

## REGULATORY AND OTHER COMMITTEE REPORT

<b>NAME OF COMMITTEE:</b>	Schools Forum
<b>DATE OF MEETING:</b>	7 October 2015
<b>SUBJECT:</b>	Prehistory on-line learning resources for Lincolnshire
<b>REPORT BY:</b>	Sarah Grundy (Historic Environment Officer)
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<b>IS REPORT CONFIDENTIAL?</b>	No

### SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is to advise the Schools Forum of the intention to produce on-line prehistory learning resources specifically focussed on Lincolnshire, and to support a request for funding from the LEA to assist with their development.

### DISCUSSION

#### Background

The proposal for the creation of prehistory learning resources is being put forward by Lincolnshire County Council's Historic Environment Team (HET) and Heritage Lincolnshire (HL). It is in response to the introduction of the study of prehistory and the changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age to the Key Stage 2 history programmes of study in the new National Curriculum for England.

One of the main functions of the HET is to maintain and enhance the Historic Environment Record (HER). The HER is a record of the historic environment of Lincolnshire from earliest prehistory to the

Cold War. The records comprise archaeological reports, index cards, parish files, aerial photographs and much more. There is also a computerised database and digital mapping system. It is a public document, and the database records are available online.

Heritage Lincolnshire is a charitable trust that operates across the county to protect, preserve, promote and present its rich archaeology and history. Education is a key element of the Trust's work, and it offers a range of services for schools to help them incorporate the county's heritage in their teaching. They have a dedicated Education and Outreach Officer who is keen to support the development of these resources. The Trust produces free learning resources, and run school sessions on various aspects of the county's heritage, and popular after school archaeology clubs accredited by the Children's University.

The project team has experience of producing learning resources for schools, working with teachers to ensure that they are what schools will find most effective, and delivering sessions in schools. Therefore the project team possesses the heritage expertise and enough knowledge of teaching heritage in schools to be able to deliver resources that are effective and inspiring for children and young people.

The project team is proposing to work with teachers to gain input for the development of the resources. The team is also keen to work with CfBT's Traded Team to ensure that the resources will be as effective as possible in supporting teachers to deliver the requirements of the National Curriculum.

### **Content**

The content of the learning resources will be developed with advice and guidance from teachers, and other education professionals.

The learning resources will provide teachers with a broad range of background knowledge on the changes during prehistory in Britain and focusing on Lincolnshire, as well as offering ideas for classroom activities aligned to various themes. They will offer clear planning with a sequence of learning objectives and progression linked to the National Curriculum.

The resources will also guide teachers and children to show how to access free online tools such as the county's Historic Environment Record to find out what evidence there is for prehistoric activity in their local area. They will be suitable for year on year use. If changes to the resources are required, these will be managed by the project team as and when needed.

The resources will be designed to complement the activity days for schools at The Collection museum in Lincoln, enabling teachers to plan preparatory or follow up lessons to help children get the most out of their visit.

The resources will be online and free of charge to download from the Lincs to the Past website and the Heritage Lincolnshire website, and therefore will be available to all schools wishing to use them. We also plan to hold a launch event for schools at The Collection, and a series of CPD workshops for local teachers to raise awareness of the resources and provide inspiration for how to engage children when teaching this new element of the curriculum.

The draft outline of the proposed resources is as follows:

#### **Introduction & Teacher's Notes**

- What is prehistory?
- Archaeology and our sources of evidence
- Engaging children with the remote past including ideas for introductory activities

#### **Changes in Britain from the Stone Age to the Iron Age (period overview)**

*A brief discussion of the major changes in each period, with specific reference to life in Lincolnshire.*

- Palaeolithic
- Mesolithic
- Neolithic
- Bronze Age
- Iron Age

### **Life in Prehistoric Lincolnshire (themes), and how it changed over time**

*Including plans for classroom activities.*

- Settlement and Everyday Life
- Landscape and Environment
- Religion
- Technology & Trade
- Art

### **What's been found near you?**

*A section explaining the resources that teachers can use to find out what prehistoric objects and sites have been found near them. These will include:*

- Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record (Heritage Gateway/Lincs to the Past)
- Museum records of objects found in Lincolnshire (Lincs to the Past)
- The Portable Antiquities Scheme Database

### **Activities**

- Practical archaeology sessions – for example: understanding the environment; preservation and decay of different materials; how and why settlements developed and evolved; use of building materials. The team would work with teachers and CfBT to ensure that the activities are safe and effective.
- Visits to sites with associated activities, within and adjacent to Lincolnshire.
- Classroom activities – using a range of source materials to understand the past, including artefact loan boxes, aerial photographs, the Lincolnshire Historic Environment Record, maps and looking at reconstruction drawings as well as ideas for simple cross-curricular activities designed to introduce ways of life in different periods.
- Story-telling scripts – this could include scripts for short plays for each of the periods and also ideas for role play and creative writing activities.

