SCOTLAND'S
ROCK ART
PROJECT

Research Workshops outcomes

The Scotland's Rock Art Project (ScRAP) ran two research workshops in November 2019 focusing on specific themes relevant to the project's objectives, methods and outcomes. The workshop themes were as follows:

Workshop 1. Research approaches to rock art

- Session 1: Theoretical approaches to rock art research
- Session 2: Digital approaches to rock art research

Workshop 2. Social value and community engagement

- Session 1: Social value
- Session 2: Community engagement

The aim of the workshops was to provoke wide-ranging and stimulating discourse around each of the specified themes. Each workshop involved around 35 invited academics, practitioners and community team participants whose research interests intersect with and augment those of the project.

The workshops were informal, and discussion based. Both comprised two sessions, each structured around a keynote talk, followed by provocative questions posed by three or four early career researchers or more established academics, and discussions around the issues presented by each provocateur.

The discussions were audio-recorded and synthesised into a readable format that captures the texture of the dialogue, organised under headings that reflect the key issues discussed.

This document focuses on Research Workshop 2.

The Scotland's Rock Art Project (2017-2021) is funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council, and hosted by Historic Environment Scotland in collaboration with Edinburgh University and Glasgow School of Art. For more information about the project please see our website: www.rockart.scot.

Arts & Humanities Research Council

HISTORIC ENVIRONMENT SCOTLAND | ÀRAINNEACHD EACHDRAIDHEIL ALBA

SCHOOL OF SIMULATION AND VISUALISATION THE GLASGOW SCHOOL OF ART

Research Workshop 2: Social Value and Community Engagement

Saturday 23 November 2019, Edinburgh University

Session 1. Social Value

The first session of the second research workshop focused on social value, led by a keynote address by **Sian Jones** (Stirling University). This considered the development of social value as a concept in a heritage context, its definition and how it is generated, the policy framework within which it operates, its place within a typology of heritage 'values' and the challenges to its inclusion in heritage practice and research.

The session was attended by approximately 35 participants.

First discussion

The first discussion took place in reaction to the following provocations:

- **Liz Robson** (Stirling University): 'There is no such 'thing' as social value', which considered absences and tensions between values, and questions of divergence and diversity, with specific reference to graffiti.

- **Katie Mills** (Manchester University): 'Can weather add value to visitor experiences of stone heritage?' which examined the ways in which decay, weather, seasonality and vegetational change can influence visitor experience and sensations of value.

Discussion overview

The discussion considered the long-standing and continuing tradition of graffiti in heritage contexts, representing a subversive and sometimes defiant form of engagement, and which is often considered as malicious damage. There was a debate on the distinctions drawn between historical and modern interventions, and the extent to which some action is considered permissible whilst other action is not; noting that graffiti, in particular, does not exist without a social context and sometimes specific moral imperatives. The importance of weather – and, more generally, an outdoor setting – in the construction of meaning in heritage contexts was deliberated. Weather was seen as affecting the understanding of not only archaeological sites, but also, in some cases, replicas in the landscape. There was discussion around the differences in experience when engaging with digital models on the one hand and, on the other, with archaeology in the field. It was noted that the act of recording a site, and of recording reactions to it, produce and crystallise values that can become entrenched in our perceptions.

The following specific points were made:

Are formal heritage processes valorising some narratives of place and potentially negating or perpetuating the absence others? How might we enable wider participation and incorporate previously under-represented perspectives in our work (and what are the implications of doing so)? How do we respond to divergence, diversity and conflicting understandings and values?

- What is the difference between modern graffiti, and historical graffiti, which is often valued as a heritage resource, and when does 'historical' become 'modern'? In some contexts there seems to be a cut-off at a point in the 20th century, although associative considerations were also important. Graffiti which is modern now will probably be considered in a different way in 100 years. Should modern graffiti on rock art be removed/covered up, perhaps to

discourage copycat graffiti, or should otherwise underrepresented perspectives with respect to modern graffiti at a rock art site be engaged with and represented?

