

# **Review of the Portable Antiquities Scheme Partnership Model**

**The British Museum**

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**DCResearch**  
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### 1. INTRODUCTION AND APPROACH

**This section introduces the report by outlining the aims of the research, providing an overview of the approach and method that is being used, as well as setting out the structure of this Final Report.**

#### **Introduction, and introducing PAS**

- 1.1 DC Research was appointed in November 2017 by The British Museum to Review the Portable Antiquities Scheme’s Partnership Model.
- 1.2 The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) is a partnership project which records archaeological objects found by the public in order to advance our understanding of the past. To do this, PAS:
  - Promotes the maximum public interest and benefit from the recovery, recording and research of portable antiquities.
  - Promotes best practice by finders/landowners and archaeologists/museums in the discovery, recording and conservation of finds made by the public.
  - In partnership with museums and others, raises awareness among the public, including young people, of the educational value of recording archaeological finds in their context and facilitate research in them.
  - Creates partnerships between finders and museums/archaeologists to increase participation in archaeology and advance our understanding of the past.
  - Supports the Treasure Act and increase opportunities for museums to acquire archaeological finds for public benefit.
- 1.3 PAS is run by the British Museum (in England) on behalf of DCMS and works through 33 principal partners who host and employ Finds Liaison Officers. There is a network of 40 Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs), based in museums and county councils throughout England and Wales, as well as five National Finds Advisers (NFAs) and a team of two at the British Museum. The data gathered by the Scheme is published on an online database ([www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)).
- 1.4 Annex 2 presents more detail on the **background to the PAS Partnership Model**.
- 1.5 The **overall sustainability of PAS, both in its current funding context, and also in terms of future opportunities**, was a particular focus for the review. The review also **captured the benefits that PAS generates** for its 33 partners, through understanding the range of different approaches to how the service is delivered, and the role and contribution of partners, including goodwill, in-cash and in-kind support provided.

#### **Summary of methodology**

- 1.6 The main research tasks that have been carried out as part of this Final Report are summarised below.
- 1.7 The survey **of all FLO’s, National Finds Advisers, managers and partner organisations engaged in PAS** sought to understand partner perspectives on:
  - The overall purpose of PAS.
  - The impact of PAS.

- The roles of FLOs and Finds Advisers.
- The benefit to partners of PAS posts.
- In-cash support given to PAS.
- In-kind support kind to PAS.
- Future potential of PAS, including project-based funding opportunities.

1.8 The survey received 76 valid responses, with Table 1.1 showing the breakdown of respondent by partnership role.

<b>Table 1.1: Partnership roles</b>		
<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>	
A Finds Liaison Officer	26	34%
A National Finds Adviser	5	7%
A PAS partner	27	36%
Someone who manages an FLO/NFA	18	24%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 76		

1.9 **Consultation discussions** were held with key British Museum staff and PAS Advisory Group Members; and a small sample of partners. These discussions explored perspectives on the survey topics above, and also:

- The current organisational model for PAS, and its suitability/sustainability.
- Perspectives on the current PAS funding model (i.e. British Museum and partner in-cash and in-kind contributions).
- Perspectives on potential changes to the PAS funding model.
- The potential for PAS to build on core activities with project-based funding.

**Structure of the Final Report**

1.10 This Final Report analyses the current PAS Partnership Model, and makes recommendations concerning (i) roles and activities; (ii) organisation; (iii) sustainability; and (iv) potential opportunities.

1.11 Section 2 examines **partner perspectives on the purpose, role and impact of PAS** from all who engaged in the review.

1.12 Section 3 presents findings from the review in terms of **partnership structure and engagement, funding arrangements, delivery arrangements, and communication**.

1.13 Section 4 presents partner perspectives on the **future sustainability of PAS, potential opportunities for the Scheme, and recommendations**.

1.14 The **Annexes** consist of:

- Annex 1: List of Consultees.
- Annex 2: Background to the PAS Partnership Model.

## 2. THE PURPOSE, ROLE AND IMPACT OF THE PAS PARTNERSHIP

**The approaches taken to the delivery of PAS can vary widely both in terms of geography and in terms of the approach towards the scheme of the host partner organisation. This section examines partner perspectives on the purpose, role and impact of PAS from all who engaged in the review.**

### The overall purpose of PAS

2.1 All respondents were asked to describe **the overall purpose of PAS** in their own words.

*"Recording the heritage of England".*

2.2 Most **FLOs** described the purpose of PAS being to record archaeological objects discovered by the public, with many also highlighting:

- Making data available to researchers.
- Working with heritage partners to promote awareness of local archaeology.
- Educating finders in terms of good practice.
- Supporting cases reported under the Treasure Act.

*"Encouraging recording of archaeological objects found by members of the public in England and Wales. Bridging the divide between detectorist, archaeologists, museums and others".*

2.3 **Managers** echoed the consensus described by FLOs in terms of the role and purpose of PAS, but some also highlighted PAS's role in encouraging awareness and understanding of the significance of treasure and archaeological find spots among a diverse audience.

2.4 One manager felt that the vast majority of discoveries were metal detected items, so in reality PAS was a scheme that records and catalogues metal detected finds.

*"PAS acts as a bridge between the metal detecting community and archaeologists".*

2.5 In terms of **organisational structure**, both FLOs themselves and their managers reported that FLOs are typically located either in Historic Environment Teams in local authorities, or within museums as part of collections teams (in either local authorities or museum trusts). One FLO explained that they reported directly to the PAS team at the British Museum.

