



# Coastal & Intertidal Zone Archaeological Network

Evaluating a community archaeology project, 2015-2018

Produced for MOLA by Esther Gill, Bright Culture, May 2018



BrightCulture

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## I. Summary

In its original application to the Heritage Lottery Fund, MOLA stated that:

*Through discovery of the past, we aim to enrich lives today and impact positively on the future<sup>1</sup>.*

Over the three years 2015-2018 it has undoubtedly achieved this and more. Since its establishment, CITiZAN has developed into an expansive and responsive project that embraces a hands-on and generous approach to working with individuals, communities and groups around England to identify, record and monitor coastal and intertidal archaeology. It has been delivered by a hard-working and cohesive team, based in offices in London, York and Portsmouth, working within a CITiZAN ethos that promotes *'friendliness, having fun, getting stuck-in but doing something important'*<sup>2</sup>.

CITiZAN has exceeded its output targets in all areas, and created a project culture in which its team of archaeologists have become active participants in public and community archaeology, sharing their experience and knowledge regularly through hands-on activity, guided walks, training events, conferences and papers.

### Project Achievements

Over the first phase of CITiZAN, it has:

- Delivered 227 outreach events, reaching over 9000 people.
- Run 120 training sessions, with 1337 attendances and 583 people trained to use the CITiZAN monitoring tools, over 40% of who had little or no previous involvement with the subject.
- Provided opportunities for active, hands-on volunteering, leading to an overall volunteer contribution to the project valued at £193,263.
- Recruited 2153 CITiZAN Surveyors who have downloaded the App or uploaded data and images to the website.
- Engaged young people, aged 16-25, through bespoke project activity, with around 8% of participants falling within this age range.
- Provided work experience to four student placements and skills development to early-career and student archaeologists.
- Tapped into a broad public interest in archaeology, reaching over 1.4 million through its collaboration with Britain at Low Tide and engaging many others through social media and the website.
- Developed new initiatives such as the training for Young Archaeologist Club (YAC) Leaders and the CITiZAN Edition of the BAJR Skills Passport.
- Raised the profile of coastal and intertidal archaeology among the general public and professional archaeology sector.
- Providing professional support and resources to existing archaeology projects and societies.

<sup>1</sup> MOLA HLF Application, 06.08.14, p. 11

<sup>2</sup> Interview with Stephanie Ostrich, Project Officer, April 2018

- Established a standard and publically accessible infrastructure for recording and monitoring coastal and intertidal archaeology.
- Contributed to climate change discussions at symposia and conferences internationally, raising awareness of the potential for coastal archaeology to make climate change relevant to local communities.

### Challenges

The project has faced a challenge in meeting its stated ambition to actively engage with young people aged 16-25 through its core outreach and training work. As the project has developed, it has identified a more bespoke approach that has successfully engaged with young people within this age range. This has included responding to their needs and interests more closely with a very flexible approach; working with partners who already engage this age group; or small-scale interventions such as student placements and links with young people who are home-schooled. Across the three years, around 8% of participants have come from the age range 16-25.

These bespoke approaches are resource and time intensive, require particular skills and an interest in working with young adults, and often don't lead to high levels of repeat engagement. There remains a tension within the project between focussing resources on working with this age group, whilst also supporting individuals and volunteer groups where there is a greater likelihood of sustained involvement in CITiZAN's goals.

### CITiZAN Phase 2

The first phase of the CITiZAN project is now completed and it is clear that throughout these three years the project has continued to reflect on and refine its practices and delivery approaches. The Project Team have been engaged with the on-going formative evaluation through this first phase, and the learning from this has fed into the development of the second phase of CITiZAN.

This evaluation has identified that the success of the project in engaging participants and volunteers is largely down to factors that should all be replicated in the next phase:

- The CITiZAN ethos;
- A clear path of engagement for participants and volunteers;
- Offering active and hands-on volunteering opportunities;
- Working with locally-based groups;
- A strong staff team.

*CITiZAN is a really good, friendly team. I have loved getting involved with the project. I feel like I am contributing something of value to a project that is important.*

CITiZAN Volunteer, January 2017

## 2. Introduction

The evaluation of the CITiZAN project was commissioned early in 2015 at the start of the project, enabling the evaluator to be involved with the development of the feedback process and the overall evaluation. Since then, an on-going formative process has been implemented, in which evaluation has been central to the life of the project, with regular opportunities for reflection and learning each year from the experience of delivery. During this first phase, two interim evaluation reports have been written (Appendices 2 & 3) and a review of the project's impact (Appendix 1) prepared for the submission of a second application to the Heritage Lottery Fund in 2018.

This final report on the first phase of the CITiZAN project, 2015-2018, complements the existing analysis with a focus on the volunteer and participant experience, and the extent to which the project met its ambitions for people and communities as outlined in the original application to the HLF.

