

MINUTES OF LEGISE OGM AT MAIDSTONE MUSEUM - SATURDAY 14TH October 2023



The meeting convened at 11.30am and was chaired by David Barwell.

Attendance List: -

<u>Name</u>	<u>Club/Organisation</u>
David Barwell	The Royal Phoenix Detecting Group /LEGISE LLG Chair.
Geoff Burr	West Kent Detector Club/LEGISE Treasurer.
Lesley Burr	West Kent Detector Club/LEGISE Membership Secretary.
Roger Mintey	East Surrey Research & Recovery Group /LEGISE Chair.
Paul Everest	Cinque Ports MDC/East Kent KAMSU Co-ordinator.
Martin Miles	Cinque Ports MDC/The Royal Phoenix Detecting Group/ White Cliffs Metal Detecting Club.
Gavin Pettet	The Royal Phoenix Detecting Group.
Phil and Joan Castle	Independent Detectorists' Representatives.
Colin Reader	Mid Kent Detecting Club.
Ronnie Watkins	Mid Kent Detecting Club.
David Villanueva	Swale Search & Recovery Club.
Mark Anderson	Invicta Seekers Metal Detecting Club.
Stuart Finch	Invicta Seekers Metal Detecting Club.
Isabelle Diggle	Finds Liaison Officer Kent (FLO).
Keith Parfitt	Archaeologist.
Emma Youell	Independent detectorist.

Mark Anderson, Stuart Finch, Emma Youell and Isabelle Diggle were new to LEGISE and thus a brief “round the table” introduction was held.

Apologies: -

Clive Sinclair	LEGISE General Secretary.
Fred Cooper	Royal Pheonix Detecting Group.
Andrew Richardson	Isle Heritage CIC.
Mark Town	Cinque Ports MDC.
Trevor Lowdell	Swale Search & Recovery Club.

Matters Arising from the Minutes of OGM at Maidstone Museum on 9th April 2023: -

Detecting on Archaeological & Development Sites: It was agreed that the problem had not altered since the discussion in April. Detectorists should continue to try to get on to these sites before they were sold to a developer. It would be sensible to avoid any mention of Planning Permission in such an approach. Counter offers from large rally groups were starting to become an additional problem.

KP-Motorways provide sources of archaeology; most old A-Roads merely followed courses of previous roads, new m/ways can reveal a site every 400m, often at considerable depth. 20-30 years ago, it was thought that archaeologists were only aware of about 10-20% of undiscovered archaeology. Due to recent finds, the estimated figure is now around 5-10%

Hawkhurst Survey: Many of the delegates had taken part in a survey on this new 500-acre Woodland Trust site in April. Several Roman coins and lead tokens had been found, together with an unidentified circular lead object. More feedback was wanted from Andrew Richardson about both the finds, plus possible report copy and any future work. **Action:** Andrew R to be contacted regarding this.

LEGISE request to join the Kent Archaeological Society (KAS): Nothing had happened since April. Some discussion followed regarding other aspects of KAS.

Could the Kent Archaeological & Detectorists Survey Unit (KAMSU) become an integral part of KAS?

Could LEGISE and KAMSU apply to join KAS together?

KAS had become much more detector friendly since the 1970s and was now aware that KAMSU had been operating successfully for many years.

KP explained that the problem with KAS was administrative rather than political. Informal discussions between CS, DB, KP and Tony Trice had taken place shortly before the OGM. KAS was not quite up to speed in various areas such as the Charity Commission requirements. Some of KAS's officers, including Clive Drew, would be retiring shortly.

Some delegates reported that the Covid pandemic had caused problems in this area, which had not been resolved. It was agreed that LEGISE should take no action at present, merely record whatever KAS was seen to do in the meantime and re-evaluate again in 2024 when the organisation has restructured.

Treasurer's Report: GB handed out copies of a Profit & Loss Statement for the period from 01/04/23 to 08/10/23 and explained how some income items had arisen.