2.6 A few of the FLOs that are part of collections teams in museums reported that they get asked to cover other activities. *"There is no longer a curator of archaeology at the museum so I am asked to cover and carry out some of my old tasks which can compromise my position as FLO".*

2.7 A number of FLOs and Managers highlighted how the role is integrated into, and valued by, the Historic Environment Record (HER) and collections teams. For example:

*"The FLO is an integral and valued part of the team. She is based in the same offices at the rest of the archaeology team. She contributes to programming and display at the museum, as well as undertaking her core duties at clubs and finds' days. She draws upon*

*the expertise of the specialists around her, meaning that it is a mutually beneficial arrangement. In more strategic terms, the FLO reaches and engages audiences that we would otherwise struggle to interact with. It helps foster our reputation as a regional leader and means that we can make an impact beyond the traditional boundaries of the museum”.*

2.8 Managers and FLOs were both asked about the other areas that PAS supports, aside from finds recording. Table 2.1 shows that all responding FLOs, and most managers, felt that community engagement and outreach was a key area of support, followed by specific projects connected to PAS, help with collections and undertaking archaeological fieldwork.

<b>Table 2.1: Aside from finds recording, what other areas does the FLO help/support?</b>				
<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>FLOs</b>		<b>Managers</b>	
Enhancing collections	12	46%	12	67%
Interpreting collections	8	31%	10	56%
Interpreting and curatorial activities	9	35%	5	28%
Community engagement and outreach	26	100%	17	94%
Undertaking archaeological fieldwork	11	42%	7	39%
Specific projects connected to PAS	21	81%	12	67%
Specific projects not connected to PAS	8	31%	2	11%
Other	13	50%	3	17%

**Source:** DC Research Survey 2017, multiple response, n = 26/18

*“Open days, social media, collections packing and movement, finds enquiries”*

2.9 Examples of specific activity include:

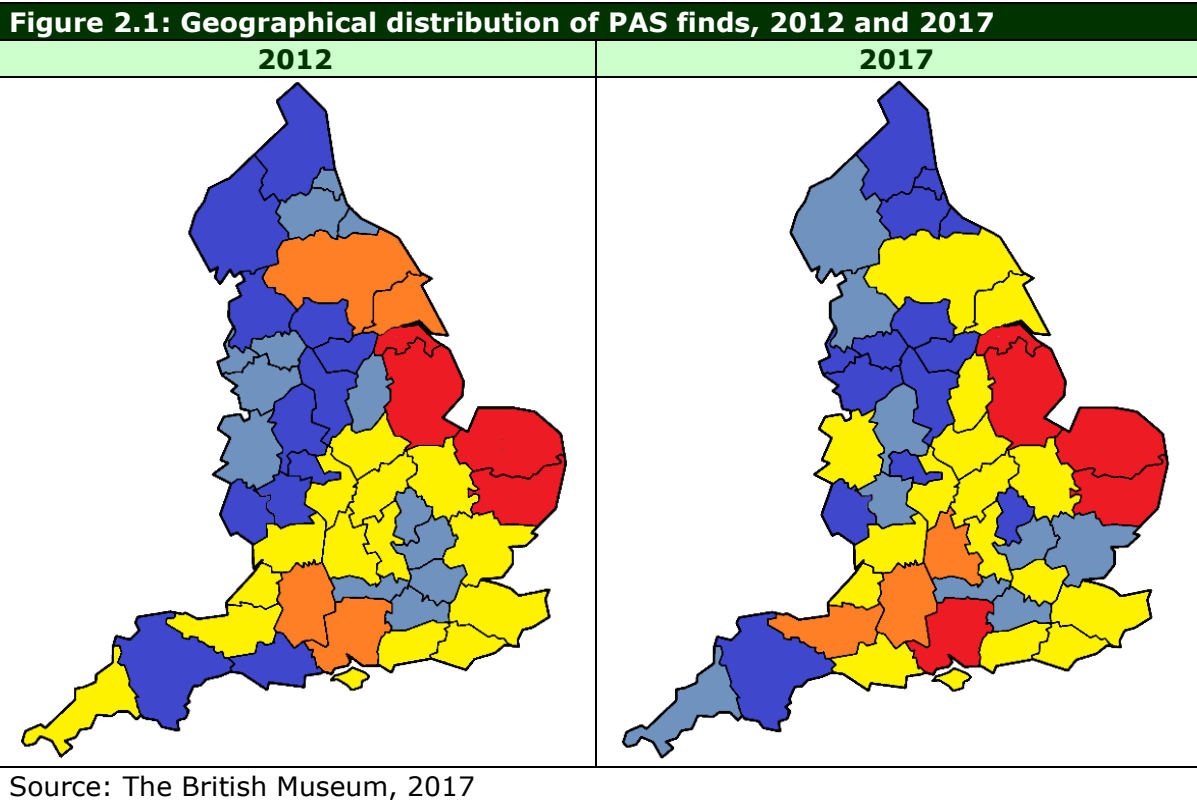
- Excavation of important PAS find spots; research collaborations with Universities.
- Community Archaeology projects.
- Exhibitions (typically related to Treasure and PAS).
- Applied for funding to acquire objects for the museum through the Treasure Act.
- Archaeological excavation and post excavation projects.
- Cataloguing archives.
- Development of learning and education materials.
- PAS publications.
- Museum displays where identification may be required or loans or donations from finders.
- PAS specific projects/groups (such as Database Working Group, Best Practice Working Group. PAST Explorers).
- Research.
- Externally funded projects.

