

# NORTH PENNINES ARCHAEOLOGICAL RESEARCH FRAMEWORK

## Part 2. Research Agenda

February 2017



The Altogether Archaeology Management Committee welcomes comments on this document. Any comments or questions should be sent via the Contacts page of the Altogether Archaeology website. Much further information about Altogether Archaeology, including details of how to join and comprehensive reports on completed fieldwork projects, is available on the website.

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***Cover photo.***

*Altogether Archaeology excavations in progress at St Botolph's Chapel, Frosterley; September 2014.*

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The North Pennines Research Framework consists of three parts. Part 1, the Resource Assessment (by far the largest of the three), and Part 3, the Altogether Archaeology Research Strategy, are bound separately.

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# 1. General introduction to the North Pennines Archaeological Research Framework.

The Altogether Archaeology Management Committee has commissioned this Research Framework to provide a framework for the group's work over the next five years and beyond. The work was funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, as part of a start-up grant for which all AA members are most grateful. The Research Framework is intended to be a meaningful and effective, but flexible, document providing a structure against which decisions can be made regarding future archaeological work in the region. Despite its landscape integrity as an upland block, today the basis of the North Pennines AONB, the archaeology of the North Pennines has not previously been studied in an integrated way; rather, it has been either ignored or bits of it have been studied in relation to outlying sections of adjacent lowland landscapes in Cumbria, Durham and Northumberland. This is not to say that much important work has not been done, it has, but often as the result of individual initiatives in particular areas rather than through any overall structured approach.

The spectacular results of the HLF-funded Altogether Archaeology project (2011-2015), managed by the North Pennines AONB Partnership and attracting 580 registered volunteers, have led to the realisation that the archaeology of the North Pennines is worthy of much further study. Volunteers from the project have set up a new group, retaining the name 'Altogether Archaeology', primarily to further the study of North Pennines archaeology. Although the group's remit is to focus on the archaeology of the North Pennines, there is a realisation that the area must not be studied in isolation as there were always close relationships between the uplands and adjacent lowland areas, and indeed areas further afield.

This Research Framework has been largely produced by Paul Frodsham (who conceived and managed the AA project and is currently Archaeological Adviser to the new AA group) through his consultancy, ORACLE Heritage Services. Paul was advised by a small Task Group of AA committee members. The Research Agenda and Research Strategy were discussed by AA members at a workshop in October 2016, after which they were finalised. It should be stressed that the entire Research Framework must be regarded as flexible, and should be regularly updated in the light of new information or new opportunities.

This document is structured to tie in with the current North East and North West Regional Research Frameworks, but with specific relevance to the North Pennines. It stresses work that could reasonably be undertaken by Altogether Archaeology members with appropriate levels of professional support. It sets out a range of recommendations that should provide a sound basis on which to design a number of research projects, with a range of partners, over the next five years and beyond. It should provide a viable basis on which to apply for funding (from a variety of sources) and legal consent (where appropriate)

for work designed to address its stated priorities. It should also be valuable in helping to attract others to come and work alongside the Altogether Archaeology group in a variety of potential partnership ventures.

## **The structure of the North Pennines Archaeological Research Framework**

The entire Research Framework consist of three sections, which can be summarised as responses to three basic questions:

**What do we know?**

**What else do we want to know?**

**How do we find out what we want to know?**

The first of these is addressed by the **Resource Assessment**, effectively an overview of what we know about the archaeology of the North Pennines. The second by the **Research Agenda**, which lists a number of key questions that could potentially be answered through new work. The third is the subject of the **Research Strategy**, to be informed by the workshop; the aim is to combine members' interests with identified research priorities.

The basic thinking behind this entire process is to ensure that our plans for future work are well founded, making applications for funding and (where necessary) consent much more likely to be successful.

Part 1, the **Resource Assessment** presents an up-to-date overview of current knowledge of the archaeology of the North Pennines, incorporating the results of all previous Altogether Archaeology fieldwork and other recent work such as the English Heritage led Miner-Farmer project on Alston Moor. It is structured chronologically, which in some ways is not ideal (eg it does not enable detailed analysis of particular landscapes through time) but is the only viable approach to cover the entire North Pennines from prehistory to present.

Part 2, the **Research Agenda**, identifies significant gaps in current knowledge, assesses the potential for addressing these, and defines some appropriate research initiatives. This is also structured chronologically, to tie in with the resource Assessment. Where relevant, it stresses relationships with priorities identified within the NE and NW regional research frameworks, where work in the North Pennines can contribute meaningfully to wider debates.

