

24-26 September 2025

Valletta, Malta

EUROPEAN HERITAGE HEADS FORUM

19TH ANNUAL MEETING

EUROPEAN
HERITAGE
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FORUM



SOVRINTENDENZA
TAL-PATRIMONJU KULTURALI
SUPERINTENDENCE OF CULTURAL HERITAGE



24-26 September 2025

Valletta, Malta

Shaping our past and present

The use and relevance of the Valletta Convention for archaeological heritage management in addressing contemporary challenges

Marjolein Verschuur

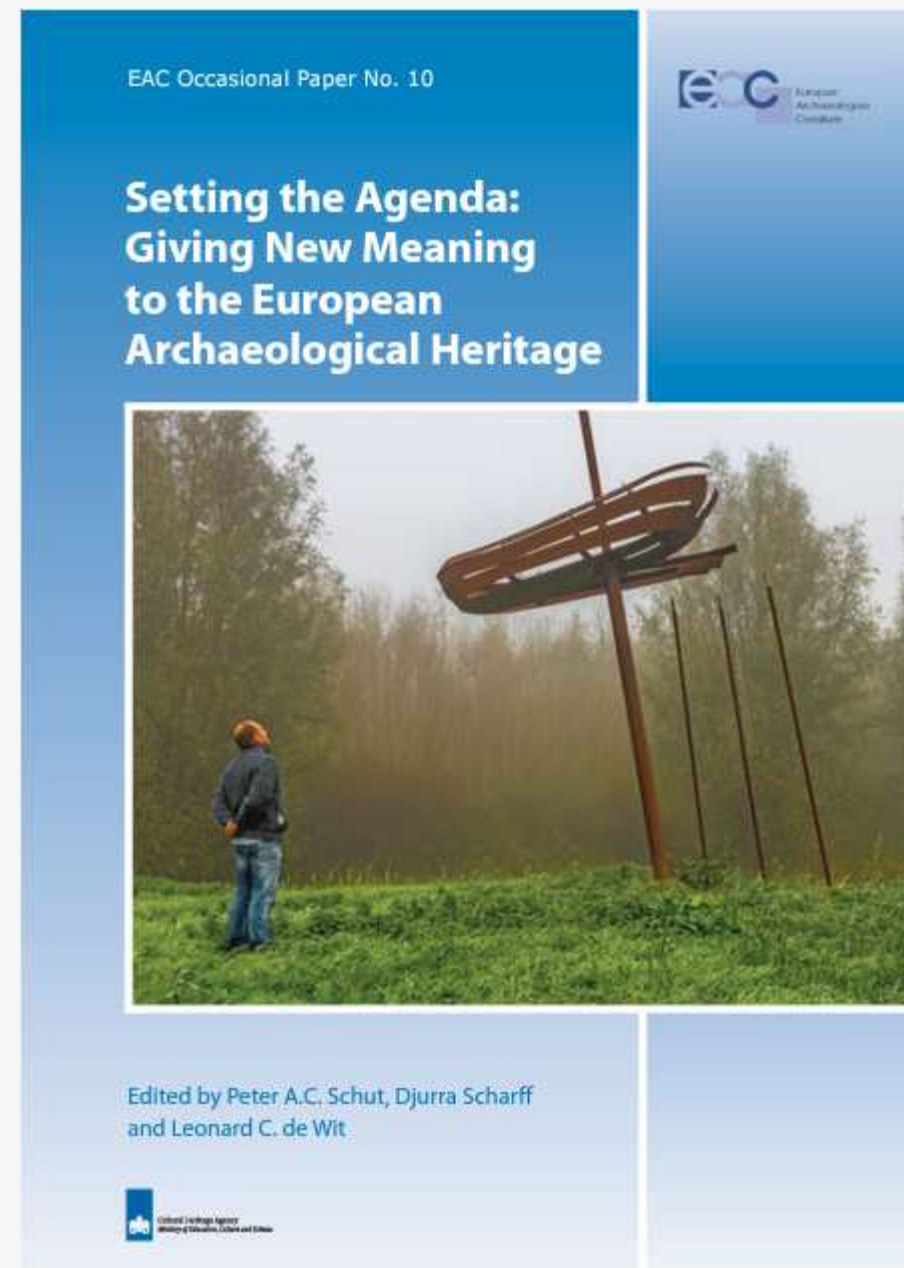
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“The vision of the EAC is that the management of Europe’s heritage includes archaeological heritage as a central component, recognising its value to society and economy, and that that heritage is afforded adequate protection as a source of the European collective memory, as an instrument for historical and scientific study, and as a catalyst for collaboration and inclusion.”



