

# Sedgford Historical and Archaeological Research Project Annual General Meeting Minutes



Held on 31<sup>st</sup> July 7.30pm onsite Boneyard Field, Sedgford, PE36 5LN (and via Zoom)

## **Attending members**

See the end of the document.

Meeting files can be viewed and downloaded on the SHARP website.





<https://www.sharp.org.uk/charity-governance>



<b>1</b>	<b>Welcome</b>	
a	Gareth Davies gives a general welcome, nice to be attending from the SHARP field this year. He introduced himself as the chair of trustees for SHARP.	
b	<b>Apologies</b> from Sophie Beckett	

<b>2</b>	<b>Outline of SHARP activities and achievements</b>	
a	<p>Gareth gave an introduction to the activities and achievement of SHARP this year. Despite the project going on for nearly 30 years he is impressed with new discoveries, the new people and increased enthusiasm and interest in the research into this seemingly normal Norfolk parish. The more work we do in it the less normal it seems, although what is normal for Norfolk seems an appropriate question.</p> <p>In 2023 we had some burials between the kitchen, track and find/information huts. Tantalising glimpse of another Middle-Late Saxon cemetery focus, and makes us reevaluate the use of space. This year there is work being carried on two kilns on the malting site. We have also been looking in the car park area at what is a post-medieval trackway, and evaluating the archaeology underneath this to the Saxon layers and beyond. Just today we believe we have found a burial, perhaps crouched, although I am holding my judgement as I did say if it wasn't Saxon I would buy everyone a beer!</p> <p>Since the death of founder director Neil in 2022, it has been an uncertain time. He inspired a lot of people with his research insight and energy, so to have these results is excellent. In the last couple of years we have a huge change in personnel and the committee, not least people like me coming in. We have also had the well documented financial situation in the press now, with our former treasurer, and we will update on that later this evening.</p> <p>Given all the uncertainty, the fact that we have offered a great 2024 whilst also undertaking much needed work on our constitution, which although we have multiple re-iterations it has not been correctly updated with charity commission. The fact that we could do that while also delivering the 2024 season is a testament to the work and support of the trustees, committee, team and volunteers.</p> <p>Gareth I am stepping down as chair after tonight but will remain on the committee. I would encourage everyone that is invested in SHARP to commit time and energy to help us where you can.</p>	


	<p>I would like to highlight the following achievements this year.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Much needed work on constitution</li> <li>• Updating governance and financial systems</li> <li>• As well as the archaeology we have also kept a pace with our specialist work, environmental processing.</li> <li>• Developed some new courses</li> <li>• Successful open day, 250 visitors, £1200 money raised.</li> <li>• Ellie in tours and visits, Friends of SHARP and NWNHS.</li> <li>• Four great lectures, including last nights where Sophie Cabot stepped in last minute.</li> <li>• Working towards sustainability grant, to get our own solar etc.</li> <li>• Post-excavation backlog has been worked on, including the Roman project.</li> <li>• Archive has been worked on at the moment, with the help of a grant NNAS</li> <li>• Vastly improved site infrastructure.</li> <li>• Merchandise improvements, including our own newsletter.</li> </ul> <p>The organisation as a whole has a huge amount of talent within in, and associated with it and long may it continue. I will go away with a real positive opinion.</p>
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<b>3</b>	<b>Update on incident</b>	
a	<p>Ellie we were hoping we might be able to tell you all a bit more by this date. Unfortunately, because of the nature of the crime this first hearing was just to push the case up the court system. Its not suitable for the magistrate’s court, so it needs to be a crown court and therefore it is going to be dealt with in the Norwich Crown Court. The 15<sup>th</sup> of August is the new date, and we may know more then as to what the plea may be, so we may be able to say more. We will keep members up to date with what is going on and once done there will be a report produced what happened, how it happened and what has been put in place to ensure it doesn’t happen again.</p> <p>We have everything in place to make the finances secure, and procedures and set and more eyes on the bank account. We can’t explain how or what at this stage but will keep you informed. There have been bits and pieces in the newspaper but what has been said is some half truths and other speculation, but we can’t say what’s really going on until after there is a guilty plea, so it’s a case of being patient a little longer.</p>	
b	<p>Question asked via zoom ‘Are we able to get some idea of how much money has been lost / removed? Is there any chance of recovery?’</p> <p>Ellie explained I would love to be able to tell you that but that is the sort of thing I can’t confirm at this stage. Its an active investigation and case, and there needs to be a plea of guilty or we are likely to get sued. So, we have to wait. In terms of recovery, we will do our best, but we won’t know until the sentencing what the court will do and say. There is a hold on her assets, so we hopefully have an opportunity to recover funds, but we just won’t know how this will work yet.</p> <p>We will keep you up to date.</p>	
c	<p>Gareth concluded by saying that people will quite rightly have questions, but we can’t go into detail. We would dearly like to tell people and give reassurance, but by explaining the detail of the reassurance may reveal the nature of the ongoing incident.</p>	