Part 3, the **Research Strategy**, presents a series of research priorities based on the conclusions of the Research Agenda, along with suggested methods of implementation and delivery for a range of potential Altogether Archaeology projects that could be developed to address these priorities. Some of these concentrate on particular periods (eg Stone Age), while others are based on themes (eg transport), and others concentrate on particular landscapes through time (eg Holwick).

The Resource Assessment and Research Agenda cover all periods from the Mesolithic through to the present day, structured chronologically with sections

dealing with each of the conventional archaeological periods (Mesolithic, Neolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age, Roman, Anglo-Saxon, medieval, post-medieval). Relevant period specialists will be consulted and invited to comment on each section, after which appropriate amendments will be made.

Altogether Archaeology members were consulted to ascertain which areas of work are of most interest to them. This consultation took the form of a questionnaire in advance of the production of the draft Research Agenda, and also a workshop at which the Research Agenda and Research Strategy were discussed in detail. This is an important aspect of this project that differs from other Research Frameworks that tend to focus exclusively on the archaeological resource rather than on the people actually doing the archaeology. In this case, the Research Strategy takes on board the wishes of AA members and seeks to marry these with identified research priorities in order to suggest possible future projects that will prove popular with members.

### **Using and maintaining the North Pennines Research Framework**

This Research Framework should be consulted in tandem with the AA Business Plan and Funding Strategy, which was produced at the same time. There is no point in suggesting projects within the Research Strategy that have little hope of attracting funding, so realistic likelihood of funding must be an issue when considering potential future projects.

The Agenda and Strategy presented here are not intended to be restrictive. If opportunities arise for alternative projects then these should not be dismissed simply because they are not identified here as priorities. However, in terms of securing funds for proactive research, the priorities presented here should be used as a guide.

It is recommended that the Altogether Archaeology committee should consider this document annually, and make any changes it considers appropriate to take account of changing circumstances such as new information, new funding options, or new opportunities for partnership working. It is further recommended that a major appraisal of the document should be undertaken every five years, including updating of the Resource Assessment to incorporate results of work undertaken by the Altogether Archaeology group and others.

The AA committee intends to develop its own campaign of research based on this document, but also hopes that other groups, including more local heritage groups in the region and Universities wishing to undertake fieldwork in northern England, will use it to help develop their own projects. There may also be cases in which work within the North Pennines can be incorporated into projects covering a wider area; to this end, the NW and NE England Research Frameworks should also be consulted by anyone contemplating work in this area. Hopefully, this document will be of use to all groups with an interest in the region, and will be used to develop joint initiatives that will collectively contribute to much to our understanding of the ways in which our ancestors have lived in the North Pennines over the past 10,000 years, thus

contributing to an enhanced awareness of, and interest in, the local historic environment amongst current and future local communities.

## 2. Research Agenda

Based on the first part of this Research Framework, the Resource Assessment, the following themes have been highlighted as particularly worthy of attention. They have been chosen to address particular topics about which current knowledge is either lacking or inadequate, but where realistic prospects of progress are thought to exist through carefully targeted research. However, it is very wide-ranging and to attempt to address everything in it in the short term would be futile, hence the need for the Strategy presented as Part 3 of the Framework. This Agenda should not be regarded as exclusive; there will always be potential for further work if opportunities arise, but it does provide a summary of what the AA committee considers to be current priorities. In addition to the period-specific priorities set out below, it will always be a priority to undertake basic landscape surveys to enhance our understanding and inform future management of the landscape; this is considered further within the Research Strategy.

### 1. MESOLITHIC

1a. Mesolithic lithic material has been recovered from numerous places in the North Pennines, including in several cases during the investigation of later sites. There is clearly huge potential to discover more about our Mesolithic ancestors here, but a key problem is that many sites must lie buried beneath peat and are therefore difficult to locate, never mind investigate. AA is fortunate in having Dr Rob Young, one of Britain's most respected Mesolithic scholars, amongst its membership. There is therefore an opportunity to work with Rob to develop a long-term programme to study various aspects of the Mesolithic. The following are considered to be priority areas for research.

1b. Mesolithic site distribution. Using data from known sites, and information from comparable upland areas elsewhere, predictive modelling of the likely locations of as yet unknown sites should be attempted. This should take account of natural features such as caves, rockshelters, springlines, natural routeways and rivers; also unusual natural features such as waterfalls and particularly distinctive hills.