- Graffiti is part of the social value context in which people are actively engaging, and is sometimes deliberately antagonistic to values they see others hold. The motivations are important, as is understanding that it is participatory process.
- At a number of rock art and other sites there are examples of modern intervention, such as people chipping their marks or adding names or other writing to stone. Strategies can be designed to attempt to control this; however, it often represents an act of subversion, so it will happen whether it is thought of as socially problematic or not.
- Graffiti is part of a continuing tradition lasting thousands of years. Whether it is condoned or not, it is a fascinating response to these sites, and a valuable part of the heritage that we need to understand and incorporate into the record of these sites, and how we understand their social value.
- Heritage professionals do not 'own' these places, although allowed to interact with them in a way that others are not. Graffiti has been used as a mark of resistance against the 'Disneyfication' of rock art sites. There is a conversation to be had about which people are allowed to mark-make in certain contexts.
- Is it possible that the original rock cut marks were themselves originally an act of subversion?
- Graffiti can also simply be seen as malicious defacing of something known to be considered of value.
- Understanding the motivation for graffiti helps situate behaviours that may seem irrational or unacceptable in a contested space. Although the graffiti community is not one homogeneous group, there are moral imperatives within groups around where it is acceptable or unacceptable to write.
- There is a discussion about what is defined as 'heritage' and who gets to define it and which things are valued. Although some communities struggle for recognition, in other situations there can be resistance to being categorised as a community so that definition should be approached carefully.

What tangible and intangible aspects of stone heritage are important?

- The issue of weathering and the relationship, from a landscape perspective, with other agents is fascinating. The removal of biological growth – such as for rock art recording – is potentially problematic for a variety of ecological and ethical reasons.
- Should cup-and-ring marks be renewed so that erosion is countered?
- On the topic of re-carving, in Australia, aboriginal people go back to re-carve rock art, and to repaint paintings. Although in Western Europe the communities which produced rock art no longer exist, there are examples of those in charge of sites wishing not to have natural growth removed.
- We work with people who have replicas within their area of interest, and the weathering process is important in starting to make them feel more authentic.
- One trait that people value in replicas is the sense of age value and authenticity they develop over time in the landscape. There is value in having a digital model which can be experienced throughout the year, but the individual, repeated experience of visiting is also connected with people's own identity and memories.
- The process of recording and photogrammetry fixes, privileges and, to an extent, objectivises a particular experience in the landscape; however, the panel when visited is

never the same as in the digital record. How can the perspectives of atmosphere, weather, change, sociability when visiting a site be included in the archive of a project like ScRAP?

- Perhaps it should not be an aim to capture these different experiences of visiting a panel as these are specifically personal reactions to a site. There is a danger of raising people's expectations about value of what they should feel about the rock art, whereas they should be able to experience that themselves. Providing a template on which to build their experience is more important, for example through photogrammetry which at least has a claim to objectivity.
- There is an exclusive nature in experiencing features in the landscape, particularly with carved stone where some features may only be visible at certain times of year. Digital technology enables this to be seen throughout the year, and also makes them more visible to the general population.
- It can be difficult to locate panels, and sometimes these have been covered by people for protection. What are the ethics behind these decisions, and who has the right to decide what is covered? This rock art has existed for thousands of years and has a seasonality/patina of its own.

Is there value in visiting stone heritage situated within the landscape, in the changing seasons and weathers? How do atmospheric encounters and sensations of awe feed into meaning-making at heritage sites?

- Prehistoric monuments have attracted artists who painted them in extreme weather, which may themselves attract people to visit, and in this way weather, through the mediation of art, can add value to heritage sites.
- Research covering the removal of carved stones into a museum setting has revealed that, although people valued the protection, and the interpretive setting, at the same time there was a feeling that there was a dislocation in the sense of authenticity, and that they should be out in the weather and under the sky as integral part of the wider world.
- The importance of intangible dimensions, such as weather, are also seen in some East Asian cultures where weather is part of sense of place and the sense of belonging. As part of the research there should be more emphasis on how to bring out those intangible elements.
- The late 18th/early 19th century romantic, picturesque, sublime and ultimately ideological and culturally-constructed values are still the ones that we hold to today, and remain privileged. What are the new aesthetics that occur from encountering the rock in a digital age?
- Weather already affects data capture in the field, if not explicitly acknowledge: fine weather may be likely to produce a longer and potentially more accurate record, whereas wet weather may have the opposite effect.
- It is important for posterity to record different sites in different contexts, including different weather conditions. When writing for publication, the weather is part of the writer's assessment, and evidence should be given to support that position. Not everyone will have the opportunity to visit a site, so how evidence is gathered and interpreted is significant in allowing alternative opportunities to experience and engage with a site, including the weather.
- Implicit professional decisions taken in how work is presented should be made more explicit, and the idea that once something is recorded, it is fixed, should be resisted. These are dynamic processes, and plural experiences.
- Recording itself is productive of value, and creates a particular type of vision and ways of understanding, which largely privileges the visual characteristics of the site.