In this application, MOLA outlined a range of anticipated project outcomes (see pages 10-11 of the HLF Round 2 submission, dated 6<sup>th</sup> August 2014):

- Establishing a national, structured survey system that will lead to improved monitoring and management of coastal heritage.
- Enabling new sites to be discovered and recorded through greater public awareness of coastal archaeology.

- A programme of outreach events that will engage communities and raise awareness of coastal and intertidal archaeology.
- A programme of hands-on and outdoors volunteer training, supporting people's well-being through active engagement.
- Creating a legacy of trained and motivated volunteers who have had enjoyable experiences with the project, building their own skills and enabling them to contribute to the monitoring of coastal heritage.
- Raising public awareness of coastal archaeology, an area that is now well interpreted for a general audience.
- Involving local communities in learning about and monitoring their coastal sites.

Above all, the project sought:

*Through the discovery of the past, we aim to enrich lives today and impact positively on the future<sup>3</sup>.*

### The Evaluation Process

The evaluation process has been on-going and hands-on throughout the period 2015-2018, enabling the Evaluator to witness the 'CITiZAN ethos' and to understand the development of the project over this period. Qualitative and quantitative data has been gathered through:

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<sup>3</sup> MOLA HLF Application 06.08.14, section 4b, p. 11

- participant feedback forms from both training and outreach events;
- on-site consultant observations;
- a series of structured interviews in 2016 with CITiZAN volunteers who had attended a training workshop for the app or who had downloaded it.
- structured interviews with and written responses from wider CITiZAN team;
- Experiencing the project as a ‘volunteer’, including being trained on both the paper based monitoring systems and using the app.
- Evaluator observations and informal participant discussions during visits to seven sites and training workshops, five outreach events, and the 2017 CITiZAN Conference.

The participant feedback forms the backbone of the evaluation process, collecting data from participants at outreach and training events across the three years. The responses to these forms provide data on:

- Experiences of the event.
- Level of existing archaeological training/involvement.
- Interest in future CITiZAN events.
- What they feel they learnt during the event.
- Confidence in using the skills they have learnt
- Confidence in talking about the project.

In mid-2017, further questions were added to the forms to gather data on repeat attendance at training events, following the observation that this was happening more than was originally anticipated. A total of 427 forms were returned from outreach events (comprising 5% of participants) and 484 forms were turned from training workshops (comprising 36% of volunteers). The significantly higher percentage of forms return from training events reflects the different nature of outreach and training events; the deeper engagement of volunteers in training which makes them more likely to complete a form; and the fact that some outreach events were led by partners.

### A Reflective Project

Throughout the project, the CITiZAN team has been engaged with the evaluation process and have participated in reflecting on their work and the delivery of the project. This has run alongside a project culture that is both hands-on and can-do; the two approaches do not always sit easily together. In part, the reflective nature of the project has been due to the consistency of the team which has seen little change over the three years.

### Project Definitions

CITiZAN is an expansive project, led by an energetic and engaged staff team that have been able to develop their specific interests or build upon existing expertise. This has enabled the project to reach and engage with a wide range of people, one day working with a group of academics, another being part of an art course looking at coastal

locations. In order to create a coherent picture of how the different elements of the project relate to each other, the following definitions have been used throughout the report.

**Outreach Event:** Events held to raise awareness and inform people about the project and coastal and inter-tidal archaeology, ranging from a stall at a community event through to a full-day conference.

**Training Event:** A workshop involving the active training of individuals, who have signed up to be part of it.

**Professional Engagement:** The professional engagement strand of the project includes the conferences, published and un-published papers.

**Participant:** Members of the public who had taken part in any element of the CITiZAN project, primarily through outreach events.

**Volunteer:** Anyone who has attended a Training Event and either as part of that workshop, or subsequently, has uploaded data via the App, website or paper records.

## **CITiZAN as Community Archaeology**

Whilst undertaking the evaluation it has been interesting to reflect on the term ‘community archaeology’ and how it is used in relation to the project. CITiZAN now sits with the MOLA community archaeology brief and is described using terms such as ‘community archaeology’, ‘community-led’, ‘citizen science’, a ‘network of volunteers’.

Community archaeology is a subset of the wider field of public archaeology: the intersection between the world of professional archaeology and the wider public, whether this be through museums, TV and media, lectures, talks etc<sup>4</sup>. Within this, and overlapping it, the definition of community archaeology is fluid, depending upon the wider context in which it is being used and who is using it. It can range from the sharing of knowledge in more accessible and engaging way with the ‘public’ through to the active contribution of skilled and experienced ‘amateur’ archaeologists working with local archaeological societies. In general, precise definitions seem to be avoided: community archaeology involves people other than professional (paid) archaeologists.