1c. Linked to the above, we should attempt to construct models of Mesolithic landscape exploitation, linking uplands of the North Pennines with river valleys and even perhaps the coast, considering how communities who spent much of the winter on lowlands to the east and west may have come into contact during the summer months.

1d. In areas where fields are ploughed, campaigns of fieldwalking should be undertaken using standard methodologies. This applies in particular to the

Eden Valley, but also to other areas of the North Pennines fringes and fields within Weardale, Teesdale and other valleys.

1e. A reassessment of all existing finds would be potentially of great use, including discussion of the likely sources of raw material. Where does the flint originate from, and what are the sources of the local chert used at Cow Green and elsewhere? This work is potentially of interest to AA members who may not wish, or may be unable, to go out 'digging'. Training should be offered to potentially interested members in what is currently a very specialist field; it would be very useful to have more members capable of undertaking lithics analysis to a basic level.

1f. It is particularly important to seek further early Mesolithic sites, should they exist, and use these to inform models of landscape exploitation throughout the Mesolithic, noting changes through time.

1g. The appearance of apparently Mesolithic finds on later sites is a phenomenon that demands explanation. Were there Mesolithic 'campsites' underlying all these later sites? Or were aspects of Mesolithic technology still practiced long after the conventional end of the Mesolithic? Recent work at Kirkhaugh certainly suggests the former, though the explanation need not be the same at all sites. Resolution of this issue has major implications for our understanding of prehistoric activity in the North Pennines through the Neolithic and potentially into the Bronze Age.

1h. A particularly important site demanding investigation is Staple Crag, Upper Teesdale. This appears to be an early Mesolithic site. A programme of test-pitting could be designed to assess its chronology and also its extent, which is currently unknown. It may be a large site that functioned as seasonal campsite by the river, returned to as part of the annual cycle over many generations, or it may have been more short-lived. Either way, it is important to gain a better understanding of it, which would also contribute to its future sustainable management.

1i. There is still a little more work to be done to complete the AA project at Cow Green, Upper Teesdale, including further excavation, the analysis of samples, and radiocarbon dating. Consideration should also be given to the possible locating and investigation of further adjacent sites in comparable landscape settings, linked perhaps to a consideration of probable routeways through the uplands linking the Eden Valley with Teesdale.

1j. Palaeoenvironmental research. Linked to all of the above, the North Pennines landscape offers immense possibilities for palaeoenvironmental research, using pollen analysis and other techniques. With specific regard to the Mesolithic, this could tell us much about the natural environment from the end of the 'Ice Age' through to the time when much of the land was clothed with mixed woodland and beyond. In particular, it may help us to inform us about patterns of Mesolithic landscape exploitation, such as whether sites are linked to the upland forest margin, and the extent to which the natural forest was artificially manipulated, for example through controlled burning. Palaeoenvironmental research is also key to understanding the 'end' of the

Mesolithic and the processes by which hunting and gathering eventually gave way to farming.

## **2. NEOLITHIC, CHALCOLITHIC AND EARLY BRONZE AGE.**

2a. The introduction of the Neolithic, the so-called 'Mesolithic-Neolithic transition' that saw the advent of farming, is a fundamental event in the story of the North Pennines, but is poorly understood and may have been a long drawn-out affair. The current lack of dated sites doesn't help. It may be that the issue is best addressed primarily through palaeoenvironmental research, linked to reassessment of lithic scatters.

2b. All we currently know of Neolithic settlement throughout the North Pennines comes from lithic scatters, and it can be difficult to know for sure whether particular scatters are Mesolithic or Neolithic, or a combination of both. As with the Mesolithic, a reassessment of all known lithics, coupled with new campaigns of fieldwalking, should be a priority. Indeed, the two periods can't really be separated in terms of this work, and should be treated together. For the Neolithic, studies of stone axes from the North Pennines and adjacent areas could offer clues as to relations between different areas, though teasing out the probable nature of these relations will require careful thought.

2c. Parts of Upper Teesdale and Baldersdale in the SE of the North Pennines are particularly well endowed with Neolithic rock art. Although the nature of the motifs and the apparent complexity of this art do not compare favourably with those of North Northumberland and parts of Scotland, this is still a resource of national importance. There are certainly places in the North Pennines where relationships between rock art and other (potentially dateable) features could justify excavation, but the results of the AA excavation at Tortie in the NW should serve to guard against over-optimism. The reasons for the absence of rock art throughout most of the North Pennines also require explanation - if we can establish why the phenomenon only occurs in certain places then this could be a start in attempting to account for its significance, even if the actual 'meaning' of the cupmarks and other motifs is destined to remain forever something of a mystery. As noted elsewhere in this document, it is crucial that rock art is not treated as a standalone subject; rather, projects should be encouraged that seek to account for it within the wider Neolithic world. It may well be that the time is now right for a large-scale project, or an integrated series of smaller-scale projects, to investigate rock art at a number of locations, including the North Pennines.

