

DIOCESE OF BATH AND WELLS

ARCHAEOLOGICAL WATCHING BRIEF CONDITION JULY 1999

Information paper for Architects, Surveyors, Archaeologists and parishes

The following details help to explain what is required and wording is based upon Somerset County Council General Specification for Archaeological Works (March 1995)

Redevelopment work in churches, particularly changes to heating systems, drainage, water supplies and toilet extensions require excavation in and around the church and through the churchyard. Medieval churches and churchyards have considerable archaeological potential and it is therefore becoming increasingly common for an archaeological **WATCHING BRIEF** condition to be attached to a faculty.

WHERE A WATCHING BRIEF IS SPECIFIED

- 1.1 An adequate written record will be maintained of archaeological features and **FINDS** encountered.
- 1.2 The location of all archaeological features and **FINDS** will be indicated on a measured plan of the site at an appropriate scale.
- 1.3 Where appropriate, measured drawings will be made of archaeological features encountered.
- 1.4 An adequate photographic record of the **WATCHING BRIEF** will be prepared. This will include black and white prints and colour transparencies illustrating in both detail and general context the principal features and **FINDS** discovered. The photographic record will also include working shots to illustrate more generally the nature of the works.
- 1.5 The **WATCHING BRIEF** will result in the production of a report comprising a written description of the features observed and an interpretation of their significance, together with sketch plans, drawings and photographs as appropriate.
- 1.6 Copies of the report will be supplied to the appropriate Local Authority Archaeological Officer and to the local Sites and Monuments Record on the understanding that it will become a public document after an appropriate period (a maximum of 6 months after the completion of the fieldwork unless another date is agreed in writing with the Local Authority Archaeological Officer)
- 1.7 The **WATCHING BRIEF** will result in an **ARCHIVE** of notes, drawings and photographs. A copy of these, together with a copy of the report and any **FINDS**, will be deposited in the nearest **MUSEUM** (for definition see Information Notes)

FINDS and SAMPLES from Excavations and WATCHING BRIEFS

- 2.1 The standards specified in section 2 of the document Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections 1992 published by the Museums and Galleries Commission will be adhered to.
- 2.2 Provision and agreement will be made for the time-limited retention of all the **FINDS** and their full analysis and recording, by appropriate specialists. All **FINDS** are subject to the jurisdiction of the Consistory Court and may not be removed from the site without the authority of the Court. Applications for the purpose should be made to the Diocesan Registry.
- 2.3 All **FINDS** are to be retained during the fieldwork with the exception of 18th century and later building materials which may be discarded after consultation with the Local Authority Archaeological Officer, **MUSEUM** and owner (if appropriate). The discard policy will be noted in the **ARCHIVE**.
- 2.4 All **FINDS** are to be treated in accordance with current Museums and Galleries Commission and United Kingdom Institute for Conservation standards. Where appropriate, they are to be cleaned, marked and conserved in accordance with recognised best-practice and in a manner agreed with the **MUSEUM**. All materials are to be fully labelled, catalogued and stored in appropriate containers. The approval of the **MUSEUM** will be obtained concerning appropriate methods and materials.
- 2.5 Human remains will be treated with due reverence. If any human remains are disturbed, the directions of the Diocesan Registrar must be obtained immediately. In addition to any specific directions which may be given, all cleaning, marking, conservation or examination shall be undertaken out of public view. Human remains may not be removed from the site without the authority of the Consistory Court.
- 2.6 **SAMPLES** for radiocarbon dating, where appropriate, will be taken and packaged in accordance with current best-practice. Such **SAMPLES** will be taken even if no provision has been made for their analysis.
- 2.7 Bulk soil **SAMPLES** for environmental sampling will only be taken where provision for their analysis has been agreed, or in agreement with the **MUSEUM**.

If a **FULL ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION** is required this is a larger operation and architects and parishes should contact the Diocesan Archaeological Adviser for further details.

This information note is drafted to help parishes fulfil their faculty conditions and to obtain advice and estimates of likely costs from specialist archaeological contractors.

Information notes

DEFINITIONS (taken from Somerset County Council General Specification for Archaeological Work in Somerset, March 1995)

ARCHIVE: All records, in whatever form, generated by an archaeological excavation or other fieldwork programme, including any published or unpublished report on the work

FINDS: Objects recovered from an excavation or other fieldwork that are the result of, or evidence of, human activity in the past. Includes **SAMPLES**.

MUSEUM: A museum registered by the Museums and Galleries Commission as meeting its minimum standards; which has a publicly stated policy to collect and preserve archaeological material; and aspires to meet the Standards in the Museum Care of Archaeological Collections published by the Museums and Galleries Commission in 1992. A list of such museums can be obtained from the County Museums Officer, Taunton Castle, Taunton, Somerset

SAMPLES: A portion of an excavation context retained during excavation for further study and analysis

WATCHING BRIEF: A formal programme of observation and investigation conducted during any operation carried out for non-archaeological reasons with a specified area or site, where there is a possibility that archaeological deposits may be disturbed or destroyed. The programme will result in the preparation of a report and ordered **ARCHIVE**

FULL ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION: A programme of archaeological excavation involving the removal, full record and interpretation of archaeological deposits.

CONTRACTOR: The archaeological body commissioned to carry out the programme of archaeological works.

NOTE 1 It is the responsibility of the parish to arrange for the archaeological **WATCHING BRIEF** to take place. Details of professional archaeological contractors are published in the Institute of Field Archaeologists yearbook. A list of local consultant archaeologists is held by the Diocesan Registry. For further information apply to Mr R A Croft, Field Archaeologist, Environment and Property Department, County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY. (Tel. 01823 356089)

NOTE 2 Local Authority Archaeological Officers are:-

Somerset: Mr Robert Croft, Somerset CC, County Hall, Taunton TA1 4DY

Bath and North East Somerset: Mr Robert Sydes, B&NES Council, Trimbridge House, Trim Street, Bath BA1 2UP

North Somerset: Mr Vince Russett, Town Hall, Weston Super Mare, North Somerset BS23 1AE

Exmoor National Park: Mr Rob Wilson-North, Exmoor House, Dulverton, Somerset TA22 9HL