*“The projects I support are all directly connected to my PAS work but feed into the county museums service plans and KPIs - so am part of multidisciplinary teams who organise exhibitions, deliver education and develop museum galleries”*

- 2.10 Managers were asked whether their organisation made a financial contribution to PAS in addition to the funding contribution from the British Museum, with all 18 responding managers saying that they did.
- 2.11 14 of these 18 managers specified the amount and proportion of overall PAS costs that are funded by their organisation.
- The average contribution made towards PAS costs was just under £6,000 per year, ranging from £600 to £26,000.
  - The average proportion of overall costs covered by these contributions was 15.7%, ranging from 2% to 53%.
- 2.12 Managers were also asked about the types of 'in-kind' support their organisation makes to the delivery of PAS, and to estimate how many days per year.
- The average 'in kind' contribution made by an FLO manager was 11 days per year, ranging from 4 to 30.
  - The average 'in kind' contribution made by other staff was 32 days per year, ranging from 3 to 330.
  - The average 'in kind' contribution made by volunteers was 80 days per year, ranging from 20 to 300.

### The geography of PAS

- 2.13 Finds Liaison Officers in England typically operate at ceremonial 'county' level geographies. Some operate in combined areas that join two counties (such as Herefordshire and Shropshire), whilst there are a few examples of wider regional consortia (such as Cheshire, Greater Manchester & Merseyside; and Staffordshire the West Midlands).
- 2.14 Figure 2.1 overleaf shows the number of finds recorded across England, comparing 2012 and 2017 (with dark blue denoting 0 to 500 finds, grey 500 to 1000, yellow 1000 to 2000, orange 2000 to 4000, and red 4000 plus).



**The Impact of PAS**

2.15 All survey respondents were asked how PAS generates impacts in their area or field.

**Table 2.2: How does PAS generate impacts in your area/field?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Supporting collecting and collections activities	55	70%
Engaging with communities, historic and special interest groups	69	87%
Providing volunteering opportunities	48	61%
Providing archaeological expertise in the area	60	76%
Other	30	38%

**Source:** DC Research Survey 2017, multiple response, n = 76

2.16 Table 2.2 shows that most responding partners felt PAS generates impacts in their area/field through engaging with communities, historic and special interest groups, with over three quarters suggesting that PAS creates impacts through providing archaeological expertise, with impacts from supporting collecting and collections activities, and volunteering opportunities also being highlighted by many.

2.17 'Other' impacts included outreach through schools, provision of data to researchers, teaching and talks to groups, research, and providing information for use by the HER.

2.18 Taking all the impacts in Table 2.2 together, over one third (35%) felt that 'Engaging with community, historic and special interest groups' was the most significant, followed by 'Providing archaeological expertise in the area' (24%).



- 2.19 The survey highlighted a range of outcomes that PAS helps partner organisations achieve that would not be possible otherwise, notably including:

*"Closer relationship with the British Museum and regional museums, which may help with the arrangement of loans in the future".*

*"The recording of archaeological artefacts that would otherwise go unrecorded".*

*"Working with a range of external partners (other museums, national forums and metal-detecting organisations) that we would otherwise struggle to reach".*

*"Greater outreach and engagement with the public in general, and metal detectorists in particular".*

*"Presence of FLO as part of the Museums team provides invaluable access to knowledge & expertise in relation to objects and sites within the County. The presence of the FLO also provides opportunities to share and develop the knowledge base of both curators and FLO. The PAS 'brand' and associations with the British Museum contribute to the perceived value and significance of the museums service particularly with local councillors and strengthens our case for continuing to preserve and record archaeological artefacts".*

*"Engaging with people who would not normally interact with museums or archaeological services".*

*"Fantastic archaeological database which is extensively used by the museum, particularly helpful for identification of finds. The database is also extremely helpful to members of the public and it does a good job of highlighting how important these local/regional/national items are in terms of adding to our knowledge. It is good to have a website which highlights the historical significance of items rather than how much they are worth in monetary values".*

*"Massive finds information resource that is fully integrated with the HER and is in use daily to support development management and strategic planning decisions".*

*"PAS helps provided the British Museum with truly national impact due to its officers in the counties. As mentioned, they provide any opportunity for outreach through talks, hosting volunteers and interns, excavation, museum and school sessions. As a general rule, the socio-economic groups the PAS reach often includes people who do not traditionally visit museums".*

*"Providing additional curatorial expertise and help with enquiries".*

- 2.20 Finally, respondents were asked to rank in order of importance the benefits host organisations get from being involved in PAS. Table 2.3 shows that engagement with communities, followed by association with a national initiative were the highest ranked benefits.

- 2.21 Table 2.3 overleaf also suggests that association with a national initiative is more important than association with the British Museum.

<b>Table 2.3: What benefits do host organisations get from being involved in PAS?</b>						
	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth
Association with a national initiative	<b>18%</b>	<b>31%</b>	<b>18%</b>	12%	12%	10%
Association with the British Museum	19%	15%	16%	12%	21%	18%
Networks with other specialists	6%	12%	29%	22%	14%	17%
Mechanisms and activities for volunteers	6%	6%	14%	22%	17%	35%
Engagement with communities	<b>35%</b>	<b>22%</b>	<b>13%</b>	22%	7%	1%
Engagement with historic and special interest groups	15%	15%	13%	11%	27%	18%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 68 to 71, answers ranked in order of importance						

### 3 PAS PARTNERSHIP STRUCTURE AND FUNDING ARRANGEMENTS

**This section presents findings from the review in terms of partnership structure and engagement, funding arrangements, delivery arrangements, and communication.**

#### Partnership structure and engagement

3.1 FLOs, managers and PAS partners were asked about **the clarity of each of the roles of the different partners** (i.e. local partners, the British Museum, the PAS Advisory Group etc.) involved in the PAS partnership. Table 3.1 shows that more than one-third felt these roles were completely clear, with nearly half feeling they were moderately clear.

