

Careers in heritage

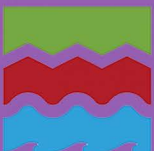
Factsheet

When you think about careers in heritage, you might think about archaeologists digging up treasure, or museums with stuffed animals in them, or even of running stately country houses or medieval castles.

It's true that there are those careers in heritage, and those will be covered in this factsheet. But perhaps what you didn't know is that there is an enormous range of other careers in heritage.

So if you're interested in heritage, whether you're into IT, science, history, prehistory, geography, art, architecture, construction, town and country planning, environment, engineering, teaching, sociology and communities, or materials science, there'll be a career in heritage for you. On the other hand, if it's not a career in heritage only that you're looking for, then you can include heritage in your career instead. That's something that many businesses and organisations choose to do.

There's a variety of ways of working towards your career in heritage too, and you don't need to go to university (although it does help for lots of careers).



Historic England

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Lincolnshire
COUNTY COUNCIL
Working for a better future

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Field Archaeology



Often employed by **private companies** and **consultancies**, or are **self-employed**.

Field archaeologist – being a field archaeologist is much more than digging, it's a technical job that needs all sorts of skills, such as surveying, photography and understanding stratigraphy. Jobs like these are often called **field archaeologist, site assistant, project manager**.

There are other field archaeology jobs and careers that don't involve excavation, such as **geophysicist**, and **landscape surveyor**.

Post excavation – much of the work in archaeology takes place after the work in the field has been completed.

There are lots of different roles, such as **Finds specialist** (someone who has specialist knowledge of the finds from sites, like flint tools, pottery, wooden and metal finds),

Mapping/GIS specialist (plotting and recording what's been discovered is vital – it allows everyone to be able to understand why a site is located where it is, and what is around it), **Report writer** (recording and sharing of results are important so anyone who wants to can learn about a site),

Environmental archaeologist (study of microscopic flora and fauna from on and around a site helps us to understand and reconstruct what the landscape and climate was like in the past), **Osteologist** (study of bones),

Conservator/materials scientist (understanding what objects are made of, and how they are made, and making sure that they don't decay any more than they already have).

Find out more on the **Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (CIFA)** website
<https://www.archaeologists.net/careers>

There are some really handy tips on how to get your first job in archaeology on the **British Archaeological Jobs Resource** website -
<http://www.bajr.org/Employment/getajob.asp>



Community Heritage



Often employed on a temporary basis while projects have funding, they can be employed by **Local Councils, local and national charities and trusts** and **individual heritage sites**.

Community archaeologist / Community heritage project manager - these roles can be hugely varied (which is what makes them so interesting and exciting), and often need lots of skills, like marketing, social media, customer care, understanding of how communities work, heritage skills, promoting ideas and persuading people who might not normally get involved to take part, budgeting and graphic design. Some people have careers in evaluating projects like these, to help people understand what worked for the project and what the lessons learned were.

The Lottery funds a lot of community heritage projects – check out their website to see what they have to say about community heritage - <https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/our-work/community-heritage>



Museums, Galleries and Archives



Often employed by **Local Councils**, **local** and **national charities and trusts** and **individual heritage sites**.

Museum curators – planning and delivering exhibitions, looking after collections from flint axes to Medieval art to 20th century clothes to photographs and sound recordings.

Conservator – this is someone who specialises in making sure that objects in collections are safe and not decaying. Take a look at the Prospects website for more information -

<https://www.prospects.ac.uk/jobs-and-work-experience/job-sectors/creative-arts-and-design/museum-jobs>

Archivist – Caring for historical documents and books held within county archives, also making them available to the public. Find out more on the Archives and Records Association website - <https://www.archives.org.uk/careers.html>

The British Museum runs the **Portable Antiquities Scheme** and helps to employ **Finds Liaison Officers** for almost every area in the country. In Lincolnshire the **FLO** is employed by the **County Council**. FLOs are specialists in identifying small archaeological objects that are found by members of the public, particularly metal detectorists, and recording the finds on a national database. You can search the database and find out more at <https://finds.org.uk/>