2d. Given work undertaken previously, the AA group has a particular affinity with the great Neolithic complex of Long Meg in the Eden valley. AA's interest in Long Meg arose initially due to the likely role the site played in cross-Pennines relationships, and it is now recognised that the site was probably a key 'hub' in activity throughout northern England. There is much further work to be done at Long Meg to build on the survey and small-scale excavation work undertaken to date by AA, and this should be done within the context of

more work locally within the Eden valley as well as further afield to investigate links between Long Meg and sites such as Thornborough to the east of the Pennines. Further work at Long Meg could be represent a flagship project for AA.

2e. No confirmed early Neolithic enclosures are known from the North Pennines. The excavations completed by AA at Long Meg were in reality little more than an evaluation, demonstrating the potential for further work. They do, however, support the notion that the large earthwork enclosure is earlier than the circle, although the two may have co-existed for quite some time. The radiocarbon dates obtained from the enclosure ditch are late Mesolithic or very early Neolithic, and these are probably residual, relating to earlier activity on the site before the construction of the enclosure. There is thus the intriguing suggestion that the site may have been of some importance before, possibly long before, the enclosure was constructed. The enclosure may well be of early Neolithic date, though further work is required to be sure. Another possible early Neolithic enclosure has recently been recognised to the south-west of the North Pennines, just south of Kirkby Stephen on Birkett Knott. Located on the edge of the uplands with splendid views northwards along the Upper Eden Valley, this site should be surveyed in detail, and possibly subjected to small-scale excavation to establish its nature and chronology.

2f. The nature of monuments of potential Neolithic or Chalcolithic date throughout the North Pennines, of which only a few are known (eg Dryburn 'henge', Lunedale stone circle, Egglestone stone circle) could be investigated to ascertain their nature and potential link to wider patterns of Neolithic activity. The recent recognition of an apparent henge at Allendale is very exciting, and needs to be tested through detailed field survey and perhaps excavation. All these sites seem to be located in relation to pathways across the landscape. Such work must be linked to the work on lithics and possible settlement sites discussed above.

2g. The AA investigation of the early metal-worker's grave at Kirkhaugh in 2014 led to headlines around the world and is one of the most significant fieldwork exercises yet undertaken by the group. However, the context for this grave remains frustratingly unclear. It is assumed, not unreasonably, that the person in the grave had died while on an expedition searching for easily exploitable copper reserves, but whether or not copper was ever mined in the North Pennines at this time, or indeed at any point in prehistoric or Roman times, remains unknown. A project could be designed specifically to investigate 'a context for Kirkhaugh', including analysis of possible early copper mining sites. This could also include the re-investigation of the second cairn at Kirkhaugh and possibly also an attempt to locate contemporary settlement through fieldwalking and other means.

2h. In addition to Kirkhaugh, which on the basis of currently available evidence is very much a special case, a small number of early Bronze Age burial monuments is known from the North Pennines (eg Brackenber Moor - excavated by AA in partnership with the Appleby Archaeology Group; Crawley Edge, Weardale; Birkrigg Fell, Blanchland; Kellah Burn, South Tynedale; and others known from antiquarian reports such as Kirkcarrion above Middleton-in-

Teesdale, and at Holwick). Further examination of all of these, including consideration of the landscape location of the monuments and detailed analysis of all finds, would be a worthwhile exercise to see whether patterns, and perhaps regional variations, can be identified. How, for example, do the burials of the North Pennines relate to others in Cumbria, Durham and Northumberland? This work would have added value if it could be linked to the excavation and detailed scientific analysis of one or more further burials; a number of possible sites are available.