Unlike other areas of shared curation or interpretation of historical subjects or heritage assets, such as projects planned as ‘community heritage’, archaeology brings with it a professional discipline, skills and practices that are clearly defined and which are learnt through higher education or considerable volunteer or paid work. This can effectively work as a barrier to an untrained participant – often representative of much of ‘the community’ – getting involved with archaeology and can impact on the extent of real community involvement. What role can the wider public play in archaeology? Is there a space where dialogue and shared authority can happen? What has been CITiZAN’s role in this field?

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<sup>4</sup> See Moshenka, ‘Introduction: public archaeology as practice and scholarship where archaeology meets the world’ in Key Concepts in Public Archaeology, Moshenka, UCL Press, 2017

In practice, as a large, multi-year project, CITiZAN has been 'archaeology', 'public archaeology' and 'community archaeology' at differing times, and particularly, in different locations. As a project working around the coastline of England, with different partners, landowners and site requirements, CITiZAN's approach has had to be responsive and flexible to the situation. Its outreach programme has undertaken regular public archaeology events: talks, conferences, stalls at community events. All of this supports its core commitment to expanding local communities' involvement with archaeology, extending the archaeological knowledge base outside the professional sector, supporting volunteer groups to lead work and providing tools such as the CITiZAN App and monitoring forms to enable people to get involved.

Examples of where CITiZAN has worked closely with and responded to the interests of the local community in different ways include:

- Mersea Island, Essex: Work here was prompted by local interest and there has been extensive and on-going local involvement in training and outreach work. The on-the-ground partnerships have included the museum, the local fishing industry and individuals who have brought their skills and local historical knowledge to the project.
- Drigg, Cumbria: Timbers washed up prompted a local man to send CITiZAN some images to find out more, leading to a pooling of local, CITiZAN and other professional resources brought in by the project to explore the site.

- Medmerry, Hampshire: CITiZAN has worked closely with Chichester and District Archaeological Society (CDAS) to provide additional expertise and resources to an existing, highly professional volunteer group.

In these locations, CITiZAN's involvement has been successful due to the sharing and valuing of professional archaeological expertise alongside the expertise provided by local people: knowledge of the environmental conditions; historical context and changes; access to resources and complementary skills that 'the community' can offer. These have been professional-community partnerships that are exemplars of CITiZAN's vision and its version of the broad field of community archaeology.



### 3. Project Activity

CITIZAN 2015-2018 Impact (Appendix 1) lists the activities of the whole project in detail, from April 2015 to December 2017. In addition there have been a small number of additional outreach and training events in the final quarter, January to March 2018. The headline figures for the whole project are:

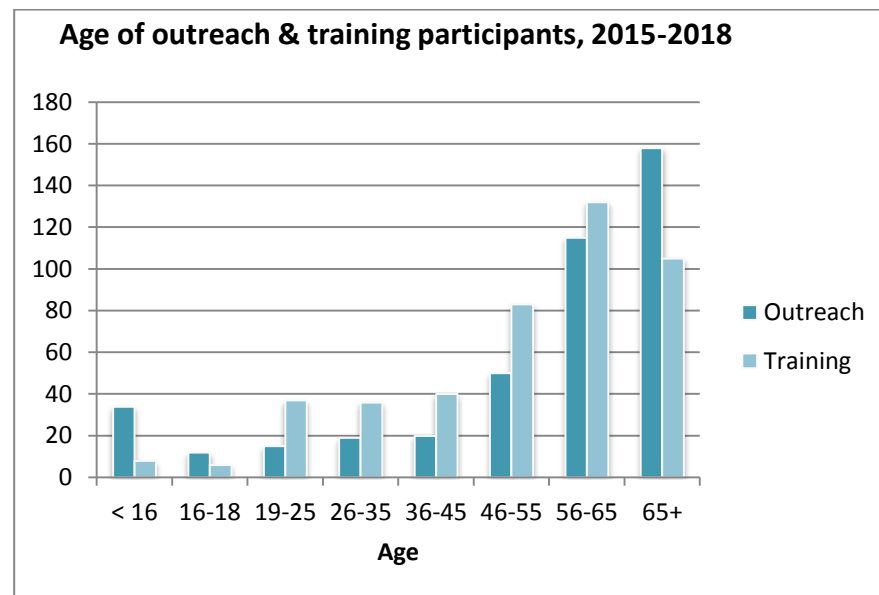
- 247 Outreach events, reaching 9234 people.
- 120 Training sessions, 1337 attendances, with 583 people trained in the CITIZAN monitoring tools.
- 3 national CITIZAN conferences.
- Participation in two national TV series – *Britain at Low Tide* – reaching over 1.4 million people.
- Presenting papers and chairing sessions at over 30 conferences including internationally.
- Published paper in academic and non-academic publications; along with over 30 unpublished reports.

#### Who has the project engaged?

##### Age

CITIZAN was a project designed for all, with a focus on engaging across communities around specific geographic locations. There was, in addition, a greater emphasis on engaging young people aged 16-25.