Second discussion

The second discussion took place in reaction to the following provocations:

- **Chiara Bonacchi** (Stirling University): 'Networked individualism in digital heritage', which looked at social value generated in online environments in a heritage context.

- **Yang Wang** (Glasgow University): 'The social inclusive nature of the emotional bonds between people and the historic environment', which presented work on examining and mapping emotional attachments to the historic environment encountered in our daily lives.

Discussion overview

The discussion considered the varied ways in which different online groups function, and the extent to which they reflect real life communities. The potential of digital innovation to play a role in capturing people's experience of and value for heritage sites was considered, as was the opportunity for using digital tools to include more qualitative and well as quantitative material in research, and for a mixed approach to research using both online and offline interaction. The role of digital technology in allowing different, and previously exclusive, interactions with heritage both in private and at a distance was noted, and the potential for insights into social connections and new ways of examining what constitutes a 'community' in this context were discussed. The discussion also encompassed thoughts on the ways in which social value is created and identified, with different values accorded different status in practice, and research design affecting what information is gathered by way of a social value response.

The following specific points were made:

How do we understand and assess increased 'connectedness' with one's social environment as a result of online engagement?

- There is a difference between crowdfunding and crowdsourcing: crowdfunding represents a stronger tie to a community or a specific place, often reflecting an offline community defined by place; crowdsourcing tends to be a group which is loosely tied and exists only online.
- Considering the values which may intersect with social value, such as cultural and economic values and sustainability, there is a social dimension to crowdfunding in the economic power which can be mobilised, and which may, at a grass roots level, affect political change or decision-making.
- There is a very specific distinction between a crowdsourcing group and an online community. Crowdsourcing represents a group with weak ties, which comes together for a social purpose, and social meaning comes through contributing to something the individuals in the group see as meaningful, and provides a sense of accomplishment. The connection between them is represented through that contribution. Online communities are more tightly knit, and not only to carry out specific tasks together, but also to exchange views and discuss values surrounding their activities.
- Some heritage managers use Trip Advisor when looking at redesign of heritage experiences, to get a more organic response to how sites are being utilised.
- It is hard to gather data on how people use, experience or value heritage sites and digital innovation is one possible way forward.
- Using a methodology of 'emotional GIS' emotional attachment can be identified and mapped, by mapping where participants live and how they interact with different places.

This kind of online participation not only collects mapping data, which is potentially useful for policy makers, but also by applying spatial analysis, clustering or spatial regression can be analysed. Social conditions can also be included as deprivation shapes people's travel, and thus engagement with historic places.

- Online research of emotional attachment to place can be combined with other methodologies, such as interviews to reveal different insights and explore themes emerging from online survey. Thus, an underlying hypothesis can be produced in the first stage of research, which then allows the examination of the deeper, lived and embodied experiences.
- Where research has highlighted new values, in relation to digital heritage or emotional connections, how can these influence the decision-making process for policy makers?
- It is crucial to try to integrate the qualitative and the quantitative. The quantitative creates only a partial rendering of a situation, but along with the qualitative aspect can give another dimension, which can feed into policy making.

How do we better account for individual and personal enjoyment as a dimension of social value? Individualised attachment versus shared value.

- On question of the individual versus the collective, with graffiti communities, online interaction mirrors offline interaction; with other groups there is a purely online interaction, but with points of commonality understood. With some projects, however, there is rather a collective of individual actions. To what extent is that therefore a community?
- There is a constituency which wants to engage with heritage privately rather than communally. Heritage professionals are privileged in their opportunity to engage with heritage in a deep and meaningful way; allowing other people to interact with it privately, via online platforms, opens that up to another constituency.
- Information gathered forms anthropological datasets, taking place in the ethnographic present, which will change and cannot be indicative of anything else other than that. If digital engagement is considered as a sort of multi-sited ethnography, as in George Marcus's work on hyper-disparate anthropological communities, would that be a stream to tap into when thinking about what is the 'community'?