Amersfoort agenda

1. Embedding archaeology in society
2. The importance of conscious, explicit and transparent choices in archaeological heritage management.
3. Archaeological data management in the digital age.



EAC Occasional Paper No. 14



Development-led Archaeology in Europe
Meeting the Needs of Archaeologists,
Developers and the Public



Edited by Agnes Stefánsdóttir



Europae Archaeologiae Consilium
European Archaeological Council / Conseil Européen d'Archéologie
Managing Europe's Archaeological Heritage



HOMEANNUAL MEETINGSPUBLICATIONSWORKING GROUPSABOUT EACNEWSMore



26th EAC Annual Meeting
Gdańsk, Poland
27-29 March 2025

Life after life of archaeological archives –
accessibility and re-use of archaeological
collections in heritage management

<https://www.europae-archaeologiae-consilium.org/>

<u>Public Benefit of Development-led Archaeology</u>	<u>Archaeological Significance</u>	<u>Research Frameworks</u>	<u>Archaeological Archives</u>
<u>Remote Sensing</u>	<u>Making Choices</u>	<u>In translation</u>	<u>Archaeological Archives research</u>



<https://www.europae-archaeologiae-consilium.org/publications>

archives emergency implementing context
Faro pressure green conflict migration
historical measures future artificial intelligence cooperation prepare
impacts eroding preservation policies Valletta vital
follow-up qualification change knock role science accounting
preferred rebuilding building human remains connecting mediating
reporting ethical metal-detecting in situ entirety
media development-led now school zones mind cost expand
prices big data community planning high
bartering engagement groups cpd guidance surely
machine loss effects support scientific learning legislation might find guidelines europe
ukraine council spatial directive sites convention unite art gain good impact citizen
mapping landscape large people value metal-detecting damage place-making integrity
conservation storytelling treasures dialogue enabling data public youth helping
stretched shortages participation professional capacity
corporate becoming quality management climate problem environmental illegal
pro-active field specialisms gaps view without strong decision-making sharing
expected insurance deal improve climate procurement taught
disturb working membership

Archaeology as a source of European collective memory

Article 1.1

"The aim of this (revised) Convention is to protect the archaeological heritage as a source of the European collective memory and as an instrument for historical and scientific study.

Explanatory report

"By the use of scientific techniques, both destructive and non-destructive, the heritage can be used to provide information on the evolution of mankind in Europe, to serve "as a source of the European collective memory".

