

5. **What kinds of experiences have got you where you are today?** Flexibility, do as much as you can. Volunteering is always important. Get as much skills in the field as you can and don't take no for an answer!
6. **What are some of the best parts of your job?** I get to play with really cool things. There is such strong archaeology in York and I get to get close to it.
7. **And some of the worst?** I honestly don't think it has any. We've no benefactor and we have to raise our own money and we have to deal with an old building and institution, with a vast quantity of inherited material.
8. **How much do you have to deal with members of the public?** All the time and I love them! Whether its enquiries, talks, tours, it's the only way to know what people want.
9. **What are your thoughts on the state of the museum system? Do you think it is adequate, is there any room for improvement and if so where?** There's always room for improvement. More money is always needed in different ways. Extra resources should go to regional museums as the bigger museums usually get the funding. Work should go to popularising the tiny museums.
10. **How do you see the current Archaeological climate in terms of jobs in this country?** Absolutely terrible in terms of pay scales! The problem is the system is churning out so many undergraduates to few jobs. However its getting better as more opportunities are appearing in the cultural sector where the transferable skills of archaeology come in use; such as the National Trust or the Forestry Commission.
11. **What advice do you have for students wishing to get a job in Archaeology or Heritage Management?** Get as many skills as possible, volunteer and do the extra work yourselves. Your C.V. has to shine as there will be so many other candidates for jobs with the same degree.
12. **What are your experiences of job interviews?** Personally I quite like them. I've never not succeeded which is a strange situation. I've been on the other side of quite a few interviews.
13. **Do you have any interview technique tips?** Do your research, find out about the job and get to grips with what it entails, find out about the panel; their interests, positions etc. Come prepared and be honest and brave. Don't blag, the people interviewing you will probably know more and can tell. The ones who shine in interviews are the ones who answer questions in a relaxed way and include detail.

With thanks to Andrew Morrison, Yorkshire Museum.

3 The State of Heritage in Chester

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I am currently reading for a MA in Cultural Heritage Management here at York. However, I am also a History, Heritage and Archaeology graduate and an ex- resident of Chester. My dissertation discussed the issues of heritage conservation in the city from the Victorian period to the present day and as such, some of the issues raised are relevant to the present heritage debate.

One of the major challenges for any conservation policy in Chester is that the city is historically and architecturally a multilayered site, not simply Roman. Around the walls there are areas of deep historical significance but also buildings and sites that have been altered so radically over the years that they contain only a fraction, if any, of their original fabric. The issue of authenticity has therefore become of paramount importance to the interpretation of Chester's heritage. However this has become significantly convoluted by conservation policies that do little more than chase funding in the face of extensive re-development. These strategies have become short term solutions to provide short term financial gain. Nevertheless, since 1945 there have been a plethora of expensive conservation reports, studies and reviews in which many important recommendations for long term conservation strategy in Chester are recurrent but largely forgotten themes.

That said, we must understand that towns and cities can not remain static. Chester cannot become a museum piece. Urban growth is the driving force behind any economy and new opportunities, markets and trends must be tapped into if urban centers are to survive. Chester's Victorian vernacular renaissance is a fine example of a balance being struck between the need for urban re-development and the City's heritage. Since then public funding, the increase of stakeholders through privatisation and the subsequent town planning agendas have meant that the conservation consciousness' which emerged in the 19th century has now been diluted. However it is clear from the various letters and articles in the local press every week, that the local community has a valid opinion about the direction and form that conservation policy should take and has now become the voice of common sense. For example, there is a consensus that the Amphitheatre should be preserved and developed into a world class visitor attraction. Nevertheless to date, all recent work has been backfilled and the future of the site is unsure. The future for Chester Castle is also lamented; all hope for it resting on a tenuous bid to redevelop the site into a hotel. These are just two examples of the appalling waste and neglect to our heritage which is reported and commented on with alarming regularity in the local press. Chester's historic environment is what sets it apart and therefore it must not repeat past mistakes as of those of the 1960's.

Therefore, in my opinion, it is about time the planners listened to the recommendations of their expensive conservation reports and also acknowledged the validity of community participation. Perhaps this would then lead to the implementation of a more long term and sustainable approach by better exploiting the Cities historic legacy rather than replacing it with yet another quick economic fix.

Some useful links

- For more debate on Heritage in Chester see: <http://tinyurl.com/7jqm1h> (Facebook: Save Chester's Heritage)

- Report on community involvement in archaeology in Chester: <http://tinyurl.com/8pnhbs>
- For history of Chester (Community website) see: <http://tinyurl.com/8bzm9c>
- For archaeology: <http://tinyurl.com/9s2lz2>

4 Skipton's Archaeological Gateway to the Dales

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If you are interested in Archaeology, Geology or Social History read on. Outside York by 40 miles is a town called Skipton (or Sheep-town from its Saxon derivation). It is a historic, and not a little odd (at certain times of the year), market town with great attractions: Skipton Castle, Holy Trinity Church and the Leeds-Liverpool Canal (the first Grade I listed structure for Skipton).

Amidst all this lies a small museum in the Town Hall. The hub of all tourist activity (<http://tinyurl.com/9xerzc>), it combines a gallery relating heritage and the arts - rather interesting - and a small but varied Archaeological museum on the first floor, which is absolutely FREE! Exhibited are all the goodies of Skipton's past: from old excavations revealing the prehistory of Skipton's local area, to artefacts dragged from wells, and tools and objects relating to the industrial expansion of Skipton with the Leeds-Liverpool Canal.

The displays give a glimpse as to how local landscapes were formed by agriculture, industry, lead mining and town life. These collated with the period costume display showcase a neat socio-historic theme to digest as you meander round. All this before hogging the computer to look at the photographic collections.

Be prepared though, you are not going to get a quiet meander, unless you have chosen an off peak time, because local schools love this place. The Riddle Solver quiz and the museum's interactive exhibits usually enthrall them.

So, if you are interested in lazily relaxing on a Saturday head there, make it part of a journey to visit Skipton's brewery the Copper Dragon or spend it in Skipton Castle where Civil War Battles erupt at certain times of the year. You are bound to find something. Ah and there is a great little pub in Skipton called the Narrow Boat, it has the best selection of beers!

Travel Details

- Train Routes & Times: YORK LEEDS SKIPTON
Cost single fare: £10.35 (around £16 for return) Single journey time: 1hr 1/2
From Leeds station there is a train to Skipton from platform 4 or 5 which lasts around 45 minutes. Once at Skipton Platform you have a short walk up a small hill past Bizzie Lizzie's (a fish and chippy) into the hub of Skipton. There's a handy map available at <http://tinyurl.com/6snj5v>.