**Table 3.1: How clear is the role of each of the different partners involved in the PAS Partnership**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Completely	25	34%
Moderately	35	48%
Not very	9	12%
Not at all	4	5%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 73		

3.2 Respondents highlighted some areas that were less clear, notably FLO employment and welfare. Some noted that partner expectations about priorities and priority setting could vary (between local partners, and between local partners and the British Museum).

*"Welfare is often said to be the responsibility of our local employers (i.e. Local Authorities), but we are a national scheme, often working in isolation across the regions. Accordingly, it seems as if there is some degree of responsibility on behalf of the Central Unit to support FLOs".*

3.3 A number of respondents commented that the role of the PAS Advisory Group<sup>1</sup> was not very clear, and that minutes were not shared, leading to speculation about its purpose ("I do not know what the PAS Advisory Group does nor who is on it", "first time I have heard of the PAS Advisory Group").

3.4 From a number of the comments to this question, **some FLOs can feel very frustrated, isolated, and feel poorly supported by either their host or the British Museum.** This issue is often connected to remuneration, how their terms and conditions compare to others in the scheme; pressures in terms of travel; the ability to source materials; and expectations from finders. Such comments tended to be from those FLOs that were hosted in a museum setting.

3.5 FLOs, managers and PAS partners were asked about **the effectiveness of the structure of the PAS Partnership Model currently** (i.e. the aspects around the structures and arrangements for the various groups and meetings that take place as part of PAS).

<sup>1</sup> The role of the advisory group is mentioned in all annual report and the notes of these meetings are circulated, both to FLOs and managers

- 3.6 Table 3.2 shows that 21% felt these roles were very effective, with more than half feeling they were moderately effective.

<b>Table 3.2. How effective is the structure of the PAS Partnership Model currently?</b>		
<b>Answer Choices</b>	<b>Responses</b>	
Very effective	15	21%
Moderately effective	42	58%
Slightly effective	11	15%
Not at all effective	5	7%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 73		

- 3.7 There were a range of comments made expanding upon this question, from those that thought structures were effective, to those who felt they were not at all effective.

*"Given the nature of the PAS with its dispersed staffing across the country the structure works well. However, most arrangements and meetings take place at a regional level with less at a national level".*

- 3.8 Some noted the **issues that are inherent in getting people to meetings as part of a national scheme**, with the varying approaches to line management and levels support for FLOs also being mentioned as issues that can limit the effectiveness of PAS structures.

- 3.9 Some FLO managers expressed frustration with the PAS managers meetings, questioning the extent to which the British Museum appreciates their priorities and constraints. *"Meetings for PAS Managers do not allow enough time for issues to be raised and discussed in any depth and what is raised does not always result in a suitable resolution."*

- 3.10 Those respondents who did not think that partnership structures were particularly effective also highlighted the range of different ways in which PAS is managed by different partners, and also the scope for conflict between host and scheme expectations and priorities. *("There are too many bosses - the host institution pays my wages and the British Museum/CU scrutinise my work")*.

- 3.11 Table 3.3. shows the range of PAS meetings attended by respondents to the survey.

<b>Table 3.3: Which of the following meetings do you attend?</b>				
<b>Answer Choices</b>	Local team meetings	Regional FLO meetings	National meetings	None
A Finds Liaison Officer	46%	35%	46%	35%
A National Finds Adviser	60%	60%	40%	40%
A PAS partner	37%	33%	59%	15%
Someone who manages an FLO/NFA	50%	39%	56%	28%
<b>ALL</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>53%</b>	<b>26%</b>
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, multiple response, n = 76				

- 3.12 The survey also asked whether all PAS Partners were fully engaged in the Partnership, with Table 3.4 showing that over half of respondents did not know.

Table 3.4. Are all PAS Partners fully engaged in the Partnership?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Yes	17	24%
No	18	25%
Don't know	36	51%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 71		

*"Some local partners don't see any local benefit from PAS because there are no local finds. Partners without staff with archaeological knowledge don't have time or inclination to get involved".*

- 3.13 Whilst some partners were not fully engaged (such as local authorities supporting a lead host), respondents felt there was limited appetite from such partners to get more involved.

### Funding arrangements

*"As an independent museum with a 20% cut in our funding from the local council, it is increasingly difficult to sustain the PAS. Want to be sure that the British Museum (as an organisation) is matching our own commitment - that is not clear at the moment. The PAS is the only nationwide scheme run by a national museum, the British Museum should be proud of it. Instead, it seems to find it slightly embarrassing".*

- 3.14 It is clear from both consultations and survey responses that the funding and resources arrangements of PAS are a cause for concern for many involved in the Scheme.
- Firstly, the **'flat funding'** of the Scheme in recent years means a gradual decline in the real value of the funding received by partners from the British Museum. This coincides with similar trends in local authority budgets, which results in increasing pressure on non-statutory services in particular.
  - Secondly, the **annual yearly funding agreements** typically issued in December, leads to lack of certainty for all concerned, and practical problems for most partners, who set and agree budgets in the autumn.
- 3.15 FLOs, managers and PAS partners were asked about the current **effectiveness of the funding and resources arrangements of the PAS Partnership Model** (i.e. the overall level/scale of funding, the mix of different funders and contributors, etc.).
- 3.16 Table 3.5 shows that whilst 43% felt that the current funding and resources arrangements of the PAS partnership model were moderately effective, more than half felt they were either slightly effective, or not at all effective.