### 3. LATER BRONZE AGE AND IRON AGE

3a. There is a need to better understand the transition from the monument dominated landscapes of the Neolithic to the agricultural landscapes of the middle Bronze Age. This could be achieved through carefully targeted excavations at Bronze Age settlement sites such as Crawley Edge (Weardale) or Scordale (Eden Valley), possibly also further investigations at Bracken Rigg (Upper Teesdale). These investigations should be linked to palaeoenvironmental research into changes in vegetation linked to the development of farming. They would inform us how much chronological overlap there was between the burial monuments we currently tend to refer to as 'early' Bronze Age and the cairnfields and settlements that we label 'middle' or 'later' Bronze Age. Was there really a dramatic shift from the former to the latter? If so, did the former retain significance to later Bronze Age communities? Or did the houses and fields of later prehistory somehow play roles as 'ceremonial' monuments in addition to their practical domestic and agricultural function?

3b. Numerous late prehistoric farmsteads are now known throughout the North Pennines, but despite a handful of excavations their chronology is still not well understood. The recent discovery of many more such sites, several with accompanying field systems, during the Miner-Farmer survey of Alston Moor and AA lidar surveys of other areas, provides a fascinating opportunity to analyse late prehistoric landscapes in their entirety. A key question to address is the extent to which these sites predate the Roman occupation. Comparable sites in different places could be investigated to provide comparisons with the sites recently recorded by English Heritage on Alston Moor. (Note - this work is potentially as relevant to the Roman section, below, as to this one).

3c. There are currently no known 'hillforts' in the North Pennines, akin to those of north Northumberland, but a handful of apparent palisaded or earthwork enclosures are known, for example in Upper Teesdale, in Baldersdale, and on Alston Moor. These may prove to be of different dates, but it is possible they do represent some kind of move towards large enclosed settlements during the Iron Age. They should all be surveyed, including geophysics, and small-scale excavations should be undertaken primarily to ascertain their chronology. Once the date of these structures is known, we will be better able to construct models of late prehistoric settlement in the North Pennines, including suggestions regarding notions of tribal identity (eg. did people of the

North Pennines regard themselves as ‘Brigantes’) and how these may have changed through time.

3d. It is currently difficult to say anything meaningful about the nature of late prehistoric ‘religion’, given the absence of burials or specifically ritual monuments. Neither is it easy, given the absence of sites to investigate, to suggest ways in which this conundrum could be addressed. It appears as though natural places, perhaps rivers and bogs, may have played a key role as ceremonial foci. There was almost certainly also a ritual dimension to ‘functional’ structures such as houses and fields. Using work done elsewhere, it might be a useful exercise to try and build a speculative model of later prehistoric ritual and belief in the North Pennines.

3e. The technology of metalworking and the sourcing of ores. It is not known whether any copper was mined in the North Pennines during prehistoric times, but a few potentially early copper mining sites are available for investigation; with regard to Bronze, the required tin was obviously imported from elsewhere. The mechanisms by which copper and tin (and indeed gold) were brought to the area are poorly understood, and could justify research. Evidence for small-scale iron working, on a domestic scale, has been found on excavations, for example at Forcegarth, but how much ironworking actually took place in the North Pennines during the Iron Age? It is known that local iron reserves were exploited extensively in parts of Upper Teesdale during medieval and post-medieval times, but to what extent may this process have begun in the Iron Age (or Roman times)? It certainly appears from a brief analysis of the distributions of roundhouse settlements and slag heaps that there may be a relationship between the two; this could be easily tested by a small campaign of excavation and dating.

3f. Useful work could be done regarding the re-analysis of artefacts of Bronze Age and Iron Age date, including metalwork and pottery, from a number of different sites. Further work could, for example, be done on the finds from the Heathery Burn cave, and on other hoards, notably Gilmonby.

## **4. ROMAN**

4a. The Roman fort of Epiacum is one of the iconic sites of the North Pennines, yet it has seen hardly any excavation. While the excavation of the fort itself is not really a priority (though the re-excavation and slight expansion of the 1950s trench could be justified to provide clarification of the fort’s origins and chronology), the investigation of surrounding areas, including the vicus and possible cemetery, could potentially tell us much about the nature of activity here during, and potentially beyond, the Roman occupation.

4b. The only logical explanation for Epiacum existing here is that it was built primarily as a base from which to oversee lead and silver mining, and possibly other industrial activity. The nature of Roman industrial activity in the North Pennines has, however, still to be established. It is likely that much evidence has been destroyed by later, larger-scale industrial activity, but there are a few

places where remnants of Roman activity are thought to survive and these could form foci for potentially very interesting analysis. A start could be made through the current OREsome North Pennines project, managed by the North Pennines AONB, which aims to complete two fieldwork projects at 'early' mining sites.