Attachment is changing, fluid and adaptable. Attachment is not necessarily engagement.

- Attachment to place, and sensorial experience, are not captured by or reflected in the dots and polygons of GIS. Should the way in which heritage knowledge is constructed be reconsidered?
- Mapping can be a way of transferring qualitative data into something spatially rendered, and which planners are more focussed on. In conversations about social capital, social value or emotional attachment, more emphasis is put on the 'social' side; however, this also always represents a geographical location, so the spatial dimension should not be overlooked. It can generate new insights into social connections, which may be affected by variables, such as distance and location.
- Both the potential for the instrumentalisation of heritage and the top-down presentation of heritage should be dealt with carefully. People's engagement with particular monuments does not necessarily reflect the expectation of heritage professionals.
- The demographic of local city associations tends to be older people; but younger people also show their love for local places. Online and digital applications can be used to talk to young people about history and help them engage, in particular those in more deprived areas.

Social value, authorised discourse, and the production of value

- If data are collected then they are available for the future. For example, if a multi-vocal reaction to a rock art site is recorded and then, for example, there is a later proposal to build a wind farm at that site, at least a record is in place to assess the impact of the development.
- We should guard against separating out an ethnographic present from the unfolding social and material relationship with these places. If we engage in ethnography, it concretises an ongoing biography and that has a potential impact in the future. Future actions, for instance building developments at a site, are part of its unfolding dynamic; however, so are the acts of heritage managers or other aspects of recording, such as ScRAP. All these actions create value.
- The authorised heritage framework is productive of value: what are the benefits flowing from such a framework? If these are not important to people in general, to what extent are the things they do care about being considered? What is being prioritised when it comes to the 'social' part of social value? In some situations values are considered as hierarchical, and some values are accorded more weight than others.
- There are different approaches to identifying social value. For instance, ACCORD was different to ScRAP in that there was co-design from the outset, and the community were asked to identify sites of significance to them, rather than being asked to help record sites identified by professionals.
- Community engagement is often geographically specific, but can also encompass rather a particular category of monument – such as rock art – rather than a geographic area. What is key is how these types of value interact with policy. Is it possible that a kind of jeopardy is being created and that, once social value has been captured, it becomes difficult for policymakers to ignore? If so, it is important that we make sure that what we capture is 'real'. There is a value to people in doing, and in engaging. However, the act of engaging and recording is also a way for the community to intervene in something which the planning or heritage authorities may not think is significant, but which is thereafter difficult to ignore.

Session 2. Community Engagement

The second session of the second research workshop focussed on community engagement, led by a keynote address by **Gavin MacGregor** (York Archaeological Trust). This considered the demands and responsibilities of delivering effective and meaningful community engagement, and what this means for future practice more widely in the heritage sector.

The session was attended by approximately 35 participants.

First discussion

The first discussion took place following a provocation by **Suzie Thomas** (University of Helsinki): 'What social values emerge when heritage is difficult or contested?', using the example of a community-owned WWII Prisoner of War camp to examine issues surrounding heritage and social values in a context of difficult, painful or controversial heritage.

Discussion overview

The discussion considered the role of funding in shaping community heritage projects, and the need for new funding models which allow longer-term planning and potentially more inclusive approaches to participation. The complexities of community engagement were discussed, with responses of different communities, and different individuals within a community, varying greatly, and the definition of what comprises a 'community' a potentially difficult issue. Heritage professionals need to be ready for those complexities and difficulties, and there is a role for more a guided/step-by-step approach to support those interactions. The relationship between communities and academics in shaping research questions was also considered, as were the ways in which these groups may not have the same goals, but may be approached as being complementary. Some heritage sites pose particular practical and ethical issues, which are specific to them and which have to be understood in their own contexts, including in connection with funding sources.