Table 3.5. How effective are the funding and resources arrangements of the PAS Partnership Model currently?		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very effective	2	3%
Moderately effective	31	43%
Slightly effective	26	36%
Not at all effective	13	18%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 72		

*"The scheme still provides excellent value for money but there is a presumption that the same levels of service will be provided for less and less money".*

- 3.17 A number of partners made reference to **the survival of PAS as a national scheme being testament to the overall effectiveness of the model and noted that the original funding arrangements were not designed to serve the Scheme for as long as they have**, with arrangements adapting to reflect partner needs and circumstances over a considerable period of time.
- 3.18 Nevertheless, the differing funding arrangements for hosts is a bone of contention, as is issue of variances in salaries for FLOs, and the way in which some partners manage their partnership contributions (for example *"I would like my host to have to commit to their 10% contribution, but they use part of the council's contribution to pay my overheads and they take my on costs out of my salary budget"*).
- 3.19 A number of respondents and consultees highlighted that current funding does not cover salary costs and partners are unable to increase their contribution to make up the difference as the general pressure on local authority budgets continues. Some partners are considering a renegotiation of current contractual arrangements to reduce FLO contracted hours.

*"The problem locally is that the host employer thinks funding for resources should come from the British Museum, but the British Museum think it should come from the local employer".*

*"We would not be allowed to accept such terms now".*

- 3.20 Many Scheme staff are clearly feeling undervalued (for example *"As in the archaeology/heritage sector as a whole, we are underpaid and overworked. Compared with peers in other sectors (with commensurate experience and qualifications) the financial remuneration we receive is shockingly low"*). A number of respondents also highlighted difficulties in resourcing materials needed through the delivery of the Scheme (books, IT equipment, travel etc), with range of salaries for staff also being frequently mentioned.
- 3.21 Most highlighted the Scheme's future funding sustainability as a source of significant concern, although there was a consensus around the lack of pragmatic alternatives beyond an increase in core funding. For example, some highlighted the relative position of PAS in a museum fundraising context (*"PAS is not a priority, far from it, and it would be financially easier to stop hosting the Scheme than to raise funds for it"*).
- 3.22 Many respondents highlighted that partners are informed of settlements too late in the financial year (*"Redundancy notices may need to be given out where future funding is not guaranteed more than three months in advance, which is extremely unpleasant for the FLOs and increases the administrative burden on managers"*).
- 3.23 Some respondents raised the lack of formal maternity cover arrangements in the scheme, responsibility for this resting with the host organisation.

### Delivery arrangements

- 3.24 FLOs, managers and PAS partners were asked about the current **effectiveness of the PAS Partnership Model in terms of delivery**. Table 3.6 shows that over 80% think that the PAS partnership model is currently either 'very effective' or 'moderately effective'.

**Table 3.6. How effective is the PAS Partnership Model in terms of delivery at this moment in time?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very effective	14	20%
Moderately effective	43	61%
Slightly effective	7	10%
Not at all effective	7	10%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 71		

*"Given years of flat funding and often cuts to host institution funding, I think that the partnership model is still working well overall and PAS staff are generally considered to be a very positive addition to any local team. How well it will continue in future is probably dependent on funding levels".*

- 3.25 The above quote reflects many of the views about the current effectiveness of the PAS partnership, with many highlighting that despite the challenges faced by all, the scheme has been able to maintain its national coverage, delivering well given the resources available.
- 3.26 Difficulties in processing finds in a reasonable timescale were highlighted by some respondents, leading to criticism from finders and increased pressure on FLOs. Other respondents and consultees made reference to regional disparities in terms of numbers of finds, treasure cases and level of FLO coverage, with some highlighting the challenges of managing workloads and finder expectations. Additionally, some museum hosts expect their FLO to be fully involved in the day to day activities of the museum.

*"The PAS delivers a high-quality service. It is only hindered by not having enough staff (but that is a problem across heritage services more broadly). But I am really pleased with the scheme and how it works in my area".*

- 3.27 FLOs, managers and PAS partners were asked about the current **effectiveness of the PAS Partnership Model in terms of collaborative working** (i.e. the way in which partners work together to delivery PAS). Table 3.7 shows that over three quarters felt collaborative working was currently either 'very' or 'moderately' effective.

*"Significant finds locally have been effectively dealt with by all partners involved including the FLO and Treasure registrar".*

**Table 3.7. How effective is the PAS Partnership Model in terms of collaborative working at this moment in time?**

Answer Choices	Responses	
Very effective	12	17%
Moderately effective	43	60%
Slightly effective	13	18%
Not at all effective	4	6%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 72		

- 3.28 A number of respondents noted that collaboration worked well for them, but they were aware of others under pressure to carry out duties that were not PAS related.
- 3.29 Some respondents highlighted that **collaboration is often reliant on effective local management**, typically involving liaison between museums, archaeological

provision, and the metal detecting community, and the promotion of best practice and collections care standard.

