## Appendix J

## Amanda Bowens, Maritime Archaeology Trust

### Q1

Does the challenge of provision of access (physical, intellectual and cultural) dictate how you design maritime heritage programming?

Yes. Physical access to underwater and even foreshore sites can be harder to achieve for many audiences, though it is a barrier that can be overcome.

Physical access

The MAT's E&O programme has used a number of approaches to address the challenge of physical access. This has included active engagement, where people are taking an active role, such as recording/survey and passive engagement, through interpretation:

Providing/enabling physical access:

- providing physical access to protected sites through guided visits, under licence, to designated underwater sites (e.g. Pomone/Assurance).
- providing physical access to foreshore sites through facilitated site visits with volunteers and/or school/youth groups.
- providing on-site interpretation for divers (Dive Trails) to help divers recognise and understand sites (e.g. Alum Bay).
- Enabling physical access by teaching youths to dive, so they can visit and survey/record maritime heritage on the seabed (e.g. HLF Young Roots project).

All of the above require thorough planning, including risk assessment and are subject to factors entirely beyond our control, some of which are predictable (e.g. tides) while some are not (e.g. weather).

Providing/enabling virtual access:

- creating online site interpretation to enable people to undertake a 'virtual dive' (e.g. Londonier virtual dive [http://www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/mapguide/maps/a2s_mystery_wreck/main.php] , Braedale [http://www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/mapguide/maps/braedale/main.php], Invincible, Yarmouth Roads 3D [https://sketchfab.com/models/76cb1d4367f9408a972437f953b08843], West Wight's shipwrecks: http://www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/sunkenmap, Hamble River's archaeology Map View: http://www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/hamblesites , Atlas of the 2 Seas Geoportal of maritime sites in Europe: http://www.a2s-geoportal.eu/#/welcome ) from their PC or mobile device
- creating near-site interpretation in the form of information boards at coastal locations and electronic 'signposting' for mobile devices (e.g. Isle of Wight Wikitude http://www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/shipwreckapp ) creating Audio guides

and articles for people to listen to on/near-site or at home – providing information and interpretation about maritime sites (http://www.maritimearchaeologytrust.org/podcasts) creating videos for online access via YouTube and for showing in the Maritime/Discovery Bus

Intellectual access

The MAT E&O programme aims to be accessible by all, irrespective of age, background and real or perceived barriers to access. This can largely be about use of appropriate language and frames of reference and recognising that the language that is commonly used in stakeholder and academic circles is not very accessible for many audiences.

In addition, for underwater sites, many people will not have had the opportunity to see them, first hand, or even via video/photo/model. There is, therefore, quite a lot of work that needs to be done in the interpretation, so people can understand what it is they are looking at in terms of the heritage and the marine environment in which it sits.

Cultural access

Issue of relevance: despite being an Island nation, much of the UK's population does not have a direct link with their maritime heritage: often they can't see it, perhaps they aren't even aware it's there, it doesn't enable them to do anything, or stop them from doing anything, so it's often not on people's radar. Inland communities can have more of a disconnect; people vising the Maritime Bus often say, with an apologetic tone 'we don't live near the sea' and suggest that they feel maritime heritage is, therefore, not relevant for them.

We want people to know that maritime heritage exists, that it can tell us about our past, that this is important in terms of understanding, preparing and informing current and future planning and decisions and for people to help protect it, through their own actions, and/or influencing others. However, in our attempts to achieve this, we must take all of the above into account, so yes, the challenge of provision of access (physical, intellectual and cultural) does dictate how we design our E&O programme.

## Q2

Do you believe access to maritime heritage is being/can be provided at the same level as terrestrial heritage?

No, we can't take everyone to underwater sites to see them first hand but, given appropriate resources, we can take many. Virtual access, facilitated by improving and more affordable technologies is providing more opportunities for improving 'virtual' access however.

## Q3

What is the perceived effect of public fascination with 'treasure hunting' on the perception of maritime archaeology?