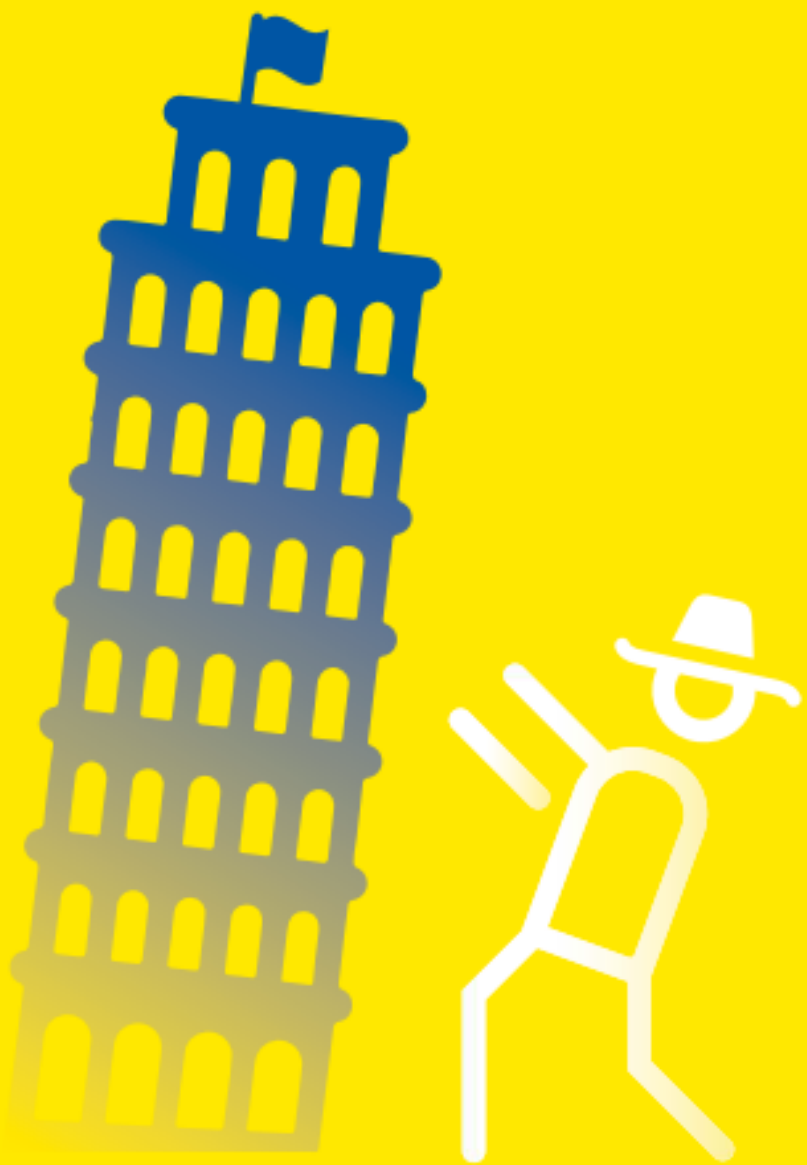
NEARCH

27%

OF EUROPEANS DECLARE
THAT THEY WANTED TO STUDY
ARCHAEOLOGY

38% IN FRANCE
34% IN SWEDEN

15% IN GERMANY
14% IN THE NETHERLANDS



46%

BELIEVE ARCHAEOLOGY MUST
UNDERTAKE THE STUDY AND
PROTECTION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE

ONLY 5%

THINK THAT ARCHAEOLOGY
CONTRIBUTES TO THE
CONSTRUCTION OF EUROPEAN
CITIZENSHIP

NEARCH



46%

THINK THAT ARCHAEOLOGY ALLOWS
A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF THE PAST,
AND THEREFORE BETTER PREPARATION
FOR THE FUTURE

40%

OF EUROPEANS BELIEVE ARCHAEOLOGY
CREATES BETTER UNDERSTANDING
OF OUR PLACE IN THE WORLD THROUGH
A SHARED PAST

50% IN SWEDEN

49% IN SPAIN

49% IN THE NETHERLANDS

45% IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

64%

OF EUROPEANS THINK
THE DISCIPLINE SHOULD
BE TAUGHT IN SCHOOL

85% IN GREECE

80% IN ITALY



73%

BELIEVE A CITIZEN SHOULD
HAVE SOME KNOWLEDGE
OF ARCHAEOLOGY

54%

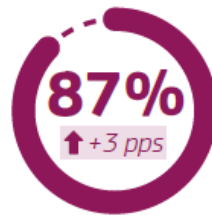
SAY ARCHAEOLOGY
IS A FIELD TO WHICH
THEY FEEL AN ATTACHMENT

63% IN FRANCE

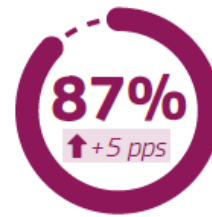
62% IN GREECE

62% IN SWEDEN

A majority of **Europeans agree that...**



Culture and cultural exchange should have a very important place in the EU so that citizens from different Member States **can feel more European**



Culture and cultural exchanges can play an important role in developing **greater understanding and tolerance** in the world, even where there are conflicts or tensions



The promotion of European cultures abroad is important for **building peaceful, diplomatic relations** between Europe and other countries



Young generations are also more likely than others to agree that living close to places related to Europe's cultural heritage give people a sense of belonging to Europe (83%)



Most Europeans view culture as **important to them personally**

Importance of...



