

Since 2018 CITIZAN Community Archaeologist Lawrence Northall has been pioneering the methodology of using of oral histories within Intertidal Archaeology. This work has shown that recording local knowledge, stories and memories is an invaluable way to understand local foreshores and overcome some of the unique challenges faced by intertidal archaeologists.

Key Benefits

New features: As erosion is both revealing and destroying features on the foreshore, local observations can alert us to vulnerable archaeology before it disappears.

Lost features - England's foreshores are receding at an ever increasing rate and the archaeology they contain is going with them. Sometimes the only record left of remains once visible in the intertidal zone is held in the memories of people that saw them before they were washed away.

Artefact assemblages – While concentrations of artefacts can be useful for indicating specific types of human activity, they don't always survive in the intertidal zone for long. Talking to foreshore users helps us to identify assemblages, which are sometimes picked up and held in personal collections.

Local knowledge – By deepening our understanding of local culture and history we can better understand and interpret local heritage. A lifetime of first hand observations can also help us track how coastal environments have changed and how this relates to foreshore archaeology.

Community Benefit - Oral history projects put the community at the heart of the research methodology. This brings local people together and forges connections between the community, archaeologists and coastal heritage. It also produces accessible archives of local knowledge for future generations.

Searching Mersea



(Mersea Museum)



Piloted the use of oral history projects for Intertidal Archaeology by recording local knowledge, stories and memories on Mersea Island, Essex.

Rolls Farm, Red Hill Project



(CITIZAN)



Recorded detailed observations from an elderly interviewee, who had monitored and collected material from a Red Hill in Tollesbury, Essex, as it was eroded over a thirty year period.

Projects

Scan QR code for website

Changing Minds, Changing Coasts



(Mersea Museum, CITIZAN)



Building on *Searching Mersea* this Natural Environment Research Council funded project combined oral histories with locally held image archives and map regressions, to understand coastal change over a 100 year period on Mersea Island, Essex.

Searching Sandwich Bay



(Tijana Cvetkovic)

An ongoing project running alongside CITIZAN research into the archaeology and practice of stake net fishing in Sandwich Bay.

Our Supporters