Managing and interpreting historic buildings and sites, including parks and gardens, like the **National Trust** <https://www.nationaltrustjobs.org.uk/> and **English Heritage** - <https://www.english-heritage.org.uk/about-us/jobs/>

Research

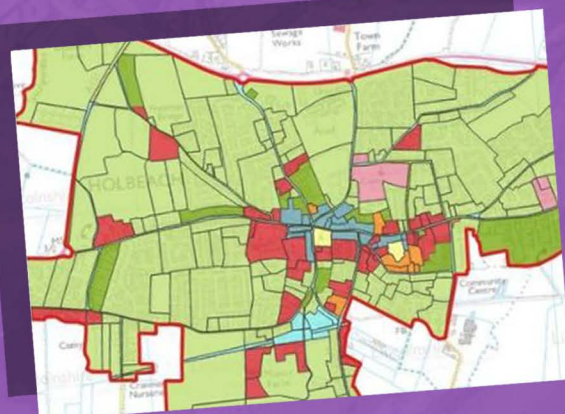
Often employed by **Historic England, Local Councils, Universities, local and national charities** and **trusts** or **self-employed**.

Researcher – carrying out projects across a really wide range of subjects and times – surveys, studies, primary research... it doesn't need to be heritage you can see or touch, it can be intangible, like folklore, dialects, traditional stories, people's memories of the past.

Characterisation of places, like the Extensive Urban Survey or Historic Landscape Characterisation – understanding over time how and why places become the way they are today – for more information see <https://www.lincsabout.town/> and <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/historic-environment/historic-landscape-characterisation>

Some other examples of careers like this are:

- Landscape archaeologist**
- Architectural historian**
- Art historian**
- Studying and teaching in Universities**



Historic buildings and traditional skills



Often employed by **private companies, consultancies**, and many are **self-employed**.

Buildings archaeologist – this is someone who can understand and explain how and why old buildings have been changed and adapted over the centuries.

Conservation Architect – this is an architect who specialises in understanding and working with old buildings, which are often built in very different ways to modern buildings.

Conservation Structural Engineer – they work with old buildings and structures to help us understand how they are put together, how we might be able to change them without causing them to collapse, and how we can best keep them standing.

Builder and other kinds of construction, specialising in traditional skills like thatching, stone masonry, mill wrights and others. Look out for apprenticeships to support learning these skills.

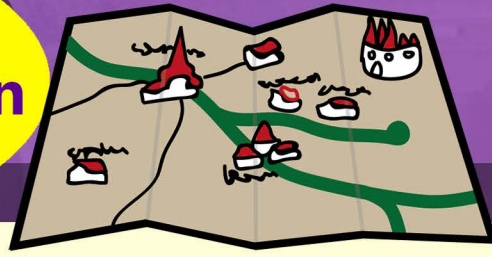
Heritage arts and crafts - creating art through traditional methods such as weaving, painting, pottery, glazing as well as many others.

<https://www.spab.org.uk/learning> is the place to go for information about learning about traditional skills. **SPAB** stands for **Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings**.

The Institute for Historic Building Conservation website has lots of useful advice:
<https://www.ihbc.org.uk/selfstarter/>



Historic Environment Advisers and Information Managers



Often employed by **Local Councils**.

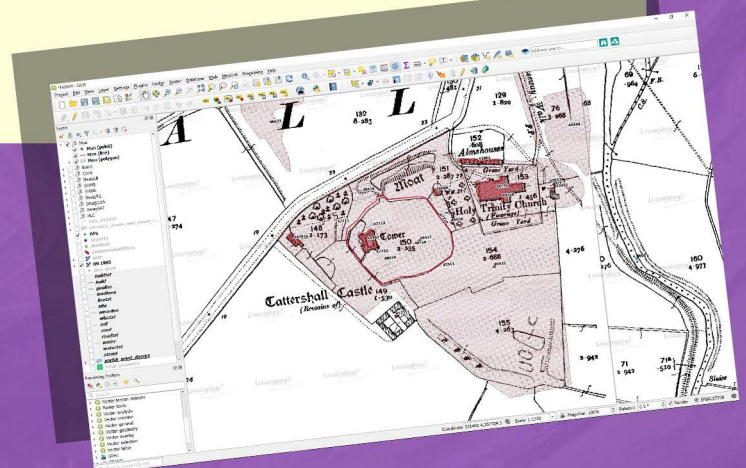
Conservation Officer – they give advice to anyone wanting to make changes to a building that is Listed (being Listed means that it is a historic building that is nationally important, and is protected by law) – see more at <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/historic-buildings-inspector-conservation-officer>