The following specific points were made:

Strategy and Funding

- The availability of a funding stream affects the design of a project. If funding is easier to obtain for a heritage project than one with another main aim, the project can become inappropriately skewed towards a heritage goal.
- A longer-term strategy is needed for community engagement, but the normal funding cycle for fixed-term projects is only 3-5 years. This also creates difficulties in employing and developing staff with expertise in engagement. It is a reliance on one particular funder which is encouraging this project-to-project format.
- There is a need to look at different funding options, such as via non-heritage funding bodies which understand the need for long-term strategy when dealing with poverty and inclusion. A future approach may be for HES/universities/Archaeology Scotland-type bodies to pilot a new model.
- There are several smaller heritage projects across Scotland, but barriers to access remain and most National Heritage Lottery funding goes to big capital projects at major institutions rather than grass roots organisations with small/medium-sized projects. Additionally, many communities are not able even start the application process: as with planning issues, not all communities have the capacity to participate.

Community and engagement: best practice

- It is important to recognise that engagement in a community context is not always positive for those involved, and that conflict may arise. However, this can be a normal and healthy part of the process. As professionals, we need to be prepared/trained for such conflict emerging.
- There is a tendency for some to take a position of 'waiting for it to fail' when considering community projects; however even state-funded bodies staffed by professionals encounter crises.
- Communities are fluid and changeable and, within a community, there may not be agreement about what is important or in good taste, or the same understanding of the local areas. This is especially true in communities where there has been a big influx of new inhabitants/a change in the population. Practitioners need to, but do not always, have the training and skills to deal with that sort of conflict.
- A practical tool kit for community engagement has been developed in Australia which has been applied to cultural heritage. It sets out a five-stage process, with the last step being complete systems control and empowerment. However, in some cases here the process has accelerated to this final step, missing out earlier stages covering dialogue, training and collaboration. It is possible that guidance on engagement under the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2016 (to the extent that heritage sites are likely to be affected) will codify rules of engagement, making such a staged approach impossible. The Community Empowerment (Scotland) Act 2015 also contains requirements regarding community engagement.
- We need to broaden out what we call heritage, and in some cases ask people what they want us to support them in, in relating to the past. At the same time, there is room for academic-led research but with community participation. In the relationship between communities and heritage professionals, the potential glue is to think about exploring social relationships now and through time and the cultural biographies which attach to these [carved stones].
- Many projects are being driven by Community Development Trusts or the equivalent. However, those groups do not always consider their work as a heritage project, as understood by professionals, but rather about meeting community needs in a way that just happens to be heritage-related.
- It is important to understand the dynamics of free-to-access projects and that they are potentially exclusionary, as they tend to recruit a narrow demographic. There is a tension between the need to recruit volunteers to carry out work, and the need to consider other models, such as where some pay to take part, allowing others access for free.
- Although not all within a community will wish to participate in a project, it is also necessary to consider ways of encouraging participation outwith the usual groups of participants. If we want to engage with a particular group, then specific steps can be taken to financially and practically support their involvement.

Practical and ethical issues

- For sites related to previous conflicts, there is the possibility of a 'dark heritage' approach but this may not always be appropriate or possible, and people have different views, in part depending on their own experience of the war, or of the site.
- Many sites have emerged which were used as military installations during the war and have now been returned to the community, which are essentially unusable for agricultural purposes, but may not be appropriate for use as heritage sites.

- In heritage contexts relating to issues of conflict some of the same questions are raised as in addressing heritage in colonial or slavery contexts. Where money is available from a contested source, it may seem appropriate to use it for an educational purpose, or one with some positive force in that situation.
- It has to be recognised that there is a difference between the history considered as a broad issue, and the individual and personal experiences within the story, particularly in a wartime scenario. In the context of World War II there is a complex history existing between German forces and the community in occupied countries, and between Prisoners of War and the community in others.

Second discussion

The second discussion took place following a provocation by **Kenny Brophy** (University of Glasgow): 'Local art for local people', looking at community engagement and the rock art of the Faifley area and issues surrounding the production of replica rock art.

Discussion overview

The discussion considered the significance of rock art within a community, and the varied potential roles of rock art replicas in a community context, using the Faifley example as a springboard for debate. The necessity for community engagement, the benefits it can bring, and the expertise which the local community offers to such projects were examined, and various ideas were proposed for innovative use of replica rock art panels, such as multiple versions of one panel, or the use of replica panels as a community resource for painting and playing. Going beyond the Faifley example, there was broader consideration of the developing importance of community archaeology in its various manifestations, from Scotland's Rural Past to current schemes such as Adopt-a-Monument. The future of the data gathered by ScRAP was considered, in terms of the accessibility of data, scope for future academic research, and the possibility of retaining the engagement of volunteers in the longer term.