Perceived public fascination with treasure hunting results in biased reporting and a media emphasis on treasure and monetary value. This has a negative impact in a number of ways. It means that sites which have no monetary value but do have an interesting story to tell, are often overlooked by the media. It can be hard to attract media interest when there is no 'treasure' angle (or 'lost world', or 'oldest in the world' etc.). This in turn can result in a public perception that there are only a few wrecks out there and they're only of interest in terms of their monetary value.

Of course, there's the danger that this assumption (public fascination with treasure) becomes selffulfilling and it ends up being all that the media report and all the public are aware of!

## Q4

What do you believe is the most effective way to change public perception through engagement?

- By counterbalancing the media bias with information and examples of a diverse ranges of sites that tell us a whole range of different things.
- By providing virtual access to sites that the majority of people cannot easily visit.
- Through hands-on interaction with artefacts from underwater sites: including a range of different materials and artefacts from different periods, that had different uses.
- By meeting the public in their own 'back yard'

The multi-sensory, tactile and in-the-community based approach in the last two bullet points above can be the most effective. The public react very well to being able to hold ancient stone tools, a mammoth's tooth, twisted metal that was once a German bomber, 8,000 year old string and burnt hazelnuts etc.

## Q5

How do you think the messages being delivered by public access initiatives are being perceived/received?

General public outreach: people are generally surprised by the information we are disseminating through our public access initiatives (e.g. existence of submerged prehistoric landscapes, scale and extent of conflict heritage in the seas, evidence of historic trade and technology etc.). For the majority, it seems to be new information that they weren't previously aware of and they seem pleased to have been made aware of it. There is an apparent intrinsic enjoyment from learning.

Further to this, there is also a strong public appetite for active public involvement, through research, recording, survey etc. The number of people willing to volunteer in maritime heritage seems to be increasing. Some of these are students seeking experience for a future

career and it certainly feels like there are growing numbers of people or retirement age (often early retirement) prepared to invest their time in this type of activity.

### Q6

How are practicalities (national interest, targeting audiences, funding & staffing) affecting aims & delivery of public programming?

Very significantly, with the root being funding. Without funding, you can't support staff to devise, create and deliver outreach. The funding will influence the target audiences that the funders want to reach and often, national interest influences what funding is available (e.g. national/international focus on First World War centenary has resulted in increased amounts of money from HLF and other funding bodies, for FWW focused projects). The nature of the target audience will affect the content, language and means of delivery for an outreach programme. Funding is generally on a project by project basis. It is therefore relatively short-term (6 months – 4 years) at a time and each project has its own set of monitoring, reporting and administrative conditions and methods. This can mean retaining staff can be hard because towards the end of a project, individuals are having to apply for their next job and project delivery pressures tend to restrict applications for future projects, so having the next project lined up when a previous project comes to an end is difficult.

### Q7

How do you design engagement initiatives?

There is an ongoing process of successfully delivering projects, while looking to the future and devising new engagement initiatives. The practicalities discussed above means that a process of trying to ally messages and models we would like to promote, with priorities of funders, is necessary. Where common ground between a funder/funding stream and the aspirations and abilities of the Trust exists, we will work within this framework to devise a public engagement project. Ideas for new projects and initiatives can come from anyone in the Trust. Often, a brainstorming process, involving a number of staff members and experiences from previous projects (what has/hasn't worked), is employed. Sometimes an individual will have an idea and will take it forward themselves. For larger projects, there tends to be a group who put the project idea and application together, consulting with other staff members as appropriate and practical.

### Q8

How do you evaluate your engagement initiatives?

We undertake quantitative and qualitative evaluation for funders and to inform future projects. Evaluation attempts to demonstrate impact; to show what difference this project is making. This will generally be considered in terms of:

- Impact for different audiences (in terms of access, exposure, involvement, learning etc.)
- Impact for heritage (in terms of increased profile, changed public behaviour, levels of protection etc.)

NB more thorough reflection is generally prevented by practical pressures cited above (i.e. always looking to next project).