Archaeological advisers – they give advice on how best to protect heritage for all kinds of work that people want to do, such as in the countryside, landscapes, planning, the environment – sometimes known as **Historic Environment Officers**. The manager of the archaeological advisers is often known as the **County Archaeologist** – see more at <https://www.prospects.ac.uk/job-profiles/archaeologist>

Information management – looking after and sharing the huge amounts of heritage data there is across the country, particularly databases and digital mapping – for example the **Historic Environment Record (HER)**, where you will often find **HER Officers** and **HER Assistants**.

There's more information about what an **HER** is at <https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/technical-advice/information-management/hers/>

You can find out more about the **HER** in Lincolnshire at <https://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/historic-environment/historic-environment-record>



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Living History, Reconstruction, Digital and Experimental Archaeology



Often employed by **private companies**, or **self-employed**.

Reconstructing the past – **digital 3D reconstruction creator, VR programmer, gaming programmer, illustrator, experimental archaeologist.**

Experimental archaeologists will try out different ways of constructing and making things from the past to try and get a better understanding of how and why our ancestors did what they did.



Heritage Learning



Often employed by **Local Councils, local and national charities and trusts** and **individual heritage sites** (like Lincoln Cathedral).

Heritage learning managers – share your love of heritage and learning with all ages, in schools, museums, communities and online.

Find out all about careers in heritage learning at the **GEM** website - <https://gem.org.uk/careers/>



How to get into a career in heritage

A great way to learn about careers in heritage, and what is right for you, is to volunteer with heritage organisations. In Lincolnshire you could volunteer with the **County Council**, **Heritage Lincolnshire**, **Lincoln Cathedral**, **National Trust**, or a **local archaeological unit** amongst many others.

You could also try contacting the **Council for British Archaeology** for more information on volunteering in heritage- <https://new.archaeologyuk.org/> or join your local Young Archaeologist Club - <https://www.yac-uk.org/>

Lots of places across Lincolnshire have local heritage groups and heritage sites, and not just in the larger towns and villages. Check out your local area to see what voluntary groups and heritage sites are out there: they'll be really pleased to hear from you. There are also lots of societies that enjoy reconstructing periods or events in history, like the Sealed Knot.

If you're still at school or college, you might want to think about what your favourite subjects are, and what courses you're taking, and whether they will help you get the career in heritage that you want to do. It's always a good idea to take history if you can, but what else you choose to study depends on what career interests you the most.

If you're interested in going to university, always check what the entry requirements are before you apply. There are lots of really good courses on archaeology and history; museum studies and education; conservation of finds and buildings; at universities across the country, and many universities offer more specialised courses.

You don't have to go to university though; there are other training courses that could get you where you want to go. Apprenticeships are helping to get many people the career in heritage they want: for example they are particularly useful if you're interested in traditional construction skills. **Historic England** is now offering a range of apprenticeship schemes: <https://historicengland.org.uk/about/jobs/apprenticeships/>

There's some really helpful information on education and courses to help you get into heritage on the **BAJR** website - <http://www.bajr.org/BAJREducation/>

It's also true to say that there are lots of people in heritage careers who didn't decide straight-away what they wanted to do, and have changed direction as they find aspects of heritage that interest them, and learn new skills.

If you want to know more, talk to your teachers and careers advisers. There will be lots of resources and information that we haven't mentioned here, so do some investigation of your own into what is out there for you.

You could also try contacting someone who already does the job you're interested in doing, and ask them how they did it – they would be very happy to help!