- 3.30 Many felt that the **dedication of the FLOs is critical to the effectiveness of PAS collaboration**, with consultees and some respondents feeling the scheme has recently made strides in terms of collaboration in the sector, despite the failure of representative detecting organisations to sign up to the code of practice.

*"We work well with the PAS. It provides useful data to us, and we can send enthusiastic amateurs to the sessions, reducing the risk of archaeological data being lost".*

### Communication

- 3.31 FLOs, managers and PAS partners were asked about the current **effectiveness of communication within the PAS partnership** (i.e. between PAS partners; with the British Museum etc.). Table 3.8 shows that there is a spread of views in terms of the effectiveness of communication.

Table 3.8. How effective is communication within the PAS partnership		
Answer Choices	Responses	
Very effective	16	23%
Moderately effective	28	39%
Slightly effective	21	30%
Not at all effective	6	8%
<b>Source:</b> DC Research Survey 2017, n = 71		

- 3.32 Respondents highlighted the clear advice and guidance often received, and that informal communication and networks tended to be helpful and supportive. Many felt that current communication meant they were kept informed.

*"Have regional and national managers meetings. Don't fill the agenda with presentations but talk about issues and experiences".*

- 3.33 Suggested improvements from survey respondents include:
- The minutes of key partnership meetings (such as managers meetings, and PAAG meetings) should be stored in a single place where they can be accessed easily by all partners.
  - Improved scheme wide consultation and partner involvement in decision making.
  - More frequent PAS manager meetings, with the introduction of regional manger meetings.
  - A single storage area for the current PAS policies for PAS staff (which could include minutes of key meetings and reinforce version control of key documents).
  - Regional updates/newsletter/monthly digest distributed to a wider audience, not just specialists.
  - Establishing/clarifying clear lines of communication between the British Museum and regional managers.



## 4 PARTNERSHIP PERSPECTIVES ON THE FUTURE OF PAS, RECOMMENDATIONS

**This section presents partner perspectives on the future sustainability of PAS, potential opportunities for the Scheme, and recommendations.**

### Sustainability of PAS

- 4.1 To be sustainable beyond the immediate short term (i.e. beyond the current funding arrangements to March 2019), PAS now needs to directly address a number of challenges that the Scheme has previously been able to navigate around.

*"The most successful public archaeology scheme ever".*

- 4.2 There is consensus from all that PAS is very highly regarded and does vital work in ensuring that the heritage of England is properly recorded and managed, and in encouraging good practice across all partners involved in finds recording and treasure.
- 4.3 The considerable goodwill towards PAS from across the partnership has clearly been critical in ensuring that the Scheme has survived to date in the context of ongoing flat core funding and partner financial constraints. Without this regard and goodwill, PAS would not have survived into 2018 in its current format, if at all.
- 4.4 Sections 2 and 3 demonstrate that PAS continues to be delivered despite the challenges for all partners in the scheme. However, future reductions in services by local government partners will inevitably compromise the national coverage and depth of provision, and most survey respondents and consultees agree that a new delivery model is required beyond 2019 to allow the benefits of the scheme to be continued.

### Funding agreements

- 4.5 The issue of **annual funding agreements, and their timing, is undermining both the viability and partnership credibility of PAS**, and needs to be quickly addressed by the British Museum.
- 4.6 The Scheme cannot expect host partners to continue delivery of the core elements of the scheme under such arrangements, and it is difficult to see how any fundraising or project/programme opportunities can be developed by the scheme when core funding is so uncertain. Few, if any, partners would commit to a new partnership initiative on the same basis.
- 4.7 **The British Museum needs to demonstrate its commitment to the PAS partnership by offering longer term funding arrangements**, at least for the term of its own funding agreements, and ideally for three years. Whilst partners are realistic about the overall funding context for PAS, such a move would provide greater individual and partnership certainty and could be the starting point of a more fundamental process of developing a more sustainable partnership approach to PAS.

### PAS operations

- 4.8 Whilst core funding resources for PAS have tightened over the past few years, the core principle of national coverage has been preserved, with savings being made through 'flat funding' and also in terms of expertise capacity. Although some partners who engaged with this research have been critical of this approach, had PAS not maintained national coverage it is likely that a number of host partners would have disengaged with the Scheme during this period.
- 4.9 However, given the core and partnership funding constraints faced by the Scheme, most consultees feel that **PAS is now at the point where greater operational flexibility is necessary to maintain the principle of national coverage.** There are separate, but clearly overlapping, mechanisms through which this flexibility could be achieved.
- 4.10 Firstly, the **extent to which the Scheme manages priorities of PAS staff could be reviewed.** The current 'flat funding' situation means that host partners are contributing an increasing proportion of Scheme costs both in cash and in kind.
- 4.11 The ability of the Scheme to determine the priorities of Scheme staff is under pressure now, and this will further increase as this funding gap widens, with many partners feeling it is only reasonable that a sustainable PAS model is able to adapt accordingly.

If priority sharing arrangements could be agreed by the PAS partnership, it could alleviate pressure in some areas and some organisations, and allow staff to be retained, supplementing PAS work with complementary activities.

- 4.12 Secondly, the partnership needs to consider and question whether the current arrangements mean that **the right staff are with the best hosts and in the most appropriate geographical locations.** Figure 2.1 in Section 2 shows variations in numbers of finds recorded, in effect what one partner called the 'archaeological reality' of PAS, and there may be some scope to see whether there are mechanisms for supporting further consortia-based approaches, and/or resourcing FLO 'pools' to manage capacity fluctuations and demands across the Scheme.
- 4.13 The **current PAS geographies could be reviewed** to determine if there are any advantages that could be derived from moving towards consortia-based approaches to deliver the Scheme where it would make sense to do so. Such an approach could present host partners with the ability to choose to retain current arrangements if it accepts the ongoing need to gap fund its current PAS presence.