... culture for you personally

79%



... cultural heritage for you personally

87%



... cultural heritage for Europe

86%

Europeans believe their country and the EU **should work more closely together** when it comes to... (TOP 5)



Making arts and culture **more accessible to everyone**

45%



Protecting cultural heritage sites during wars, natural disasters, or climate change

43%



Ensuring artists and cultural workers have **fair pay** and **good working conditions**

42%



Protecting **artistic freedom** and cultural rights

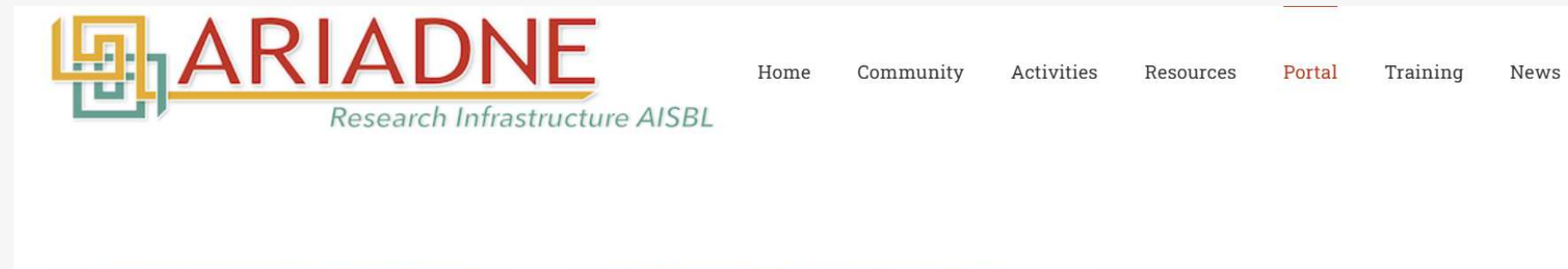
40%



Supporting artists and cultural workers to gain **new skills** for a changing world and business environment