The following specific points were made:

Rock art: replicas and re-use

- Can/should a replica have an ongoing life, for example, by being painted and repainted over time? Or could there be multiple versions of a single panel? There are (controversial) examples of community art being repainted, such as Kenny Hunter's sculpture (known as 'King of the Castle') in Castlemilk, which represents a form of community engagement. Could this tie in with the idea of a replica gaining a form of authenticity?
- Even if it were not officially sanctioned, is it not likely that painting/graffiti would happen spontaneously in a similar situation at the Cochno stone? There is already a history of subversion at the Cochno stone, including Ludovic Mann's painting. Perhaps multiple versions could be made and presented differently.
- A replica would have the advantage of being a tangible thing which can be played on as there are no constraints on engaging with it. It could be a play park.
- In relation to graffiti, can distinctions be drawn between different sets of values, what the community feels about the graffiti, and what it feels about the rock? What does the community in Faifley feel about the graffiti? Is it defacement or enrichment? What is the difference between that graffiti and the work of Ludovic Mann?
- The local community has not expressed any problem with the graffiti, or with the work of Ludovic Mann. Most of the graffiti was carried out by children, and largely respects the rock art apart from some example of fake modern rock art. The burying of the Cochno stone is the more problematic issue for the community.

Community and engagement: benefits, expectations and aspirations

- What are the areas of expertise, or local knowledge, that a community can bring to a project, as opposed to those brought by a heritage professional? Are there other forms of value brought by the community, such as the potential for delivering things, and are these as important the expertise brought by a professional?
- The rock art has to be seen in the context of other projects in the area, heritage-related and otherwise, meaning that this should be seen as an urban regeneration project with the

passion and drive which is fundamentally important. The conversation about the Cochno stone is situated within social history and that is where the community has expertise. At Faifley, there is a history of community use and knowledge of the Cochno Stone and other panels, including names being carved onto the rock making it a particular focal point within a bigger project.

- It is useful to consider other ambitious projects, such as the Caithness broch project, as inspiration for a community project, and to gain insight into some of the challenges they may face. This can also provide a form of external validation for a project by showing examples which have succeeded.
- Future workshops looking at replicas and some initial ideas for co-production in that area will focus on work with heritage and museum professionals and students. However, the community could also actively consider a replica option. Co-production with the community already exists in connected projects, such as a walking tour, and could encompass the creative process in considering other ways of bringing rock art into the park and the townscape of Faifley.
- Adopt-a-monument is an example of a project which has shown the value of the community input in identifying structures of otherwise unknown origin.
- Scotland's Rural Past emerged following recognition that there was a gap in understanding and in conservation management. It is a good example of a 15-year cycle of a research issue informing a policy development issue which then informs a project development issue, which then informs a series of outputs and capacities which are very community based.
- At the time that Scotland's Rural Past was being developed from 2003, the archaeological establishment was almost entirely hostile to the proposal, seeing it as a waste of time and expertise. So it can be seen that, despite the issues we are discussing, we have come a long way in community archaeology since that point.

The future

- ScRAP data will be publicly accessible for research, for education and for awareness raising. The longer-term successes will be intangible, but it is hoped it will inspire people to be more aware of and do more about rock art, creatively, academically and within communities. This will largely depend on our community teams.
- The purpose of Archaeology Scotland partnering of ScRAP is to be a bridge for people who wish to continue engaging, recording, and to be a contact point for the future. The evidence from previous community projects involving training of volunteers is that people can remain engaged over the long term, and work in a connected way with new projects.
- There remains a debate in the archaeological community on the role of communities, and whether their involvement simply represents a loss of jobs for professional archaeologists. Although we have come a long way, there is some way to go and although things may continue to get better in community archaeology, they may also get worse.
- The international links and read-across of different projects for the future should be considered. Adopt-a-Monument has been adopted in Finland, and is also in operation in Ireland. Heritage frameworks may work in a number of different contexts.