The PAS partnership could review the current PAS geography and consider whether there are opportunities to develop collaborative and consortia-based arrangements where there are partner and/or demand based reasons to do so.

- 4.14 There may also be circumstances where **partners might prefer greater freedom to determine how PAS is delivered in their area.** For example, instead of replacing a post, partners could have the flexibility to determine how PAS activities and outcomes are delivered without being obliged to take on another employee.

### Partnership working and communication

*"PAS has a fundamental problem with collaborative working in that the management of both sides (British Museum and local partners) see their contribution as a generous gift which benefits the other side".*

- 4.15 Partners feel that whilst communication has improved over the last few years, the British Museum still manages the scheme from the 'top down'. PAS staff can often feel conflicted in trying to be accountable to two different organisations, one of which provides core funding and sets priorities, the other that supplements funding, provides in-kind support, and shoulders risk and liability.
- 4.16 In short, all partners need to feel that they are valued and consulted, and a notable proportion currently do not. Whilst a proportion have been engaged in the development of the Portable Antiquities and Treasure Strategy 2020, some partners feel that decisions are often taken without consultation, and this often reinforces frustrations about the partnership.
- 4.17 Given the proportionate increase in the importance of partner contributions of PAS, the scheme needs to progress to a more balanced partnership model to support its future sustainability. Therefore, any change in the delivery of the Scheme must involve meaningful consultation and partner involvement in decision making, and it is vital that all partners fully understand each other, and that managers meetings in particular develop beyond being information disseminating sessions.
- 4.18 The PAS Team at the British Museum needs to be empowered, and needs to be seen by partners to be empowered, to **lead the Scheme as part of the British Museum's core partnership activity**. Currently partners perceive PAS in a British Museum context as being peripheral and reactive (*"it gets the work done, but fails to address the problems it faces as a major issue.....lost its passion for doing what it does best"*), and without such empowerment, and the ability to consult and involve, partners are likely to disengage.
- 4.19 The improvement of communication between all partners will be an essential part of this process, with some suggestions being set out in paragraph 3.33 above.

### PAS responsibilities and liabilities

- 4.20 A number of those who engaged in the review highlighted staffing responsibilities and liabilities in relation to PAS. Addressing the funding period for the Scheme as set out above would be a significant development for PAS staff, avoiding host partners having to issue annual redundancy notices.
- 4.21 However, a number of other issues have been raised as part of the review:
- The need to recognise that host partners bear a responsibility for redundancy and pension liabilities for the scheme, and in some cases these liabilities are considerable.
  - The need for clarity for staff on the HR role of partners, which is not clear (for example where staff can get advice on personnel issues; line management roles and responsibilities, and the management of divergent priorities; the way in which the scheme manages maternity cover etc.).
  - Variance in remuneration both between and within host organisations.

In a partnership context it is important that PAS is seen to be fair and equitable, and that employment practices are compliant in terms of legislation, and ideally good practice. **PAS**

could look to commission some expert HR input to review relevant issues and concerns, which could include a market rate review.

### Potential improvements and opportunities

#### Improvements

- 4.22 Those who participated in the review made a range of suggestions for ways to improve PAS and its partnership model.
- 4.23 **Funding certainty and earlier decisions on funding** was highlighted by most. Many respondents highlighted the need for additional resources, with one suggesting that the British Museum use its expertise and influence to generate income by allowing the PAS to be a separate Trust. Some suggested that PAS would benefit from more input from Historic England.
- 4.24 Many suggestions for improving PAS highlighted a desire for **a clearer and more centralised structure**, with some suggesting a core role for the British Museum in terms of profile/identity, decision making. Some went further, suggesting that all FLOs could be employed by a single employer.
- 4.25 **Clarity on the purpose of PAS** was also felt to be needed (*"Is it there to record finds, engage with communities or work with museums? There must be a core purpose to focus on"*).
- 4.26 **Better communication** in terms of the partnership was another common theme, with some suggesting an annual face to face meeting for those involved in the delivery of PAS.
- 4.27 A number of respondents felt that **employment arrangements could be harmonised** (*"a clear job description for partners to follow, with what is expected from them"*), although others suggested that expectations around the FLO role should be more flexible to take account of locality and partner circumstances.

#### Opportunities

- 4.28 All consultees, and most (94%) survey respondents, felt there were opportunities to develop the work of PAS over the next five years.
- 4.29 Table 4.1 overleaf sets out a range of opportunities and funding solutions, although many felt that centralised core funding was fundamental to the future of the scheme.

*"There are numerous ways in which the scheme could be developed in years to come. Before this happens though there needs to be a core understanding and corporate buy-in to delivering PAS as a national scheme indefinitely - this will give stability onto which everything else can be bolted"*.