4c. The Maiden Way road, on which Epiacum is situated, should be resurveyed in great detail using modern techniques including lidar and geophysics. Although some of its course has been lost through agricultural improvement, and in places on higher ground where the route is still used the surface has been relayed in more recent times, there are many places where the Roman road surface appears to survive relatively intact.

4d. At the south end of the Maiden Way, AA could attempt some further fieldwork to build on the results of the recent geophysical survey at Kirkby Thore, which appears to demonstrate the presence of a vicus extending along the road from the fort's west entrance.

4e. Linked to a new study of the Maiden Way, attempts should be made to clarify the existence and nature of other Roman roads through the North Pennines. A good start has recently been made through the AA investigations near Hexham Racecourse of what could be the 'lost' road between Epiacum and Corbridge, though its presence remains unproven along much of its assumed course. Further work could take place on Stainmore (including perhaps detailed survey and geophysics at Bowes and Brough), and also to investigate the supposed road between Bowes and Stanhope, shown as Roman on OS maps but without any proof of its date.

4f. In addition to studies of the Roman military infrastructure, it is crucial that attempts are made to integrate such work with investigations of the 'native world'. How did local farming communities develop under Roman rule? How many of the numerous 'native farmsteads' now known throughout the North Pennines were occupied during Roman times? Did these farmsteads produce food for the Roman military market? Did young men from them sign up for the Roman army? Were the occupants of the farmsteads also engaged in lead and silver mining, perhaps under close Roman management, in an early version of the 'Miner-farmer' landscapes of post-medieval times? All these questions are potentially addressable through analysis of a selection of native farmsteads. It is very important that Roman military archaeology and Roman-British native settlement are not studied as separate entities; both will benefit from more integrated study which is essential if we are to approach meaningful interpretations of life in the North Pennines during the Roman occupation.

4g. The question of what happened in the North Pennines when Roman rule came to an end in the early fifth century is a fascinating subject about which virtually nothing is currently known. This is considered in the next section, but could equally well be addressed by a project focussing primarily on the Roman period.

## 5. EARLY MEDIEVAL

5a. We know virtually nothing of the post-Roman 'Dark Ages' in the North Pennines. The obvious place to begin an investigation is Epiacum - what happened here when the Roman pay-chests no longer arrived? Assuming that Epiacum was occupied until the end, or at least almost to the end, of the Roman occupation, what happened to the people who lived in the fort and the vicus, both military personnel and others? Some answers may be available through carefully targeted excavation, although it is possible that answers will remain forever elusive. Elsewhere, at Bowes and Brough, for example, settlement may have been continuous, leading eventually to the construction of medieval castles within both Roman forts. Medieval activity at both sites may, however, hamper attempts to recover evidence of early-medieval activity to a greater extent than at Epiacum. It is important to try and address the issue of early medieval activity at Roman sites, but significant breakthroughs may be reliant on luck as well as good planning.

5b. Some of our so-called 'Romano-British' settlements may also have been occupied through into 'Dark Age' times. A good contender is the particularly large example at Gossipgate on Alston Moor, but there are many others. Carefully targeted fieldwork at some such sites, aimed primarily at their abandonment rather than their origins, might enable us demonstrate occupation through into post-Roman times.

5c. Place name studies have much to offer early medieval archaeology, both names of settlements and of other landscape features. There are methodologies available for landscape-level place-name projects which could be readily adapted for the North Pennines. Work of this kind would appeal to some AA members who are not so keen on outdoor work. Results would potentially tell us much about the nature of Anglo-Saxon, Viking and medieval settlement. However, the work must be done properly, as names can be misleading. Participants would be required to attend training sessions before beginning their own research, and to undertake their research in accordance with guidelines provided. The work could be done in small groups, with contributors able to study their own home areas. Results would be made available on the website and would be of great interest to many local people.

5d. The early medieval period saw the transformation of the Roman landscape into that of the medieval. Amongst the profound changes were the change in settlement pattern from one of scattered farmsteads with roundhouses to lowland villages, and the eventual acceptance of Christianity. Detailed survey of those villages thought to have possible early medieval origins, combined with architectural survey of all churches thought to contain pre-Conquest masonry, should be a priority, with all this work collated into a single archive with user-friendly index. Small-scale excavations could then be planned to investigate particular aspects of some of these settlements.