Q9
What makes engagement successful?

When it affects change for the positive. E.g. people knowing things they didn't know before and telling others about it, people following-up with further research and/or asking more questions,

active engagement through volunteering (not necessarily with us, though that would be nice!), seeking (or undertaking) the promotion, interpretation and/or protection for maritime heritage through their own actions or lobbying others.

Q10
Do you feel that the public is willing and interested in engaging with maritime heritage?

Yes, this is certainly true for particular demographics. There are hard-to-reach and underrepresented audiences however.

Q11
Who is delivering these initiatives?

A range of project officers with a mix of archaeological, educational and/or historic research backgrounds.

Q12

How do you believe your background has helped prepare you to deliver engagement programming?

I don't do much of the front line delivery these days, being more involved with project applications and management. My background includes academic studies in archaeology and maritime archaeology, training sports divers in maritime heritage approaches and techniques and nonheritage training & resource creation in a range of different contexts (voluntary sector, youth, language, sports etc.). I think that working (employed and voluntary) in these different sectors helps develop an understanding of diversity and the different approaches required for different audiences. It enables you to make links between the academic and non-academic worlds: helping to translate information and messages for public audiences.

Q12
How do you think engagement programming has changed since you became involved in it?

There are fewer funding streams available and more competition for those that are left. This means that some engagement activity is not possible and it can result in the loss of staff who have developed significant skills and experience. On the more positive side, our Discovery Bus has made outreach in the community easier, as it contains resources and materials that can be driven anywhere and in exhibition mode, it becomes a platform/venue from which we can undertake public outreach.

Q13
What do you believe your role is in heritage management?

To help people of all ages and backgrounds recognise the existence and nature of their maritime heritage so they can enjoy it, learn from it and hopefully play an active role in protecting it for future generations.

Q14
Do you consider yourself an archaeologist or an educator?

A bit of both.

Q15
Do you believe your work is for the benefit of archaeology or the public?

Both (see answer to how I see my role in heritage management).

Q16
Why do you believe we are engaging with the public?

If by 'we' you mean maritime archaeologists – I believe we are engaging with the public because it's our duty to do so. i.e. to disseminate the results of our research – if we don't do this, we have to question why we are doing the research at all. It is becoming increasingly recognised that heritage has social and economic benefits for communities and maritime heritage is no exception to this but can often be less visible, so can require a bit more effort to bring it to the public's attention. In addition to raising the profile of the resource, so it can be recognised, understood and enjoyed by the general public, we are hoping to encourage the public to help protect and preserve the resource for current and future generations. This can only be done through engagement.

Q17
How do you think we have arrived at this point in heritage engagement?

We benefit from decades of work of those who have come before us, trialled different approaches, often in different social, economic and cultural contexts and provided a foundation for us to build on.

Q18
If you could design a public access initiative with no concern over any mitigating issues, what would you design?

Not quite sure what you mean by 'mitigating issues' but if 'blue sky' in the sense that money/logistics etc. is no issue, I would take people in easily manoeuvrable "glass" submarines to see archaeological sites in our seas, lakes and rivers. Sometimes archaeologists would be at work on the site and we can watch and explain what is taking place and why. There would be a small laboratory on the submarine and samples from the

site (passed, via an air-lock by the divers to those inside the submarine) could be examined and recorded using a variety of techniques, there and then. Trips offered, free of charge, to diverse audiences.

Q19

How would you implement this initiative?

Blue sky thinking? – I'd pay someone to do it!

Q20

What do you think needs to change in order for an initiative like this to happen?

Very significant initial and ongoing financial investment.

Why would this be your ideal approach?

This form of public engagement would enable us to reduce what is, for many, one of the major barriers of access to maritime heritage. By taking people to see the archaeology in situ, and by being able to easily explain what they are seeing, they would gain a thorough understanding of the marine environment, the heritage within it and the methods and challenges of working in this environment. The next time they look at the surface of the sea or lake, they will be able to more easily imagine what lies beneath.