33%

Connecting datasets



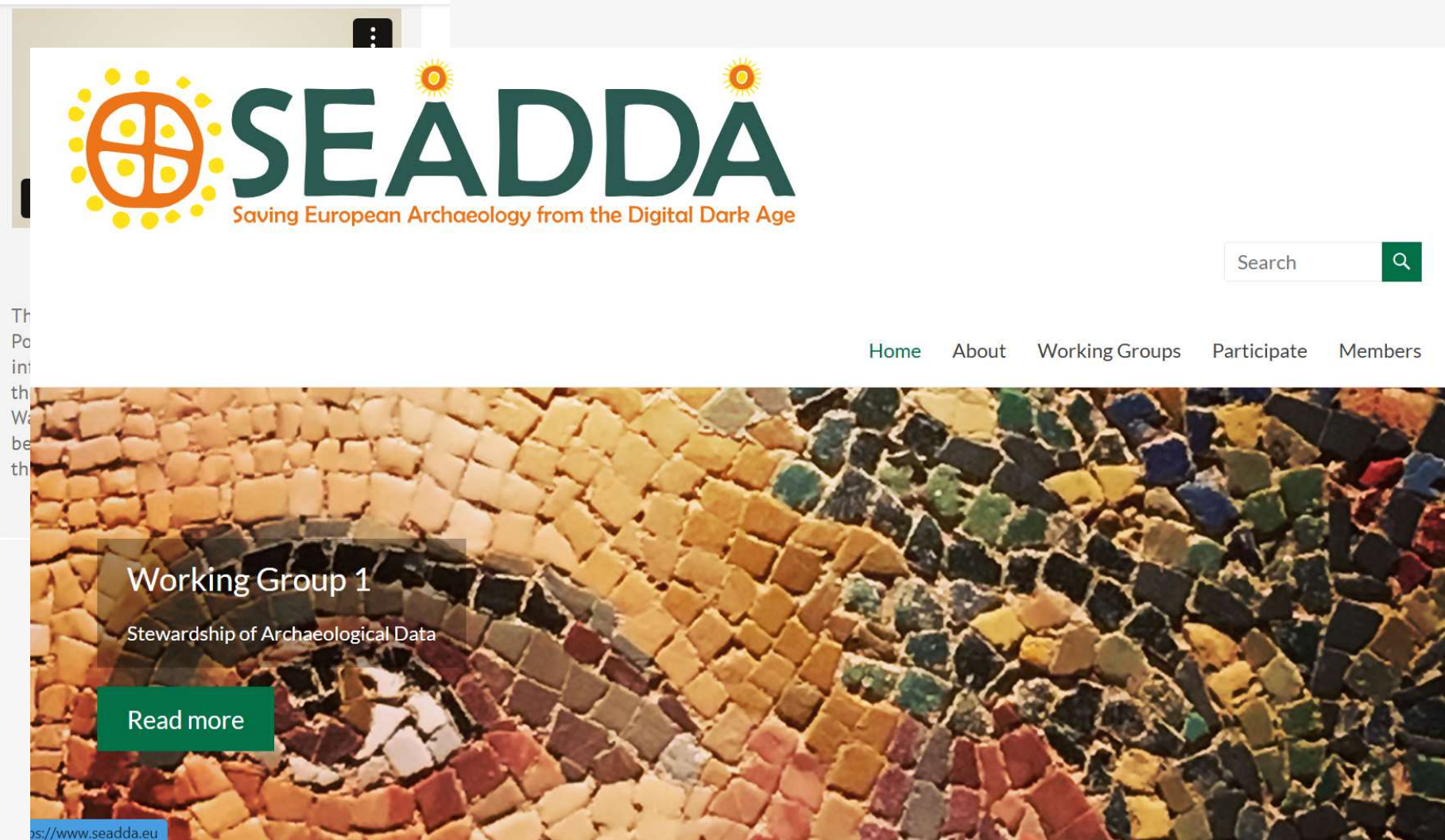
ARIADNE Catalogue

The ARIADNE Catalogue provides archaeological research datasets that researchers can browse and access for use in their projects. Several filters are provided to narrow down the results by properties such as location, time period, resource type and publisher, among others.



Services

The portal is also a point of access for services developed by ARIADNE for data management, processing and visualisation as well as vocabulary applications plus some more specialised services.



International cooperation



<https://rm.coe.int/strategy-21-archaeological-heritage-management-in-europe-in-less-than-/16808e9905>



ARCHAEOLOGICAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT IN EUROPE

EUROPEAN CULTURAL HERITAGE STRATEGY FOR THE 21ST CENTURY

In less than 1000 words...

Archaeological heritage management...

Through the study of our past, archaeology can be a source of inspiration and reflection for the present and the future.

To ensure that archaeological heritage can be of value for today's society and for future generations, archaeological heritage managers are charged with identifying, interpreting, protecting, conserving and presenting archaeological heritage. This responsibility includes shaping heritage management policy and is increasingly focussed on fundamental questions - Why do we want to protect, study or preserve something? For whom are we doing this? Who should be involved in the process? Answering such key questions can only be done in collaboration with other stakeholders, such as local government, developers, academics and researchers, commercial parties and most importantly, with the public.

... in Europe

Since its ratification, the **European Convention for the Protection of the Archaeological Heritage** (Council of Europe 1992) has had a significant impact on the way archaeology is organised in many European countries. Ratified by 46 countries the central aim of the 'Valletta Convention' is to ensure that archaeological heritage is protected as an instrument for scientific study and as a source of our collective memory. It encourages an integrated approach to archaeological heritage management and links archaeology to the spatial planning process with impacts to be funded by the developers. In most countries this has led to an increase in archaeological activity with fewer archaeological resources being lost without being recorded.

Another Convention that inspires and guides archaeological heritage management in Europe is the **Framework Convention on the Value of Cultural Heritage for Society** (Council of Europe 2005). Conventionally known as the Faro Convention, it focuses on the relationships between heritage and communities and society as a whole. Addressing themes such as intercultural dialogue, democratic participation and sustainable development, it brings an additional focus to the questions of why and for whom we should protect archaeological heritage.

The Amersfoort Agenda

The '**Amersfoort Agenda**' on the future of archaeological heritage management in Europe was launched in 2015. It provides a strategic vision for archaeological heritage management with a focus on specific themes to give the Valletta Convention renewed impetus and to achieve a stronger connection with the Faro Convention.