<b>4</b>	<b>Financial report and accounts</b>	
a	Sam Atkins spoke to the various reports. These are the examined accounts from 2022-2023. We did not get access to the bank accounts until December 2023. It's taken a long time to get them sorted, and give them to our new external accountant for independent examination.	 3.1 Income and expenditure account.l  3.3 ANNUAL REPORT 22-23.pdf  3.4 Accounts 2023-2024.pdf
b	The accountant was recommended by the Norfolk Community Foundation. All the accounts are on QuickBooks, which is linked to the bank account, and he has full live access to QuickBooks. He then goes through and produces this report, that gets submitted with the annual return. The box that has said we are late has now been removed, and they are now fully qualified.	 3.2 SHARP - signed independent examine
c	<p>One of the problems we have is that these accounts have an unexamined part for 2023-2024, which currently looks good as the value comes out at 12K income however this is only due to the accounts going over two seasons. So, one of the things we would like to do is change our accounting year if the membership agrees, so it falls more in line with our seasons. If we could take the accounting year from the 1<sup>st</sup> October-30<sup>th</sup> September it will give us a much clearer idea of the income and expenses, and what things are costing and what is going on.</p> <p>Proposal to adjust the start of SHARPs financial year to 1<sup>st</sup> October to 30<sup>th</sup> of September.  Proposed by Sam Atkins, Seconded by Eleanor Blakelock.  Vote was carried everyone for, none against or abstaining.  The motion was passed.</p> <p>This will not start until the next accounting year. There will be a shorter accounting year in 2024 to take us from March 1<sup>st</sup> to September 30<sup>th</sup>. Afterwhich we will start from the 1<sup>st</sup> October 2024 to 30<sup>th</sup> of September 2025.</p>	

<b>4</b>	<b>New Constitution</b>	
a	<p>Ellie says that she isn't going to go into all the reasons why we are in this situation, as this was covered in several blogs and posts on our website, <a href="#">website link</a> and <a href="#">website link</a>. You will have had the constitutions, the 1997 one which is currently in use, and a new proposed constitution that we hope to go forward with.</p> <p>The new constitution is just a re-organised version of the 1997 constitution, with a few additions brought in from the 2007/2008 constitution that was voted on by the membership. Changes have been highlighted. These changes were also influenced by feedback and</p>	 4.1 SHARP 1997 Constitution.docx  4.2 New SHARP Constitution.docx

	<p>comments from those that responded to the questionnaire, thanks for those that took part in this process. This allowed us to do some minor tweaks to the constitution particularly related to phrasing.</p> <p>There is a possibility it won't be accepted in its current form by the charity commission, but as long as the membership are happy at this stage we are happy to proceed. We may have to come back to the membership with any further tweaks.</p>	
b	<p>Gareth asked the question 'Is it possible to say what the key differences are between the two'.</p> <p>Ellie main changes are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Change to nature of members, the 1997 version is incredibly woolly and vague. It currently has no distinction in length of time or when people have been active, so we have included everyone from the start of the project, however for an active charity this is impractical. In 2007/8 this was reduced to 2 years as that was seen as a good timeframe to be actively involved with SHARP.</li> <li>• Second change is to do with committee. So, there is no longer a requirement that all members of the committee have to be trustees, which opens us up to having a range of people actively taking part in the organisation of SHARP. Without the perceived risk. This was done with a percentage so that the majority of committee will still be trustees, but it gives us options.</li> </ul> <p>Question 'What is the definition of that involvement?'</p> <p>Ellie explains this was expanded after feedback during the questionnaire. It should now be clear that it's not just those taking part during a season but should include out of season work. It now also includes work done by people that furthers SHARP but doesn't contribute to the archaeology, for example Tiggy's voluntary work with the website. We are also looking into ways to ensure that anyone that can't attend a season but wants to contribute has that ability to do so and can stay a member via this route.</p> <p>Proposed by Eleanor Blakelock, Seconded by Gareth. Vote was carried out. All for, none against or abstaining. Motion was carried</p>	
c	<p>Ellie says that there was a general consensus in the questionnaire for us to look into changing into a Charity Incorporated Organisation (CIO) in the future. However, the SHARP committee suggests that we wait and see what happens with the current incident before starting and exploring this option going forward.</p>	

