


Name

Alison James

Current Position

 Senior Project Manager, MSDS Marine Ltd (from 1st June 2018)

Education and Qualifications

2003 MA Archaeology, University of Liverpool

2002 BSc (Hons) Archaeology, University of Liverpool

Professional Membership and Qualifications

- Scientific Diving Supervisory Committee (SDSC) accredited Diving Supervisor (2009)
- PADI Open Water Scuba Instructor
- Level 3 First Aid at Work
- Member of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists (MCI(A))
- STWC'95
- Institute of Leadership and Management Course Level 3 Qualification in Management of Volunteers

Selected Career Summary

2018 – present: Director at MSDS Marine Ltd.

2009 – 2018: Maritime Archaeologist at Historic England

2005 – 2009: Education Officer at Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology

2004 – 2005: Administrator and Tutor, Nautical Archaeology Society (part time)

2003 – 2005: Study Supervisor and History Teacher (unqualified), Hounslow Science College

Key Expertise

Alison has over fourteen years of experience within the archaeology sector both in the UK and abroad. Notable areas of her expertise include:

Heritage Management

At Historic England Alison was responsible for the 53 wrecks currently designated under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973. She identified threats to the sites and put mechanisms in place to reduce threat and manage the sites in line with Historic England's Conservation Principles.

Project Management

At MSDS Marine Ltd Alison acts as a Project Manager managing a number of high profile projects including work for Historic England on the creation of virtual dive trails and on the creation of protective markings for wreck sites. She ensures projects are delivered on time and to budget and that a high quality product is delivered.

At Historic England Alison acted as Project Assurance Officer for a number of contractors who have work commissioned through Historic England's funding programme. She has managed a number of HLF, and other, projects from inception to completion.

Maritime Archaeology

Alison provides specialist advice to colleagues throughout the sector, as well as to volunteers, as to issues of best practice in maritime archaeology.

Managing Volunteers

Alison has extensive experience in managing volunteers. At Historic England she managed the largest number of volunteers within the organisation. She provides advice, guidance and encouragement to them as well as ensuring they are working in line with best practice.

Engagement

Alison has a strong background in public engagement. From managing an e-Newsletter to keep the public up to date with marine developments from Historic England to managing all elements of Historic England's marine social media including a successful verified Twitter account. Alison provides the public face of maritime archaeology at Historic England by attending various events and conferences with information stands.

In June 2018 Alison joined MSDS Marine as co-Director bringing all of her experience within the sector to MSDS Marine Ltd.

Sector Specific Experience

Director, MSDS Marine Ltd.

Alison has been at MSDS Marine Ltd a relatively short time but is leading on a number of existing projects including work on virtual dive trails and protective marking solutions.

Maritime Archaeologist, Historic England

Alison was responsible for casework delivery in relation to England's existing, and new, Designated Wreck Sites, and making decisions, taking advice from elsewhere when necessary including:

- Protection of Wrecks Act designations and other recommendations, administration and licensing;
- assessing unauthorised works and damage to designated monuments; liaising with Licensees and other stakeholders;
- to assist colleagues in securing the protection of heritage assets in the marine and coastal zone;
- developing management information systems for England's Designated Wreck Sites, including GIS and databases;

- assisting the determination of priorities for recording repair, management and interpretation works on monuments, and promoting programmes of work at priority monuments through advice and recommendation of grant aid;
- assisting the identification of priorities for commissioning archaeological projects (including strategic projects), prescribing briefs, assessing project designs, overseeing project implementation and certifying completed work in relation to the Historic England Action Plan;
- to take a proactive role relating to casework particularly in identifying potential problems and proposing solutions;
- to dive and carry out archaeological work, according to Historic England Health & Safety policy and as directed;
- to promote conservation generally as the Historic England representative on matters relating to archaeology and ancient monument, liaising with outside bodies, including other environmental agencies, members of the public and fellow professionals;
- to assist in preparation of paper and reports on ancient monuments and historic landscapes, internally and externally, including DCMS and Historic England's advisory committees;
- to promote public enjoyment and understanding of heritage assets and their preservation

Alison represented Historic England at a variety of national bodies and has been able to forward historic environment interests. Alison provided advice to the HLF through the Industrial and Maritime Panel and was also a member of the Scientific Diving Supervisory Committee and the ClfA Voluntary and Community Archaeology Special Interest Group.

