

LEGISE NEWS BULLETIN No:2

What is LEGISE doing for us?



The best way to determine the answer to this question is by attending LEGISE meetings, currently held in Maidstone. Obtaining and reading a copy of the minutes of these meetings is an easier alternative.

LEGISE's overriding aim is, and always has been, to promote and protect the hobby.

Information about the activities of LEGISE is posted on the LEGISE Facebook Group page.

Most of the LEGISE officers were active in the early days of the hobby, playing a significant part in the fight against the **STOP campaign**.

Many years later, having taken the sting out of the STOP campaign, a number of LEGISE Officers were also elected as Officers of NCMD, where they were involved in both discussions about and introduction of the 1996 Treasure Act. They furthermore helped to support and bring in the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) in the late 1990s.

LEGISE are currently engaged in a number of issues which have affected the hobby for many years and are likely to affect it for some time. These are: -

Treasure. The Treasure Act is under constant review and LEGISE are monitoring its current Code of Practice and each set of proposed amendments.

Identification of Finds. National finds specialists are working with LEGISE in this area. **Sam Moorhead** (National Finds Advisor for Iron Age and Roman coins for the PAS) and **Andrew Brown** (Assistant Finds Advisor and Treasure Curator, Iron Age and Roman coins for the PAS) are the latest two experts in this category to start helping out in this area. LEGISE has its own Facebook page which will be used to identify both recordable and modern finds.

Conservation. The conservation of metalwork and other archaeological finds, together with the reasons behind their decay/corrosion, is gaining an increasingly higher profile in the heritage world. LEGISE is planning conservation courses (maybe two before the end of the year) which will enable hobbyists to practice "first aid" on their finds and will invite conservation specialists to contribute to the Facebook page so that members can obtain advice directly.

Recording of Finds. LEGISE helped to introduce the PAS and has been involved with many issues concerning Finds recording, such as the transfer of finds data from the PAS to the various county HERs. In order to make progress

in these areas, LEGISE has maintained a permanent dialogue with the FLOs in the South-East.

Field Assemblage Recording. This is a new method of recording, devised by LEGISE officers after a number of field archaeologists indicated that the PAS database was of very little use to them. This was mainly due to the excessive amount of time and effort necessary to record **any** PAS find, of whatever significance, which resulted in both “cherry picking” by FLOs and a reluctance by experienced detectorists to become self-recordists.

LEGISE has put together a power point presentation for clubs, which includes Keith Parfitt, a Kent archaeologist, together with LEGISE officers, showing a joint demonstration of easy landscape recording that can be done with just basic finds knowledge by individuals, clubs and rally goers.

Rallies & Recording. LEGISE is not directly involved with rallies but is aware that many detectorists not only attend them but also in many cases regard rallies as providing them with their principal or even their only opportunities to detect. LEGISE is also aware that rallies are very unpopular amongst archaeologists, mainly because of the failure of rally organisers and rally goers to record finds. One of the reasons for this is the practical difficulties of PAS style recording at rallies. LEGISE continues to make it clear to all concerned that finds recording with **any third party** is voluntary and should only take place with the landowner’s consent. LEGISE views **Field Assemblage Recording** as a simple way to overcome this problem.

Raising Standards. One of LEGISE’s main aims is to raise standards in all areas of detecting, including the identification, conservation and recording of finds. This will **benefit** the hobbyist, archaeology, heritage, academia and by doing so will help to protect our hobby. One means of achieving this aim is to **make it easier** for everyone involved with the hobby to actually do this. Field Assemblage recording is the best example of LEGISE putting this idea into practice.

LEGISE has discussed the introduction of both Field Assemblage Recording and the issue of the resulting data storage with the Michael Lewis, Head of PAS, and will shortly be in further discussions with other archaeological organisations; ClfA CBA, FAME, ALGAO etc.

Construction Site Detecting. LEGISE has for some time administered KAMSU (Kent Archaeological & Metal Detecting Support Unit) and has discussed various political problems in this area with the PAS/County FLOs and is planning to liaise with ClfA over this issue.

Heritage Crime. This is now a national policing initiative, but it was started some time ago by a meeting between LEGISE officers and Kent Police. LEGISE has a number of contacts in Kent and Surrey Police. LEGISE is now affiliated to ARMD. David Rees, Chairman of Western Region (also affiliated to ARMD) is a former CID Officer and is liaising with Mark Harrison (former Kent Chief Inspector) at Historic England on Heritage Crime.

Environmental Stewardship. These schemes were introduced in the early 2000s. The NCMD was unable to deal with them until LEGISE Officers volunteered to take on the issue. Summaries of the various ELS & HLS Handbooks were written and placed on the NCMD website. Short simple articles on the schemes were published in NCMD's "Digging Deep". Now that LEGISE has disaffiliated from NCMD, it will be taking on the responsibility for environmental stewardship. LEGISE has contacted the **Farming Community Network (FCN)** and will be seeking their advice on this and other farming matters.

Contaminated Green Waste. The dumping and spreading of this on farmland has become increasingly problematic in the last few years. It is hazardous for farmers and livestock, often containing hospital waste, and can render a field undetectable. It is a politically sensitive area where the waste dumpers are the villains, the farmers are the victims, and the Environment Agency is the policing authority. From a legal standpoint, metal detecting is only indirectly compromised by contaminated waste. John Wells, Chairman of Midland Region, (ARMD affiliate) is coordinating the hobby's campaign against this contamination of our sites. LEGISE is seeking and collating information on this issue and liaising with John Wells and has asked FCN for advice in this area.

Liaising with other similar organisations. LEGISE has recently made an approach to the **Society for Landscape Studies** and has met with a friendly response. Dialogue with organisations such as this can only be of future benefit to the hobby.

LEGISE officers cannot carry out all these activities without input from LEGISE members, and LEGISE club officers, who can provide grass-roots information about the hobby and highlight any new problems which have arisen.

In addition to all the above, LEGISE continues to offer public liability insurance at £5.00 per year and LEGISE membership subscription at just 2 pence per week!