## Review of the Portable Antiquities Scheme Partnership Model (The British Museum)

<b>Table 4.1: PAS Opportunities and Funding Solutions</b>		
<b>Theme</b>	<b>Opportunity</b>	<b>Funding solution</b>
Legislative	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lobby for the inclusion of FLOs in the Treasure Act</li> <li>▪ Mandatory reporting of all artefacts that are older than 300 years</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Introduce 'Treasure Tax' or levy to fund PAS</li> <li>▪ % of all Treasure finds used to fund PAS</li> </ul>
Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Projects that enhance PAS data and showcases what can be done with finds data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Project funding</li> </ul>
PAS products	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Consider how skills of FLOs could be developed to generate income</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Charging for developing hi res imaging of finds</li> <li>▪ Production of specialist finds reports for commercial units, developers etc</li> <li>▪ Provision of training courses</li> <li>▪ Schools and HE workshops</li> <li>▪ Charging for expert work, attendance at rallies etc.</li> </ul>
Fundraising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ PAS development trust to support fundraising</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Trust could access grants and sources of income PAS currently cannot (due to British Museum processes and partner fundraising capacity)</li> </ul>
Branding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Relaunch of PAS brand<sup>2</sup> (with one partner suggesting "National Archaeological Finds Scheme") as PAS as a brand is not widely understood generally or strongly associated with the British Museum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Improved marketing of PAS products/services</li> <li>▪ Increased participation of DCMS and Historic England on management of PAS</li> </ul>
Events/exhibitions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ British Museum led major touring exhibition showcasing PAS</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HLF and private sponsorship</li> <li>▪ Dorset Fund</li> <li>▪ Headley Trust</li> </ul>
Historic Environment record	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Better integration of information with HER systems</li> <li>▪ Provide FLOs with GIS capability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revenue generation through HER/Planning systems integration</li> <li>▪ Developer funding</li> <li>▪ CIL / Section 106 for community archaeological projects</li> </ul>
Research	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Partner research and outreach project</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ HLF, Esmee Fairburn</li> </ul>
Licensing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Make metal detecting licensed through payment of a yearly fee</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Voluntary licencing of detectorists through clubs or insurers</li> <li>▪ Mandatory licencing of detectorists (potentially administered through PAS)</li> <li>▪ Adaptation of 'mudlark' permits<sup>3</sup></li> </ul>
Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop PAS from scheme to a project, centrally managed with 'FLO hubs' in regions</li> <li>▪ Broaden responsibility for administering PAS beyond the British Museum</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Involving other national bodies in the management and funding of PAS (such as DCMS, Arts Council England, Historic England, National Trust etc)</li> </ul>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.pla.co.uk/Environment/Thames-foreshore-access-including-metal-detecting-searching-and-digging>

Source: DC Research analysis of survey responses and consultee discussions

### Next steps

- 4.30 There is a willingness amongst PAS partners to find a solution to the sustainability of the Scheme.
- 4.31 An independently facilitated partner workshop to discuss the findings and recommendations of this review would be a useful first step. This could involve a sample of those that engaged in this review, and should be based upon an agreed list of topics (which could be based on the themes set out in this section) and clear rules of engagement.

### ANNEX 1: LIST OF CONSULTEES

<b>Consultee</b>	<b>Organisation</b>
Mike Heyworth	Director of the Council for British Archaeology, Chair of the Portable Antiquities Advisory Group
Franne Wills	Leicestershire County Council
Phillip Warren	Leicestershire County Council
Steve Minnett	South West Heritage Trust
Faye Minter	Suffolk County Council
Chris Howgego	The Ashmolean, Oxford University
Phillip Attwood	The British Museum
Jill Cook	The British Museum
Joanna Mackle	The British Museum
Michael Lewis	The British Museum
Susan Raikes	The British Museum
Ian Richardson	The British Museum
Jonathan Williams	The British Museum
Andrew Woods	York Museums Trust



### ANNEX 2: BACKGROUND TO THE PAS PARTNERSHIP MODEL

The PAS was established to complement the passing of the Treasure Act 1996, specifically to record archaeological objects found by the public that were unlikely to otherwise be recorded. Both PAS and the Treasure Act were responses to the increasing popularity of metal-detecting.

The Scheme started as six pilots in 1997, funded by the DCMS through the Museums & Galleries Commission (MGC), with a further six being established two years later, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, and was expanded to the whole of England and Wales in 2003, thanks to HLF funding, managed by Re:source (formerly MGC), which became the Museums, Libraries and Archives Council (MLA).

Through this process, 36 new FLO posts were established, all tied in with local government pay scales, with each local partner making a 5% cash and 5% in-kind contribution. When HLF funding ended in 2006, DCMS picked up the funding of the PAS, which was ring-fenced until 2014. In 2012, responsibility for PAS transferred to the British Museum (England) and National Museum Wales following the closure of MLA.

Nowadays, PAS staff are no longer on a national pay scale and local government responsibility for PAS has eroded in some areas, with some posts being transferred to Trusts. Many PAS staff have now been in post a considerable time, gaining vast and valuable experience; one third of FLOs have been in post since at least 2013. With flat-funding and rising staff costs, the financial burden of the PAS has increased, for both the British Museum and its local partners.

The nature of the Partnership has also evolved. The PAS is managed (in England) by the British Museum, advised by the Portable Antiquities Advisory Group (which includes representatives of the main archaeological, landowners and detecting organisations). All PAS staff meet twice a year (normally in London), and there are (at least) bi-annual regional meetings of PAS staff (in the North, Midlands, East, South West and South East); those in the East and North have a tradition of involving managers, and central unit staff always attend all meetings.

Periodically the Scheme holds meetings for managers, the last being in 2016. In 2015 various 'working groups' to facilitate partnership involvement in the future delivery of the PAS were established (as part of the PAS Strategy 2020 process), including groups on best practice, museums, PAS database and research. This Review is a product of the Strategy, particularly in relation to the future sustainability of the PAS.