We can see from the data<sup>5</sup> that through both outreach and training, people from all age groups have been involved with the project, but with substantially higher numbers coming from the 45+ age groups.



However, detailed analysis of the project’s work with young people undertaken by the CITIZAN team for the CiFA Conference, 2018 (Appendix 4), showed that CITIZAN’s engagement with young people was exceeding national trends. The DCMS Taking Part Survey 2015/16

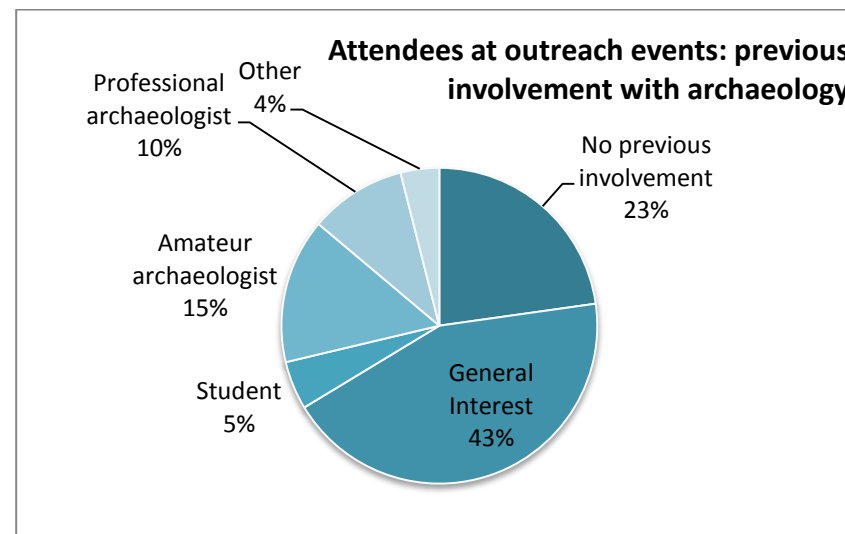
<sup>5</sup> All engagement data is taken from the responses given on the 911 fully or partially completed evaluation feedback forms. While the quantity of the returned forms is substantial, the analysis should be treated as indicative of trends due to the inherent challenges in gathering data through self-completion forms across a wide range of locations and times.

found that 4% of people aged 16-25 had 'visited a site of archaeological interest in the last month' and that 5% had 'volunteered in heritage'. For the project, 7% of outreach and 9% of training participants fell within the 16-25 age group. However, it is with the use of the App where we find the highest percentage of younger people engaging with the project at some level, with 13% of App users registered in July 2017, being aged 16-25.

### Previous Experience of Archaeology

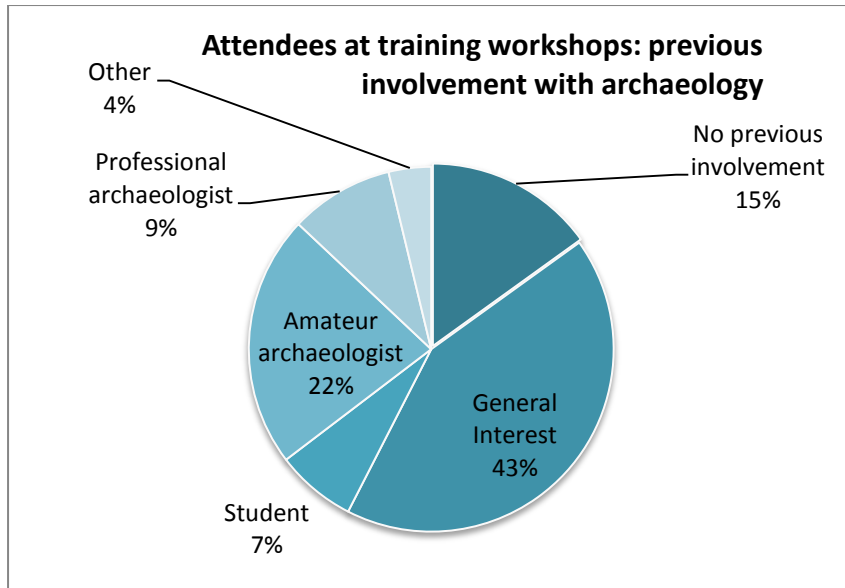
The project sought to engage with people who were new to archaeology or who had only limited involvement: 'some of the volunteers will be new to archaeology and this will be a step towards a new career or leisure activity'<sup>6</sup>. We can see from the data that the project has engaged with people ranging from those with no previous experience to those who are professional archaeologists. It is interesting to note the large cohort (43% for both outreach and training) who self-define as having a 'general interest' but who either don't have further experience, or don't wish to define themselves as 'amateur' archaeologists<sup>7</sup>. The project has managed to tap into an existing interest in archaeology and is offering opportunities to act on this interest. It is also significant that over half of all respondents either

had no previous involvement or a general interest in archaeology (66% at outreach events and 58% at training events). These are the new audiences that the project wanted to reach.