£240 income from Conservation Workshop had come from 12 people each paying £20. However, no invoice has been received to date.

Of the £100 towards KAMSU travel expense claims received from Isle Heritage CIC, related to the Hawkhurst survey, only £68.40 had been claimed for travelling expenses.

The £24 for membership arose from the accounting year starting on 1st April while the membership year began on 1st January.

£120 had been received, arising from a complaint against NatWest.

Most of the expenditure was self-explanatory. There was a resulting surplus for the period of £18.25.

The Bank Balance stood at £5,179.98, before deducting £170 for the current OGM room hire and therefore now stands at £5009.98.

Of the £1000 received from Isle Heritage CIC for ongoing traveling expense claims for Lossenham KAMSU surveys, LEGISE was still £682.80 in credit. Hi-viz jackets for KAMSU cost £141.60 with postage of £8.05.

Some discussion arose over a paragraph in the "Latest News from the National Council for Metal Detecting (NCMD)" which appeared to state that NCMD club officers would be covered for a claim made against the club for damage to a third party which could not be pinned on a specific member. DB made it clear that LEGISE does not get involved with internal hobby politics and concentrates on external affairs which affect the hobby.

Post meeting note/action: CS has emailed the Association for Metal Detecting Sport (AMDS) officers to determine whether the AMDS insurance included a similar clause. RM to check on NCMD's policy for special cover for Club Officers.

Delegates wondered if subs should increase. It was agreed that this had been discussed in April, but that more Roadshows and similar events could lead to a review of the finances in the future.

Membership Secretary's Report: Membership stood at 205. The level had fallen when LEGISE stopped selling insurance. A discussion arose about how both clubs and LEGISE could attract people with a genuine interest in the hobby and avoid treasure hunters (spongers) who merely sought club sites to detect on but not record / report finds , or help as organisers.

Invicta Seekers outlined how their membership policies achieved that aim, while raising funds for the club and arranging digs for charities. The club is now joining LEGISE in support of our goals.

Finds Conservation Workshop: 12 people attended, a more manageable number than the 15 who had attended a similar event in February. Feedback from this event was positive. It covered traditional chemical factors causing damage/corrosion to finds and also modern factors such as acid rain, fertilisers and pesticides. It was agreed that the workshop was both attractive to and useful for novices. "Why conserve?" was a rhetorical question which Dana G-B would use as an intro.

It was agreed that more events were wanted, (with a fee of £20 for LEGISE members). There could be 3 next year. Dana G-B could also visit clubs without any equipment and provide theoretical rather than practical first aid advice. This would be cheaper and reach a wider audience.

LEGISE Facebook Groups and Website: A proposal to drop the Website and place the contents on Facebook groups met with universal disapproval. The Website was open to the public and could attract new people. The Website and Facebook groups should complement each other. The Website should be updated to promote that there are finds specialists associated with LEGISE for finds identification. Techno-savvy delegates wanted to help to post PR and other material on the website. EY offered to take this on. **Action: EY, PE, CS, DB to discuss the way forward.**

Rescue Archaeology's AGM and Open Meeting: This was held at Surrey History Centre, Woking, on Saturday 24th June. RM had attended, ostensibly to promote FAR, but also to get recognition for LEGISE. RM had already sent in a written report on the event to LEGISE Officers. There were only about 20 attendees. The event's theme was "Does Archaeology have a role in placemaking", a rather vacuous question. Three of the five main speakers were just self-promoting time wasters. RM's FAR promo went down well. Jonathan Last (Historic England) agreed that cherry-picking high profile finds, and ignoring commonplace ones, could give a misleading impression to field archaeologists. Jo Caruth, Rescue Chair, took two FAR leaflets and David Calow, Surrey Arch Soc Secretary also took two. Simon Maslin, FLO for both Surrey and Sussex was not there.

After the meeting, Hana Morel, outgoing Rescue Secretary, gave a polemic against "One body putting dots on maps and putting things in boxes before passing the info to another body who does the same thing again! Join up the dots. Put things in context".

