology Project of the Year 2026

Guidance Document

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

This Award recognises and promotes the results of research and/or fieldwork led by community groups which have made a substantial contribution to knowledge and wellbeing. It is awarded annually to a voluntary group active in the UK. The winning project will receive £1,000.

Eligibility

All voluntary groups and individuals actively involved in researching the archaeological heritage of 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.

A group can nominate themselves. If you are nominating your group, you must include a testimonial from someone else who knows your project.

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 project was accessible to a wide audience and demonstrated evidence of an inclusive approach to participation.**

Things to think about: the project should demonstrate that it was developed and delivered in a way that encouraged interest and participation from a broad audience. There are many ways to do this, including consultation that explores what is of interest to different people, using this information to co-create a project based on the results of the consultation and allowing others to be involved in its delivery and management, for example.

Different ways of participating and disseminating the information generated from a project can also help with accessibility and inclusivity. Did the project ensure different methods of

participation? For example, not everyone can get to a site and/or partake in fieldwork. Did the project have a good mix of desk-based and onsite activities (if applicable), were talks/lectures etc., delivered in person and online, did the project utilise social media to live tweet activity?

Another way of making a project more accessible is to cover expenses or offer bursaries through fundraising and grants. Did the project support participants in this way?

- **The project led to enhanced wellbeing for participants.**

Things to think about: Participating in archaeological projects can have a positive impact on an individual's wellbeing, from providing opportunities to socialise to improving their physical fitness.

Did the project proactively encourage a wellbeing angle? This could be by creating opportunities to get together outside of project activities, i.e. going on walks, coffee mornings or trips out. Did they ensure there was a Mental Health First Aider on site and routes to support if needed?

A project may foster a sense of wellbeing by being inclusive in the way it plans and delivers activities. Was there a balance between the different types of activities and events being offered?

Sometimes a project can deal with sensitive topics – the excavation of human remains being an obvious example. When this occurred, how did the project support volunteers?

- **The project provided a variety of hands-on training and up-skilling opportunities for participants.**

Things to think about: Did the project provide opportunities for participants to go from passive observers to active contributors? The project should demonstrate that participants gained new knowledge and skills through their involvement. This may be through excavation and post-ex skills and knowledge, but it can also be much broader. Participants may have been taught 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!

Also consider how these opportunities were provided. Did the project identify a need/needs through consultation and tailor their delivery to the need? Did they ensure that training and knowledge gain was provided in different ways, i.e. through online and in-person delivery, for example?

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.

1. Name of the nominated project:

2. Project Details:

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

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. Is the project 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.

5. 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.

6. Please tell us in no more than 1000 words why they deserve the award and how they meet one or more of the following criteria:

- The project was accessible to a wide audience and demonstrated evidence of an inclusive approach to participation.
- The project led to enhanced wellbeing for participants.
- The project provided a variety of hands-on training and up-skilling opportunities for participants.

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 1000 word limit.

If the project is nominating themselves, please include a testimonial of no more than 500 words from someone else who knows about the project, such as an archaeologist or fellow volunteer.

This section should support the details given in Q6 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.

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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 to promote the Marsh Community Archaeological Awards.