The Agenda reflects the need to reshape ideas and practice according to the reality of European archaeology and society in the 21st century as illustrated by several symposia on archaeological heritage in Europe (see **EAC Occasional Papers**) organized by the **European Archaeological Council**

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Dissemination and citizen science



THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT-LED ARCHAEOLOGY

Prepared by the 'Making the case for development-led archaeology' Working Group



1. Evidence of our shared history

Development-led archaeology can shape our understanding of the past and our shared history.

2. Stories of discovery

Archaeological discoveries create major news stories reaching large numbers of citizens.

3. Economic growth

Development-led archaeology directly contributes economic benefits to investors and communities

4. Sources of community pride

Development-led archaeology enhances communities.



© Elaine Wakefield, Essex Archaeology

THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT-LED ARCHAEOLOGY

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5. Reflective communities

Development-led archaeology contributes to communal reflection and understanding.

6. Lifelong learning

Development-led archaeology contributes directly to education at all stages of life.

7. Health and wellbeing

Development-led archaeology can improve people's physical and mental wellbeing.



The Hengist excavation team (2012) uncovering the oldest grave evidence in Styria: from the so-called Lasinja culture. © Kulturpark Hengist / Mrs Martina Trausner

THE BENEFITS OF DEVELOPMENT-LED ARCHAEOLOGY

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8. National Cultural Treasures

Development-led archaeology discovers and secures outstanding artistic or cultural treasures for permanent display to the public.