KP-This shows how Rescue A has changed since the early 1970s (Brian Philps etc). Keith Westcott had given a presentation to RA in 2019. RA was still registered with the Charity Commission as The British Archaeological Trust.

The meeting was adjourned for a lunch break.

Kent FLO Report:

DB acknowledged that ID had hit the ground running and had inherited a backlog of Finds/Treasure to deal with and suggested a standard communication procedure which both explained the current situation and clarified where the Kent PAS are in relation to finds. This will enable finds data to be put on Facebook and circulated to the clubs, which will be quicker than sending individual emails. Isabelle had so far visited 7 of the 14 clubs known to her. There was a possibility of an assistant for her being appointed.

Post meeting note: See ID's full report appended to these minutes.

Treasure Act Revision: The recent amendments were now law. During the consultation period, LEGISE had made it clear that there were many ambiguities and a lack of clarity in the amendments. Some of these were mentioned again. LEGISE would now adopt a watching brief and monitor future events and thus be aware of specific cases, which might highlight ambiguities and lead to problems/disputes for the finders which LEGISE represent.

Dover Museum Roadshow: -

The agreed schedule for the proposed LEGISE Roadshow event was: -

- 1). Date: Late June-early July 2024.
- 2). Speakers/Presentations. Keith Parfitt, Andrew Richardson, Michael Lewis, David Barwell.
- 3). PAS Treasure advice desk.
- 4). Finds Conservation desk, Dana G-B.
- 5). Finds ID desk & basic FA recording, ID, MM, DH, DB & PE.
- 6). Raffle and a co-ordinator.
- 7). Flyers and banners for LEGISE
- 8). Publicity supervisor and a direct invite to all Kent Clubs and a reach out/contact to Independents by way of social media and hobby magazines. Also, archaeology groups and NFU landowners?
- 9). Two local club displays, possibly outside if weather is good.
- 10). Roadshow exhibition organisers.
- 11). PAS stand.
- 12). Dover Archaeological Group (DAG) stand (Keith Parfitt)
- 13). KAMSU stand. (Isle Heritage, Andrew Richardson).
- 14). LEGISE stand, with a board of 4 pictures, in large format, behind it.

There were some further suggestions: -

- A) Invites for Sam Moorehead, now retired, and Ian Riddler.
- B) Local clubs in the vicinity of Dover to set up displays and other Kent clubs to show displays in subsequent Roadshow exhibitions local to their areas.
- C) Roving Ambassadors, specifically for LEGISE but also for archaeology and detecting in general.

Action: DB and Jon Iveson. DB to fix the date with Jon Iveson asap.

Once the date has been fixed, LEGISE should put together a small team of volunteer organisers a.s.a.p for the various tasks and convene a meeting to agree responsibilities. Advance publicity is essential, as is getting to know the layout and maybe some of the history of Dover Museum together with the order and timing of the speakers.

Landscape Recording-Kent Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) Pilot scheme: The Landscape Recording (LR) document was not read out (time restrictions). Finds Assemblage Recording (FAR) had gone down well with clubs as a DIY recording method without any delay in the return of finds. ID agreed with it and confirmed that ML backs it. Some PAS personnel had reservations, wanting finds GPS'd individually and recorded to a high level.

KP. "PAS records are of little use to him/other field archaeologists, who require landscape information rather than fully identified research information. It was sufficient, for his purposes, to know both that there is, for example, a medieval scatter on a field and which part of the field it is on. An example of this occurred when a proposal was made to build a hotel. An FLO had cherry-picked high profile Roman finds from the site but had ignored much lower profile 13th century finds.

Closing the gaps between PAS, Field Archaeology and the MD hobby would benefit everyone. More knowledge and communication between finders and archaeologists together with a simpler recording system for the PAS could encourage archaeologists to take more interest in recording at clubs given landowners permission..

Storage of records was discussed together with the new PAS database (due in 2025). KP "Any record is better than no record even if the info is held/stored only by the finder".