<sup>6</sup> MOLA HLF application, p. 10

<sup>7</sup> The term 'amateur' archaeologist is problematic and carries within it negative connotations, especially for a project where many of the most active volunteers aren't 'professional' archaeologists, but shouldn't be considered 'amateur'. It is used here, as it was the original term used on the evaluation forms.



conferences, including the three annual CITiZAN conferences. The final conference in London in October 2017 attracted 143 participants and was a review of the whole project, with a large number of participant presentations and involvement.

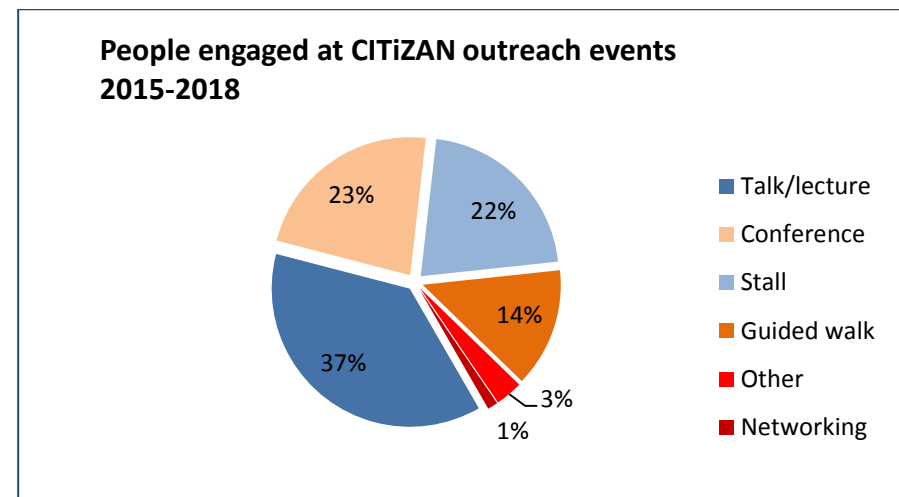
Stalls at community events, town festivals and close to active sites have engaged 22% of participants. This is an important area of the outreach work as this is where the team is mostly likely to engage with people who have had only a passing or limited involvement or interest in archaeology. Guided walks, including the popular ‘dog walks’ and a family-focussed archaeological hunt have engaged 14% of all participants. These are popular, accessible and reflect the project’s focus on outdoor and active involvement.

The category of ‘amateur archaeologist’ includes many people who are members of local heritage or archaeological societies. 22% of respondents who undertook the CITiZAN training put themselves in this category, reflecting the project’s (perhaps under-valued) role in providing skills development to existing groups.

## How have they been engaged?

### Outreach Events

The main form of outreach, through which 37% of the 9234 participants have been engaged, has been talks and lectures to local archaeology and heritage groups, volunteer groups, schools and colleges etc. 23% of participants have been engaged through



## Training Workshops

Training workshops are more standardised in their format, generally comprising a mix of classroom and on-site training spread over a weekend or a one-day workshop. When the App was launched in 2016, a further workshop was added to the range of options which specifically looked at the purpose and use of the App. As the project developed, training was focussed around specific sites and to suit the needs of specific groups. A total of 120 training events were run, with 1337 attendances, comprising over 500 individual volunteers who have been trained by the project.

## Digital Engagement

The website and social media (Twitter, Instagram, Facebook) have been actively used throughout the project. As of May 2018, the main project accounts have:

- Instagram: 164 followers
- Twitter: 2091 followers
- Facebook: 1584 followers

All three accounts are used actively to post events, findings, news and images.

The project website has developed into a welcome point, a promotional tool and an information hub for all areas of CITiZAN's work. The six detailed 'how to' guides are an important resource for people who want to make the next step after an initial outreach

activity. Since its launch on 24th July 2015, the website has had 53,821 visitors with over 275,500 page views<sup>8</sup>.

## The CITiZAN App

The CITiZAN App is an essential tool for the project, enabling volunteers to independently upload new features, updated information and images of sites across the country. It is the final step in the CITiZAN journey for volunteers who want to be actively contributing to the heritage records. It was launched in February 2016, and engagement grew slowly, with peaks following successful media activity such as Britain at Low Tide and key finds such as the mammoth tusk on Mersea Island. The Interim Evaluation Report for 2016 (Appendix 3) looks at initial responses to the App in more depth. By the end of March 2018, there were a total of 2342 registered CITiZAN Surveyors (either using the App or uploading data via the website), with a core regularly uploading information. By the end of March 2018, a total of 3959 images had been uploaded, 2289 surveys updated and 1506 new feature data added, all contributing to the archaeological record. See Appendix 1 for more information on CITiZAN data collection.