5e. St Botolph's Chapel, Frosterley, partially excavated during the AA project with profoundly important results, still requires further work. In particular, the skeleton recorded during the 2014 excavations should be fully excavated and

subjected to scientific analysis as it has enormous potential to tell us much about the site within the context of early medieval Weardale. The wider picture of settlement during the Northumbrian Golden Age, and links between North Pennines sites and the well-known monasteries such as Monkwearmouth, and sites such as St Andrew's in Bishop Auckland, demand further work as a result of the results from St Botolph's. The results from St Botolph's illustrate the great increase in knowledge that can occur when a speculative excavation is carefully planned and expertly undertaken. If this can happen in Frosterley, then there must be much scope for similar results in numerous other villages in and around the North Pennines.

5f. Wydon Eals, in South Tynedale near Featherstone Castle, was intended to be a module of the AA project, but for various reasons this turned out to be impractical. Many timber coffins were excavated here in the nineteenth century, and the site appears to have been quite an extensive cemetery. One of the coffins was recently dated to the late seventh century. Although the ground has dried up somewhat since the nineteenth-century discoveries, due largely to the artificial drainage (the original construction of which led to the initial discovery of the coffins), it is thought that important remains still survive here and the site would certainly repay further investigation.

5g. The apparently unique settlement sites of Simy Folds, above Holwick in Upper Teesdale, are apparently of ninth-century date and demand further investigation. Do they relate to an expansion of Scandinavian settlement from Cumbria eastwards into Upper Teesdale, as has been suggested, or do their origins lie to the east? Are there more sites of a similar date in the surrounding landscape? A project designed to set the Simy Folds settlements within their contemporary landscape could be an important part of a project looking more widely at early medieval settlement. In his survey of Upper Teesdale, Dennis Coggins notes several settlement sites that could be early medieval; a sample of these could be evaluated to determine their chronology.

5h. Industrial activity. While much industrial activity is assumed during Roman times, and demonstrated during medieval times, virtually nothing is known of early medieval industrial activity. Careful survey of known medieval sites may result in evidence of earlier activity.

5i. The impact of 'Vikings' on the settlement pattern of the North Pennines. Current evidence suggests that Scandinavian influence was great in the Eden Valley and Teesdale, but virtually absent in the NE sector of the North Pennines, including Weardale. What are the reasons for this?

## **6. MEDIEVAL**

6a. Basic survey work should be undertaken to establish how many North Pennines settlements have medieval origins, and estimate their potential for surviving medieval remains. This information can then be used to plan campaigns of investigation at individual settlements, enabling variations throughout the North Pennines to be assessed. In places where there is

reasonable potential for medieval discoveries, test pitting could be carried out to test for the presence of medieval pottery and other artefacts.

6b. All churches with surviving medieval fabric should be properly recorded. Thought should be given to the ways in which communities throughout the North Pennines interacted with the church; what did Christianity actually mean to a medieval peasant or miner in the North Pennines?

6c. Other than churches and castles, few standing buildings of medieval date are thought to survive in the North Pennines. Those that do, such as Randalholme (arguably the most interesting building in the North Pennines) in South Tynedale, should all be surveyed in detail. Buildings of presumed medieval date survive as earthworks in many places, for example at Holwick (Upper Teesdale) where several such sites were recorded during the AA project. A selection of such sites, in different places throughout the North Pennines, should be subjected to detailed survey and excavation to find out more about them and establish their chronologies.

6d. Blanchland is a special place that demands a comprehensive architectural and archaeological survey. The way in which the post-medieval estate village utilises the plan of the medieval Premonstratensian abbey is unique, and much medieval fabric still survives within the church and other buildings.

6e. Links with Durham are crucial to understanding the development of society in the eastern North Pennines throughout the medieval period. Recent work by Sheila Newton at Muggleswick demonstrates the potential for combined field work and documentary study, and more of this should be attempted for other areas.

6f. Much of the vast open landscape of the North Pennines was managed as hunting forests, and later as parks, during medieval times (and possibly earlier). Using a combination of landscape survey and documentary research, an attempt should be made to recognise the boundaries of these forests and parks. Work should be undertaken to investigate how they relate to castles and villages within and in the vicinity of the North Pennines.

6g. The North Pennines was clearly important for lead and silver mining during medieval times, but also for other industries such as iron and quarrying. The influence of Durham was great in the east, with, for example, supplies from Muggleswick Grange and Frosterley Marble from Weardale finding their way to the cathedral. AA work at Westgate Castle has demonstrated the high quality of architecture there, presumably the work of masons who also worked on the cathedral. The use of fluorspar in the mortar at Westgate demonstrates clearly that lead mining on a large scale was underway in the vicinity by the 12<sup>th</sup>/13<sup>th</sup> century, but we must seek to gain a better understanding of this industry through a combination of archaeology and documentary survey.