One of the Kent Pilot Scheme policies is to work with PAS to train up/recruit more in-house club recorders. MM has been mentioned to Mike Lewes as a part-time support for ID, who confirmed that a meeting in Kent would help to progress the scheme.

Kent Landscape Information System (KLIS): KP emphasised the importance of Finds Assemblage Recording (FAR) to Field Archaeology and demonstrated how KLIS worked. EY entered this on her laptop and gave a brief demonstration as to how to drop the cursor on a find spot and click on it. It is necessary to define a field and hopefully, get an idea of what material is in which field, e.g., post medieval in Field A, Roman in B and 18th-20th-century in C.

Post meeting note: If FAR information is to be passed on to the PAS or HER, it is essential to get the landowners permission. If permission is refused, then finders are advised to keep their own records until the situation changes i.e., the landowner changes. FAR information could lead to archaeological surveys on development sites.

Post meeting note: KLIS website now linked to on the LEGISE Facebook Group.

KAMSU projects update: -

Lossenham Priory Farm. The delegates were updated on present/future activity there. Surveys had been organised for Sat 21 and Sun 22 October, with each survey having a team of 7 detectorists. Full details had been posted on the FBG. **Post meeting note:** The surveys were unfortunately postponed due to the fields being too wet, which with detectorists footfall would have risked serious damage to crops.

Lees Court Estate. A rather sketchy pilot scheme had taken place earlier in 2023. KAMSU was not involved. KP had little involvement. KAS are, in theory, running the project but (see earlier in minutes) they were restructuring/updating and communication with them was poor.

A.O.B: There was a brief mention of AMDS and the current ineffectiveness of the Affiliated Regions for Metal Detecting (ARMD).

DB said LEGISE is an independent organisation, adding that he works on selected issues in association with AMDS to represent / propose and discuss Hobby / Heritage initiatives and issues at National level and should the NCMD make a similar proposal, DB would consider it at that time.

Post meeting note: DB to give a PowerPoint presentation to Swale Search & Recovery Club in 2024 and to visit more Kent Clubs, having now contacted Cantium, a Faversham club via an intro from Mark Anderson (Invicta Seekers MDC).

Roger Mintey

David Barwell

Appendix 1

FLO Report.

The previous FLO Jo Ahmet, was normalising his finds days. Problems finding venues. 10-15 finders per session was his aim. JA still had a backlog of work. He had been effectively “out of office” for 2 years and had technical problems with emails; he was now receiving about 200 per week. He now had an intern, Lori Rogerson. There was a backlog at the BM, due both to curators’ home-working and to staff changes. The Treasure system had not undergone its planned separation from PAS. Too much lengthy cross-referencing. Kent was now equal 3rd in Treasure finds per county.

Large finds were difficult to process. Unofficial mudlarking was prevalent, especially in the Medway Estuary.

A number of Bronze Age finds had been made. This emphasised the need to look for ceramics from the same period in the same area. Lead Tremesis coin weights had been found in close proximity to late Roman Tremisses. JA was liaising with students over best practices, using detecting as a teaching aid.

I am pleased to provide an update on the progress of the Portable Antiquities Scheme in Kent. As many of you know, we have had a backlog of Treasure cases and non-treasure finds waiting to be processed. I want to reassure our finders that we have been prioritizing clearing this backlog and working more efficiently going forward.

In the last six months, my team has made great strides in working through outstanding Treasure cases and pushing through new cases to avoid these getting delayed. We have also recorded over 500 non-treasure finds in an effort to quickly return these objects to finders.

I am now focusing on returning non-treasure finds and improving communications. To continue to do this, I have taken in a smaller number of new non-treasure finds, to allow for more focus on the above and treasure.

I appreciate the passion for metal detecting in Kent and the benefits it brings to our county heritage. I am grateful for the patience that has been afforded to me whilst I have settled into the role. Please do reach out if you have any questions or concerns. I welcome your feedback as we continue improving our processes.

Isabelle Diggle