<b>5</b>	<b>Appointment of charity Executive Committee based on above constitution</b>	
a	<p>Gareth we now have the appointment of charity executive committee members, there are a lot to do, so we will do a run through and a vote in a block. Unless anyone has any issues with that. No issues raised. Starting with Officers, then doing trustees and committee members as a block.</p>	 5.1 SHARP 2024 AGM Trustee and Cor

	<p>Gareth Davies is retiring from their Officer role as Chair, we have the following nomination for this role from Yvonne Bolton-Smith nominated by Ann Smith, Terry Seconded.</p> <p>Vote was carried out. All agree, no abstain or nos.</p>	
	<p>Sam Atkins is retiring from their Officer role as Treasurer, but is eligible for re-election in this role and has been nominated by Ellie Blakelock, Steve Seconded.</p> <p>Vote was carried out. All agree, no abstain or nos.</p> <p>Gareth added that he felt she had done a fantastic job.</p>	
	<p>Ellie Blakelock is retiring from their Officer role as temporary Secretary, Ellie Blakelock has been nominated by Sam Atkins for the role of Secretary, Ray Seconded.</p> <p>Vote was carried out. All agree, no abstain or nos.</p>	
	<p>Re-appointment of trustees, the following people are standing down but are eligible for re-election.</p> <p>Terry Baxter (nominated by Sam Atkins),  Daniel Cockling (nominated by Steve Horn)  Tiggy Harris (nominated by Eleanor Blakelock)  Steve Horn (nominated by Sam Atkins)  Owen Morgan (nominated by Terry Baxter)  Gareth Davies (nominated by Sophie Beckett)</p> <p>Seconded by Kali Graham</p> <p>Vote was carried out. All agree, no abstain or nos.</p>	
	<p>Appointment of new trustees.</p> <p>Pete Taylor (nominated by Gareth Davies)  Lucy Koster (nominated by Eleanor Lees)  Eleanor Lees (nominated by Dan Cockling)</p> <p>Seconded by Anj Beckham</p> <p>Vote was carried out. All agree, no abstain or nos.</p>	
	<p>Appointment of committee members.</p> <p>Ann Smith (nominated by Bill Howard)  Sophie Beckett (nominated by Gareth Davies)  Bill Howard (nominated by Ann Smith)  Kali Graham (nominated by Lucy Koster)</p> <p>Seconded by Tiggy Harris</p> <p>Vote was carried out. All agree, no abstain or nos.</p>	
b	<p>Gareth expressed his thanks to those standing down, changing roles or continuing in their roles, your efforts and commitment to SHARP are appreciated.</p>	

<b>6</b>	<b>Members resolutions</b>	
a	None received	

<b>7</b>	<b>Any Other Business</b>	
a	None received	
b	David Crease commented that 'the quality of the toilets and showers is excellent this year'.  Gareth thanks everyone for attending.	

**SHARP Members attending onsite**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Surname</b>
Sam	Atkins
Terry	Baxter
Stefano	Beni
Anj	Beckham
Emily	Blackmore
Ellie (Eleanor)	Blakelock
Sophie	Cabot
David	Crease
Tom	Cross
Alfie	Davies
Gareth	Davies
Shauna	Dixon
Chris	Garrod
Kali	Graham
Steve	Horn
Simon	Hughes
Karen	Kavanagh
Harvey	Kingston
Lucy	Koster
Mike	Lapworth
Owen	Morgan
Isaac	Norwood
Naomi	Payne
Ann	Smith
Bren	Stibbons
Horatia	Thompson
Cathy	Wright
Ray	Wright

**SHARP Members attending via Zoom**

<b>Name</b>	<b>Surname</b>
Yvonne	Bolton-Smith
Dan	Cockling
Rebecca	Ferguson
Bill	Howard
Eleanor	Lees
Katherine	Maeer
Joesph	Ogden
Julia	Paul
Graham	Shuttlewood
Pete	Taylor
Mel	Van Twest
Miriam	Weinbren