6h. Much work is required to better understand medieval agriculture throughout the North Pennines. Where fields systems of apparent medieval date survive, these should be recorded using lidar, aerial photography and field survey. In the uplands, investigations into medieval transhumance,

including analysis of shielings, should be undertaken. Angus Winchester has effectively demonstrated the potential of using documentary research combined with landscape analysis to investigate upland land use in medieval and post-medieval times; similar work should be attempted for all areas of the North Pennines - where no documentation survives, similar work can still be attempted using informed speculation based on comparable areas for which documentation does exist. Areas of the landscape that have been well recorded in recent times (eg Holwick, Alston Moor, Allen Valleys) should be compared to enable contrasting patterns of medieval agriculture to be recognised.

## 7. POST-MEDIEVAL

7a. The summary document of the North East Regional Research Framework notes that 'The North Pennines forms a distinct post-medieval landscape zone. Despite extensive work on the industrial archaeology of the lead industry, other aspects of this important regional industry merit research. There is a need to explore the potential for expanding our knowledge of day-to-day life in the dales. The architectural and archaeological investigation of post-medieval houses is also crucial'. This need to record aspects of day-to-day life effectively includes work on settlement patterns, architecture, industry, agriculture, religion and transport; in short, what is being called for here is an integrated research project covering all aspects of post-medieval life throughout the North Pennines. The recent Miner-Farmer project on Alston Moor demonstrates the value of such an approach, which should be replicated elsewhere.

7b. While we do have a good general understanding of the post-medieval lead industry, there is much to be learned about the history of individual sites through carefully targeted fieldwork. Many sites are in perilous condition, with a serious risk of information being lost forever through erosion. Some work is being undertaken by the current ORESome North Pennines project, run by the AONB Partnership, but there is much more to be done. Basic surveying of sites such as Pike Law, above Newbiggin, a landscape of shafts, leats, hushes, dams, adits etc, is required. Further work could take place to build on AA's efforts at the Shildon engine house, Blanchland, including investigation of boilers, washing floors etc. At Wiregill Mine a large area of washing floors (including timber structures), plus buildings and other structures requires recording. At Westernhopeburn Mines some early 18th/19th century sites with small intact dressing floors need survey and partial excavation. A ground survey of the Tynehead area, including some very early mining sites with dressing floors and other features, is a priority. A project to map the mining leats of Tynedale, Allendale, Weardale and Teesdale is required; this could utilise the methodology developed for the AA watercourses survey at Nenthead. Work is also required at smelt mills, for example the splendid site with chimney, condenser, and furnace metalwork at Feldon, near Muggleswick. Feldon is a good example of an upland, peat-fueled lead smelting mill. These were typically constructed from the late 17th century as peat replaced kiln-dried chopwood as the principal smelting mill fuel. Their

predecessors were typically located on lower, wooded ground further from the upland lead veins, connected with the mines by carriers' tracks. Several of these early smelting mill sites have now been located, in an arc running from north to east of the upland zone. Some were used only for a few decades from the mid 17th century before being abandoned, and their remains consequently preserve the footprint of industrial buildings from a relatively short period before the later industrial revolution. Sites such as Plankey Mill on the River Allen, Red Lead Mill in Hexhamshire, and Blackton in Teesdale would be well worth surveying.

7c. Architectural recording work at churches and chapels of post-medieval date should be completed, building on recent surveys by Peter Ryder. Surveys of vernacular architecture would also be useful, some of which could perhaps be done in partnership with the North East Vernacular Architecture Group (NEVAG).

7d. Much useful recording work could be done on the post-medieval transport network, including the railways, of the North Pennines. This could include: the winding engine houses for the Weardale Iron Company railway (including that at Scutterhill above Westgate); the loco shed at Groverake; the winding engine house site next to Stanhope-Waskerley road, near Hisehope Head.

7e. Much research is required on ironstone mining in the North Pennines, though much thought will have to be given as to which areas to concentrate upon. This could be linked to the study of ironworking through the ages, from the Iron Age to post-medieval times.

7f. Thought should be given to surveying historic aspects of some 'natural' elements of the landscape, for example historic woodland and watercourses, and the ways these changed through post-medieval times.

7g. There is huge scope for documentary/archival research into many aspects of post-medieval life in the North Pennines, using historic maps and other documents. This could be done in partnership with the three county records offices.



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