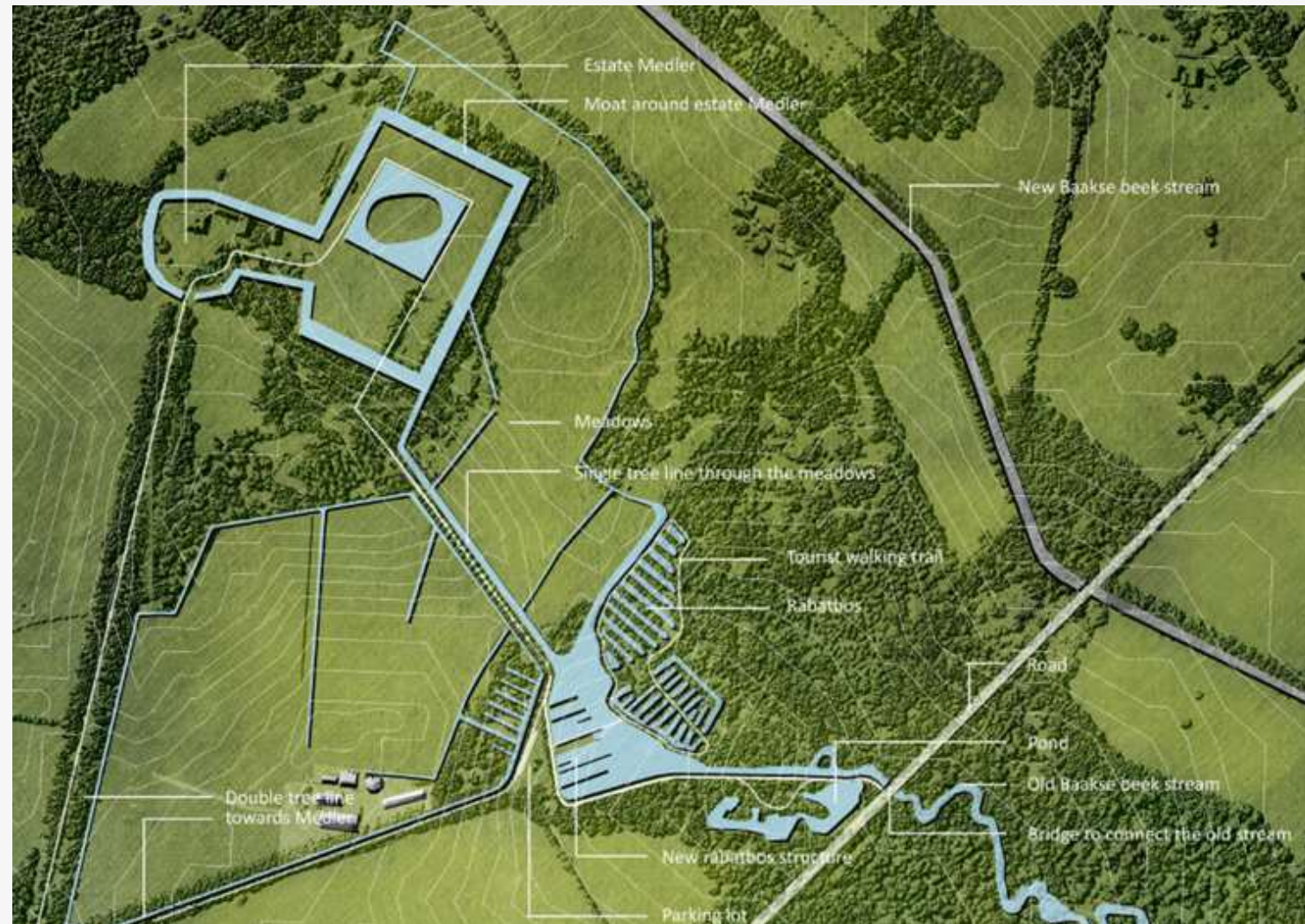
9. Scientific innovation

Development-led archaeology contributes directly to wider science and innovation in other disciplines and fields of study.

The site of the Black Death cemetery in 1987, with the Tower of London in the background. Photo: Peter Mills © MOLA.



Adressing current challenges

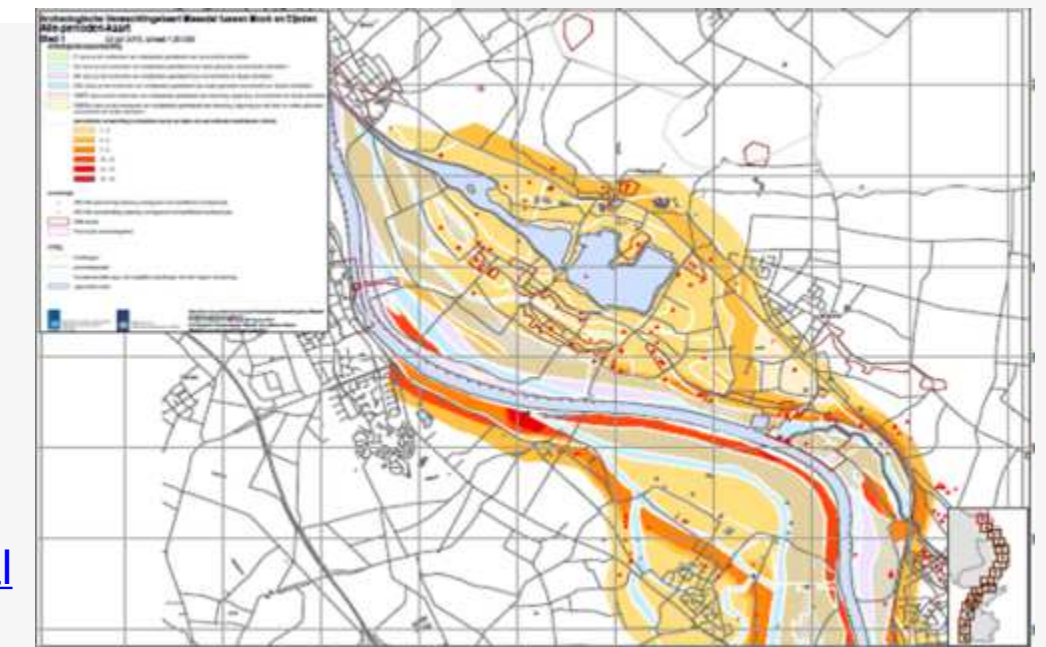


Historic Estate with possibilities for water storage (Image credit: Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed)



Mesolithic pollen diagram Well-Aijen (Image credit: ADC, Ball *et al.* [2018](#)), Roman wooden objects Velsen (Image credit: Lange [2021](#)), Iron Age valve culvert (Image credit: (T. de Ridder))

Predictive archaeological map of the River Meuse (Image credit: Rijksdienst voor het Cultureel Erfgoed, [Archeologische verwachtingskaart Maasdal tussen Mook en Eijsden](#))



Thank you !



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