

## **Notes from visit to Mike Rains, York Archaeological Trust and VRE1 Silchester project technical lead**

*9<sup>th</sup> March 2007*

Attending: Mike Rains, Chris Awre, Jim Farmer

Re: the relationship between the York Archaeological Trust (YAT) and the University, individuals have links, though there is no formal relationship. This includes no formal link between YAT and the Archaeology Data Service (ADS) other than as a user. The ADS exists as a propagator of standards and best practice for archaeological data and these are used as required within YAT and the VRE1 Silchester project (albeit with interpretation).

The VRE1 project has stuck to its own standards in the main. The Silchester project overall (going back over 10 years) developed the IADB (Integrated Archaeological Database) for its own internal information management. This captures all aspects of the project, and the structure has since been picked up by other projects, making it a standard of its own within archaeological research. The underlying technology is MySQL and PHP/Javascript, i.e., built using open source tools wherever possible.

Many other web standards are used by default and have been picked up over time (e.g., HTML, DHTML, XHTML, XML), and have mostly been produced as output from the SQL. They have also used SVG for vector graphics display, again deriving the data from the SQL. Some data is converted for use with this standard. PDF is also used extensively.

A recent innovation has been the use of digital photography to produce digitised plans of digs. The main issue here is one of over-doing the photos, without any due selection in the process. JPEG and TIFF are used generally to manage photos, these industry standards being chosen due to available technology and software. Overall, the choice of technologies is rational according to need, and needs often include having to serve a wide range of users.

Re: GIS, it is recognised that what they do within the Silchester project is GIS, though the IADB is certainly not a GIS system as this is defined and sold commercially. It is recognised that there are ongoing issues with geo-standards generally.

CA April 2007