### **Evidence for demand**

This idea for this project was sparked by an influx of requests at Heritage Lincolnshire from teachers seeking advice and assistance teaching the new 'Stone Age to Iron Age' element of the National Curriculum. Many teachers have informally commented on how dry and distant this period can seem to children, and the difficulty in finding resources to help engage them. One class teacher from Grantham commented:

“A resources pack sounds like a very welcome idea, as a lot of teachers are just trying to find their way to teach this new subject for the new curriculum, and there are no BBC DVD's or Channel 4 interactive resources to help bring it alive for easily bored children.”

Given the above, the project team decided to gather evidence for demand for prehistory resources in a more formal and structured way. So, a questionnaire was devised and circulated to all Lincolnshire Schools. It was made available in early June 2015 and was open until the end of term, 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2015.

## **The Results:**

The questions and responses are attached to this paper as Appendix 1.

In summary, a total of 23 schools responded to the survey: of those, 20 were Primary Schools and 3 were Secondary Schools.

They were asked about their current teaching of prehistory. 70% have delivered teaching about prehistory in Britain and 38% about prehistory in Lincolnshire. 87% of schools said that they would find on-line prehistory resources useful, and 4% said they were not sure. Those that responded 'no' were those who are not intending to teach prehistory, such as Secondary Schools.

Only 1 school is aware of on-line prehistory resources, which were from the history new curriculum magazine. They said that while the resources offered clear learning objectives and progression, the hands-on resources were limited. These comments will be taken into account when developing the Lincolnshire resources.

Eight teachers have volunteered to be part of a focus group to advise and guide on the development of the content of the resources.

Some of the questions related to how costs for developing the resources could be met, and whether schools would be prepared to pay for them. However, it has now been decided that external funding will be sought for the project.

The project team also took the opportunity to ask schools about what other resources they would find useful. If the Prehistory resources project is successful, the project team will look at developing the most popular historic themes (which are Romans, Vikings, Local History Studies and Settlement and Everyday Life).

## **Costs**

The project team would like to commission a professional archaeological illustrator to create some high resolution reconstruction images suitable for use on smart boards, which would illustrate the resources. We understand that it can be difficult for young children to relate to such ancient times, so it was felt that creating these illustrations of prehistoric Lincolnshire would help them to better understand what their local area was like. The illustrations will be a mixture of 7 landscape 'tiles' showing changes in the environment and 4 photo-realistic images illustrating particular aspects of prehistoric life in the county. The tiles would be a series of images of a particular piece of land, depicting how it changed over time. Based on quotes received we estimate the cost of producing these images to be approximately £10000.

It is also envisaged that a local story-teller would create some story-telling activities for the classroom, which would be included in the resources. These would help young children to understand what life was like for the people who lived in their local area during these remote periods.

The other costs that would be required are for focus groups, the launch event, CPD workshops, the story-teller, graphic design and a small amount of cost recovery for Heritage Lincolnshire, together totaling £6000. The research, development and design of the resources would be undertaken in-house at the County Council and Heritage Lincolnshire.

This makes a total of a maximum of £16000. The project team will be seeking this funding from external bodies, such as the Heritage Lottery Fund.

## **Timescales**

It is envisaged that the project will be completed by the end of the financial year 2016/17.

## **Conclusion**

Prehistory is a topic that has not been taught previously, and one that many teachers have little experience of prior to its introduction. It can be difficult and time consuming for teachers to access the specialist literature on prehistoric Lincolnshire written by archaeologists, since it is not widely available online and it uses a great deal of specialist terminology. This means teachers looking for curriculum materials often have to rely on more generalised resources, which can leave children with misconceptions about prehistoric life. For instance it is not uncommon for children to go away thinking that Stone Age man lived in caves, although there aren't any in Lincolnshire and we have plenty of evidence that people were living in Lincolnshire during this period.

There is an appetite amongst teachers to bring this topic to life using object handling and learning outside the classroom, but visits to local providers such as The Collection, Flag Fen and Creswell Crags are all heavily oversubscribed since the topic was introduced.

Therefore the project team would like to address these issues by producing bespoke Prehistory learning resources for Lincolnshire, which will support schools in finding out about the environmental, social, cultural and economic changes through those periods in their local area and be able to relate them more widely to Britain. The resources would be suitable for year on year use, and would not incur any further cost, with free CPD training sessions provided for local teachers, with ongoing free advice also available from the project team.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

That the Schools Forum supports in principle the development of on-line prehistory resources.

**APPENDICES (If applicable) - these are listed below and attached at the back of the report.**

Report on the survey of schools regarding provision of on-line prehistory learning resources.

<b>BACKGROUND PAPERS</b>			
<b>PAPER TYPE</b>	<b>TITLE</b>	<b>DATE</b>	<b>ACCESSIBILITY</b>

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