## Britain at Low Tide

The involvement with the Britain at Low Tide series, co-created with CITiZAN, was a completely new area of work that was not envisaged in the initial project proposal. The two series attracted viewing figures of around 1.4 million people, introducing coastal and intertidal

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<sup>8</sup> Data correct up 25<sup>th</sup> May 2018.

archaeology to people across the UK, many of whom will not be living near any of the CITiZAN sites and who will not have previously come across the project. The TV series hugely increased the project's reach.

## The Participant Experience

### Enjoyment

CITiZAN was intended to be 'hands-on, engaging and fun'<sup>9</sup> and the overwhelming response (98%) to the outreach evaluation is that participants 'enjoyed' their experience and felt that they had got something from it.

*Very enjoyable and informative in a way that is understandable.  
Public lecture, July 2017.*

*The tour guides were superb. It was fascinating looking at what remains, how extensive the remains were and looking at 'mistakes' in pre-fab design.* Guided walk, March 2017

*I enjoyed being out in an environment I would not normally go into - it made me think more about the seascape/foreshore*  
Guided walk, October 2016

In addition, 90% of outreach respondents felt that they had learnt something about archaeology and 74% something about erosion/coastal change.

<sup>9</sup> P. 11 HLF Application.

## Confidence & Skills Development

The training was designed to move participants from an interest in and gaining knowledge about coastal archaeology, to an ability to identify, record and monitor features and coastal change. On completing a training workshop, participants were asked to assess their own confidence in using the skills in which they'd been trained.

<b>Participants' self-assessment of their confidence in identifying, monitoring and recording</b>				
	<b>Identifying significant features</b>	<b>Recording significant features</b>	<b>Monitoring significant features</b>	<b>Using the web monitoring form</b>
Able with assistance	38%	32%	41%	26%
Confident	46%	50%	46%	47%
Sub-total	84%	82%	87%	73%
Existing Skill	12%	11%	7%	4%
Need further training	4%	7%	4%	15%
N/A	0%	1%	2%	8%

The responses are very consistent, with 46-50% of people in all cases feeling confident in using their new skills and over 80% of people



feeling confident or able with assistance to identify, record and monitor. The one area where confidence was lower was in using the web-based monitoring forms. This may partly be a reflection of the delay in launching the App, and the gap that this left in the process for training people to use the online forms.

Throughout the written feedback from the training, people comment on their experience and the skills that they have developed:

*It was great to get some practical hands on experience with knowledgeable people. Victoria Docks, Hull, May 2017*

*Putting my first tentative step into archaeology. The trainers were fab! Gwithian, September 2016.*

*I'll apply the skills I've learnt today on future excavations. Hest Bank, March 2017*

### The Skills Passport

The CITiZAN Edition of the BAJR (British Archaeological Jobs Resource) Skills Passport is an example of a project development that wasn't envisaged in the original plans. It includes an additional section on CITiZAN skills such as vessel recording, recording coastal industrial sites etc where volunteers and early-career archaeologists can document their skills development. Over 100 of the Passports have been given out and have been popular with volunteers working with CITiZAN for 'leisure' and with those looking to develop an archaeological career.

*The passports have been really popular. If we are busy packing up and forget to stamp them, we get people chasing us to do it. CITiZAN Archaeologist, July 2017.*

### Repeat Engagement

In mid-2017, the feedback forms were amended to include a question about the number of previous CITiZAN Events attended. Of the 214 outreach participants and 102 training participants who responded to this question, we can see that although the majority were new to CITiZAN, there was a core of participants and volunteers who were returning for further events or training.

Number of previous CITiZAN events attended	Outreach		Training	
	Number	%	Number	%
None	138	64%	64	63%
1-2	52	24%	18	18%
3-4	14	7%	15	15%
5+	11	5	3	3%

### A desire for more

Where people have commented more critically on their experience of both training and outreach events, it has often reflected a need for 'more'. More detail, more time, more opportunities to practice new skills or a request for handling opportunities, again suggesting that there is a real desire for greater and enhanced access to archaeology and archaeological findings. One of the challenges for the project is how to meet this need, given a limited staff team and a large workload.

## 4. Project Achievements

The project has fully exceeded its initial project targets of training 300 participants and engaging a further 600 through outreach. The wider engagement, in particular, has reached far beyond what was initially anticipated, raising the profile of coastal and intertidal archaeology, the impact of climate change and the heritage that is visible to people along the coastline.

Critical to this achievement have been a number of factors:

- the 'CITiZAN ethos';
- a 'path for engagement' for participants;
- Active volunteering;
- working with local groups;
- the CITiZAN team.

### The CITiZAN Ethos

As previously noted, CITiZAN explicitly intended to be a project where participants were engaged through hands-on activity and had fun. This manifested itself in the project with an inclusive approach: welcoming and encouraging participants to feel one of the team, articulated by the Project Officer as 'friendliness, having fun, getting stuck-in but doing something important'.

