

# **Standing on the shoulders of giants**

## **(3 tales of digital preservation)**

Enduring value, digital inheritance  
and the information age

Digital Data in 2002

Digital Archaeology: not an option

Policy Building for preservation

Other issues



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# **Will future generations of scholars be able to use the data sets we have created?**

Hopefully, perhaps, maybe, who knows?



# *Strategies for Digital Data*

## *Findings and Recommendations from Digital Data in Archaeology: A Survey of User Needs*



Cadw



DoENI



English  
Heritage



The  
Heritage  
Council



Historic  
Scotland



RCHME



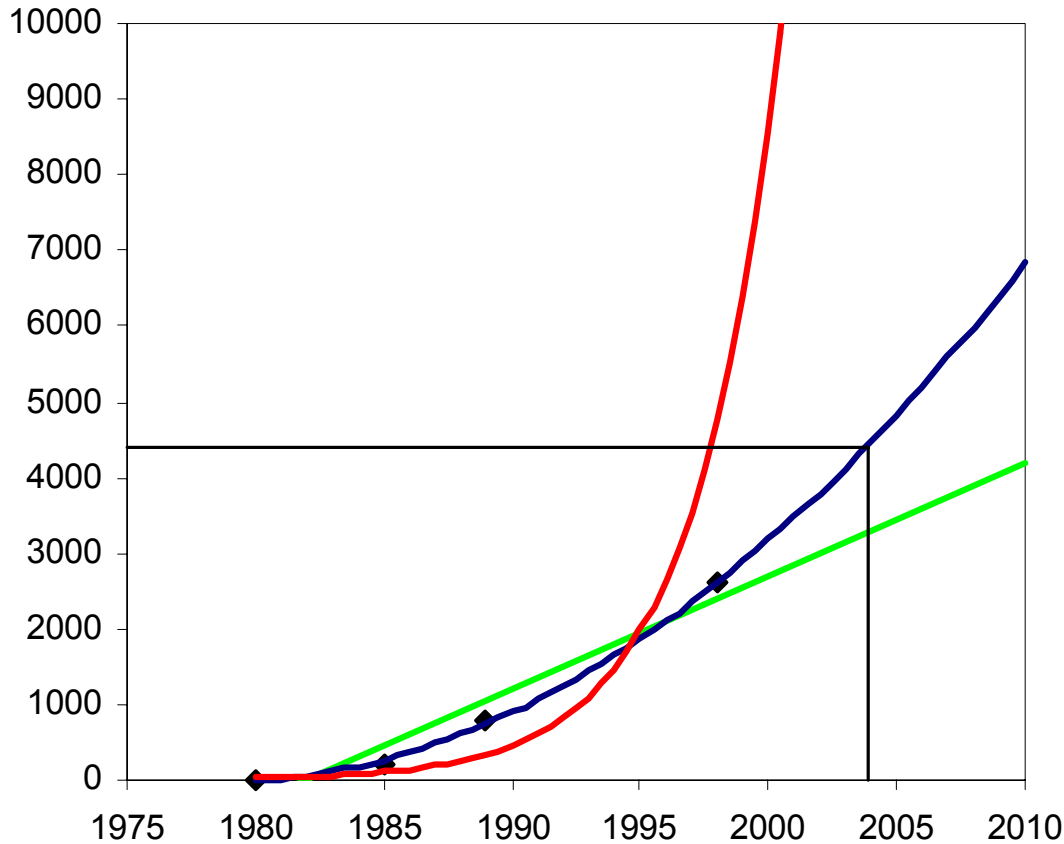
RCAHMS



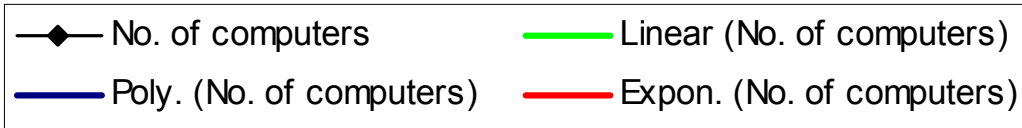
RCAHMW



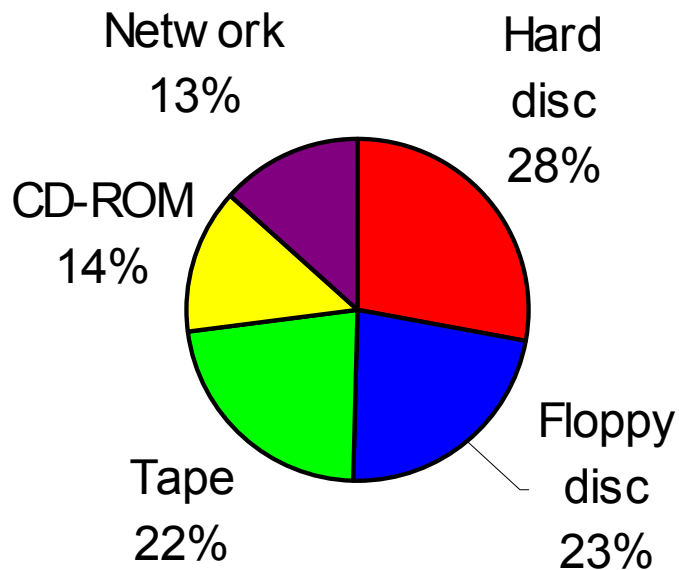
ARCHAEOLOGY  
DATA SERVICE



***The projected growth in the use of computers in British archaeology***



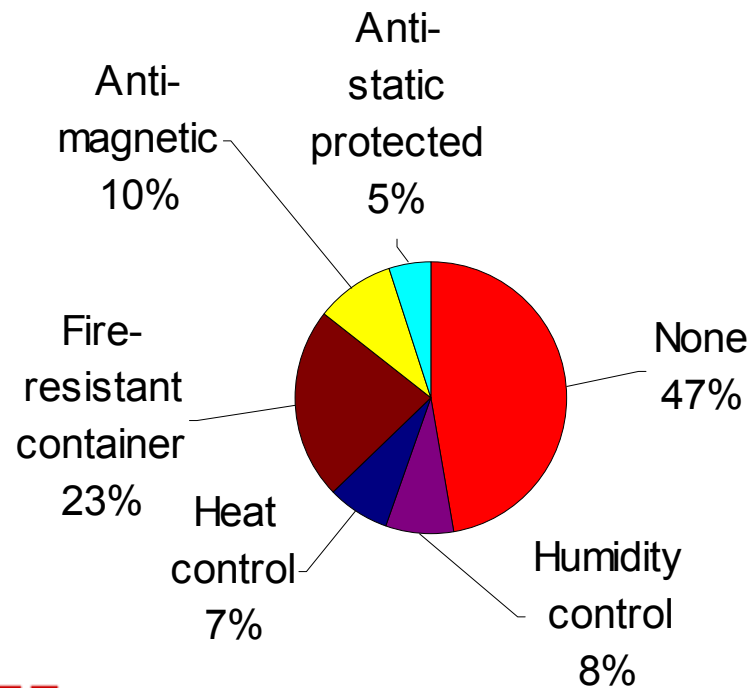
# The present state of digital archiving in UK archaeology



**The popularity of certain storage options**



# The present state of digital archiving in UK archaeology



**The popularity of typical strategies for protecting physical media**



**The archaeological record is decaying faster  
in digital form than it would have done in  
the ground**

**... and then there was Newham**



# The Newham Archive contained ...

6432 individual files

1500 excavation reports (or parts thereof)

700 database files

1200 geophysics files

200 separate projects

approx. 150 excavations





# The Newham Archive: Lessons

This is no way to do business!  
Physical Media not the main problem  
Software problems (migration)  
Data to information (documentation)  
Planning for re-use  
Forward planning is much cheaper



# Digital Archive Pilot Project Excavation Records (DAPPER)

Finding appropriate archival and publication levels

- “Index Level Archive”
- “Assessment Level Archive”
- “Research Archives”
- “Integrated Archives”
- Integrating archive and publication
- An ongoing debate (watch this space!)



# Collateral issues

IPR

Business models for digital preservation

Costs of failure

Sustaining creativity

Awareness raising



# Will future generations of scholars have anything to work with?

It's our responsibility to ensure that they do  
Preservation from the outset

If we lose our focus on this issue, then we risk failure



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# **There are professional reasons why we should want to preserve:**

The archaeological record

Research values

Access = preservation

Professional recognition

Problems with conventional publication



# What are the values of good scholarship?

Creativity

Consistency

Economy

Reference to scholarship

Comprehensiveness ←

Articulacy

Appeal to empirical base

Hypothesis / Hermeneutic driven

Peer acclaim

**Of all these, only  
comprehensiveness  
presents serious  
challenge for  
E-scholarship**