Group meals at the end of a weekend of volunteering, travel and other expenses, invitations to conferences and talks, and the opportunity to present work at the three CITiZAN Conferences are

some practical examples of this approach. The latter – presenting at conferences – is a particularly important example of how volunteers' experience, perceptions and knowledge was demonstrably valued across the project.

*[There was] a great social atmosphere and the right level of training.* Volunteer, Orford Ness, March 2018

*It was really well presented and organised. The CITiZAN team were knowledgeable and fun.* Volunteer, Brean Down, March 2017

*The enthusiasm and professionalism of the CITiZAN trainer was great! On site work was fun despite the wind and blown sand!* Volunteer, Formby, February 2016

### Path for Engagement

Many people are interested in archaeology and enjoy archaeology on television or in a museum. However, making the leap into actually undertaking monitoring, understanding a site, measuring a feature, creating an off-set drawing, can be daunting. Over the three years of the project, a model of engagement has evolved, that takes people from an outreach event, through some training, to downloading the App, the undertaking their own individual monitoring. Most of the 9000+ people who the project has engaged with will have gone somewhat along this journey, before stopping at the point that they feel confident with, whether this be having a

more informed understanding of their coastline; feeling more able to undertake monitoring as part of an existing group; or downloading the App and using it regularly as they travel around the UK. For some, this path of engagement has also taken them on to further study:

*If you are thinking of volunteering, jump in! The rewards far outweigh the work that you put in and who knows where it might lead. Me? I am off to start a BA in Archaeology in October. Volunteer, 2018.*

In the initial development of the project, it was assumed that, once trained, participants would not necessarily return for further CITiZAN events. In practice, there has been a significant level of repeat training and attendance at outreach events, supporting the building of confidence and skills, but also the sense of connection with the project.

### Active Volunteering

CITiZAN offers participants and volunteers the opportunity to be outdoors, active and hands-on. For many people this offers something different to the 'day-job', the commute, being in an office. Anecdotally we know that many of the volunteers enjoy being active and outside, and that for some it has been life-changing:

*I am very thankful that CITiZAN accepted me and got me out of a dark place. Really good to get back into archaeology again. CITiZAN Volunteer, North, May 2016.*

### Working with Local Groups

Local archaeological societies are active across England and are, for many, the primary way for exploring an interest in the subject. In its HLF application, MOLA stated that 'initially, we plan to engage with already-established, local archaeological, historical and environmental groups'<sup>10</sup>, then moving on to wider outreach work. Both these processes have happened, but the involvement with local archaeological societies has been both fruitful and is contributing to the sustainability of the project's impact. Working with and through local groups has enabled CITiZAN to support their interests, provide training to staff and learn from local people, thus rooting the project in local knowledge. There are a number of examples of these partnerships, including with the Morecambe Bay Partnership, National Trust Archaeological Project at Birling Gap, Chichester and District Archaeological Society.

Mersea Island, Essex, has been an interesting example of where the project worked with an informal grouping of interested local people, the fishing industry, Mersea Island Museum and schools. The CITiZAN archaeologists in the South East comment on Mersea as a particular example of where the project has played a crucial facilitative role: 'CITiZAN has provided a vital channel of

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<sup>10</sup> HLF application, p. 11.

communication that is focussed and relevant to local communities. In short it has improved understanding of, access to and community ownership of heritage on Mersea Island<sup>11</sup>.

### A Strong Team

Central to the pace of delivery, the development of new initiatives and the amount of work achieved by the project has been the strong team comprising the archaeologists and Project Officer. Although this evaluation has primarily been outward facing, focussing on the participant and volunteer experience, it is very evident that the core staff team have been committed to the project, have worked long hours and have been given the space to develop individual interests and use their own expertise. Without this commitment, the project is likely to have developed in a less coherent way. Commenting on the strength and consistency of the team, the Project Officer noted that ‘it’s been good to grow together during the project, with everybody having their own input into its development’<sup>12</sup>.

It is worth noting, though, that this level of commitment can’t be assumed, or necessarily sustained over long periods, without a detrimental effect on staff well-being.

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<sup>11</sup> Reflections on Project Outcomes, South East, CITiZAN, May 2018. See Appendix 6.

<sup>12</sup> Interview with Stephanie Ostrich, April 2018.

### Addressing the Challenges

Part of the success of the project is reflected in the way that it has acknowledged and addressed some of the challenges that it has faced in delivering its original ambitions. Ways of resolving the challenges have been developed as the three year programme has progressed, but also in the planning of the next phase of the CITiZAN project. Specific challenges have included:

- Engaging young people, 16-25.
- Delivering a national project.

### Engaging Young People

The project identified young people as a core audience to engage, particularly through its outreach work: ‘The range of outreach activities planned is designed to reach a wide audience, with a particular aim to reach young people age 16-25’<sup>13</sup>.

It is difficult for organisations to work with this age group (outside formal education) for a range of well-rehearsed reasons:

- Fluid and transitory period of life.
- Competing requirements for limited time.
- Requirement to be earning, often in flexible and low-hours contracts.
- Lack of transport.
- Perception as to who the event is aimed at.

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<sup>13</sup> MOLA HLF Application 06.08.14, section 3a, p. 6.

As the project developed, it was clear that to engage with young people, identified as a target group, would require a more bespoke approach, with a flexibility in meeting both the project's needs and the young people's interests, and a strong draw to persuade young people to get involved. Where this was most effective, was working with organisations, including colleges and universities, who already engage with this group.

*If we can get young people to show up, then it's really good. They are really into it [archaeology] once they get going. It's something new, in a different environment and it's hands-on'.*  
CITiZAN Project Officer, May 2018.

Students, both of archaeology and other subjects, were a fruitful partnership, with CITiZAN able to offer works placements, opportunities to gain skills on-site and outreach activities such as the partnership with University of Brighton's Faculty of Arts. The CITiZAN version of the BAJR Skills Passport also offered a way for early-career archaeologists to document their progress with the project.

Youth organisations worked with included the Guides, Duke of Edinburgh groups, groups for young people not in education or training. These interventions were very bespoke and responsive to the needs of the group.

In Lincolnshire, involvement with the project became an active element of a home-schooled teenager's learning, leading to substantial volunteering from the mother and son pair:

*They gave a huge amount of their spare time to the rapid recording of archaeological material washed ashore as an expansion of their community beach clean group. This has resulted not only in CITiZAN being able to record some rare examples of ships timbers and observe coastal erosion in areas of prehistoric significance, but also in a Heritage Angel commendation for the teenage son.* CITiZAN Archaeologist  
May 2018

Working in this bespoke way with young people requires a commitment and skills from the team, with a willingness and ability to adapt workshops and be flexible in what is achieved. Often, the numbers of people involved will be low. There is a tension between achieving good quality, impactful work with a small number of young people, and delivering a broad-based, project with a larger number of people.

An alternative approach to engaging young people has been to focus on work with younger age groups through organisations such as Young Archaeologists Clubs, and introducing the ideas and skills involved in coastal and intertidal archaeology at this stage. These events have been a popular form of outreach, leading to a training weekend for YAC Leaders in May 2017, and the development of a training resource. Feedback from the event was very positive with



all participants saying that they were ‘likely’ or ‘very likely’ to use the activities they’d tried with their groups.

*I enjoyed how practical it was. The activities were enjoyed by all of us and a really great way of allowing us to take them back to our groups.* YAC Leader Training participant, May 2017.

It is also worth noting that a number of the YAC Leaders fell within the 16-25 age range!

### Delivering a National Project

Establishing and delivering a project across the whole coastline of England with a small team based in London was difficult in the initial phases and some challenges remain. Specifically:

- Differing levels of support provided by ‘host’ organisations.
- Challenges of remote working.
- Regional differences between the three regions.

There had been insufficient clarity in the role that would be played by the ‘host’ partner for each team (MOLA, CBA and NAS), leading to different access to equipment, professional expertise and management support. While these differences were addressed with the purchase of additional equipment, establishing regular team meetings etc, it had an impact on the pace of set-up in the individual regions which took some time to settle down. The South

East team, based in the MOLA offices in London had access to resources and expertise that was not available to the other two teams.

Remote working was difficult at times, both technically with the use of centralised IT systems, but also the ability to provide management and peer support to staff in the regional offices. On the other hand, having the Regional Offices brought additional and different expertise into the wider CITiZAN project, and also ensured that the CITiZAN Archaeologists were working within the local context. In addressing the challenges, a commitment was made to investing the time and money required for regular face to face team meetings.

Although the project developed with a clear model for delivery, including a summer programme of themed events, a training programme and shared workshops, regional differences meant that over time a level of flexibility had to be introduced into the delivery of the project. The regional differences included geographical differences (the North felt that the themed programmes didn’t work well for their region); the specialism of the host organisations, and the interests; and expertise of the two CITiZAN Archaeologists in each region.

Ultimately the challenge of delivering a national project was met through the creation of a strong project team with a supportive ethos, and an acceptance of regional difference.

## 5. Appendices

In addition to this report, the following appendices form part of the on-going evaluation process that has been implemented with this project.

Appendix 1: CITiZAN 2015-18 Impact

Appendix 2: CITiZAN Interim Evaluation Report, 2015

Appendix 3: CITiZAN Interim Evaluation Report, 2016

Appendix 4: Collaborating and Innovating with Young People on the Coast. Presentation to CiFA, 2018.

Appendix 5: 'Did they enjoy it? Volunteer responses to CITiZAN'. Presentation to the CITiZAN Foreshore Conference, October 2017

Appendix 6: CITiZAN Archaeologists' Reflections on Regional Outcomes, May 2018