In relation to the Contract for Services in Support of Marine Designation Alison assisted in the development of the annual programme of investigation, preparing site specific briefs and managing issues as they developed during fieldwork.

Alison regularly monitored projects delivered by external specialist contracts and applied her knowledge to them. Elements of leadership here included proposing and recommending the submission of Project Proposals; advising/ recommending on variations to the proposed/ agreed work programme; providing advice/ recommendations to resolve conflict; providing guidance on issues and risks and providing technical archaeological advice during operations.

Alison acted as a focal point for Licensees and Historic England Affiliated Volunteers. Licensees (individuals authorised by the Secretary of State to access Protected Wreck Sites) regularly required

archaeological advice from Historic England in relation to planned activities underwater.

Alison provided expert witness statements to colleagues in relation to Heritage Crime investigations as required that have been used in successful prosecutions. This advisory role provided consistent knowledge and leadership to this sector.

Alison managed key elements of Historic England's Coastal and Marine communications including the Licensee's Bulletin and the @HE_Maritime twitter account to facilitate the dissemination of archaeological advice and information. She collated and assessed the results of Licensees work in order to provide Heritage at Risk data and to develop future site priorities.

Alison regularly liaised with a number of national bodies including the Receiver of Wreck and the Marine Management Organisation and provided competent high level advice. Alison represented the marine interest of Historic England on the HLF Industrial and Maritime Transport Committee.

Alison's work as a Project Assurance Officer work meant that she encountered a wide range of issues that required fact finding, analysis and initiative. Working with both external organisations and internal specialists to ensure projects are fit for purpose requires a high level of interpretation and judgement. Alison acted as PAO for the Contract for Archaeological Services in Support of Marine Designation (value = c.£300k p.a.). Alison was responsible for assessing and recommending the rewards of individual payments based upon performance indicators being met.

Alison was responsible for devising and recommending the prioritisation and financial resource allocation for the contract in discussion with the Marine Designation Advisor. She was also PAO for six other funded organisations; the Nautical Archaeology Society, CISMAS, SeaDive, Pascoe Archaeological Services, the *Hazardous* Project Group and Bournemouth University (for the Swash Channel Project only). Alison helped plan and recommend the strategic spend through commissions for the management, presentation and interpretation of England's Protected Wreck Sites.

By taking forward the management of England's Protected Wreck Sites Alison routinely gathered and assessed information from a variety of sources to develop research priorities. Here, her decisions related to the accuracy and efficiency of Historic England's related grant, maintenance and internal work programmes (e.g. risk analysis). Within this framework and against the range of choices available, she determined annual priorities for the conservation,

management, recording and monitoring of designated wrecks. This comprised developing both research and technical strategic project work and the promotion of investigation at priority sites through advice and recommendation of grant aid (such as deciding to undertake excavation work on the Swash Channel and *London*) as well as approving the payment of related grants (as managed through commissions). Such decisions were concerned with many key departmental objectives, related to several work areas within Historic England and identified long term corporate objectives.

Alison provided advice to the Maritime Designation Adviser on the issuing of licences under the Protection of Wrecks Act 1973. She undertook the research required to assess the suitability of a licence holder and the work proposed in their application and provided a recommendation on the licence for the Maritime Designation Adviser to approve before passing final recommendation to DCMS.

Alison had a key role in bringing to fruition a number of projects that have received awards relating to the protected wreck sites including a judge's commendation in the Association of Heritage Interpretation Awards for the *Iona II* dive trail, the Marsh Award for Community Archaeology for the volunteer team working on the *London* and a nomination in the Current Archaeology Awards in 2016 for the high profile project on the *London* excavation.

The national responsibilities of the role required Alison to access, interpret and collate information from various local, regional and national repositories. Alison is able to deal with complex situations holistically and can demonstrate confident decision making in a broad range of activities. By taking forward the statutory management of England's nationwide Protected Wreck Sites, Alison balanced varied competing priorities arising from the management of this large area of work. Alison can appraise, assess, analyse, assimilate and interpret large volumes of complex marine archaeological and oceanographic data to enable her to formulate strategic decisions (some of this information was managed within a bespoke database, developed to her specification working with a software developer); Alison reviewed and developed the complex strategic needs of Protected Wreck Sites on a national scale and used her initiative to respond to changes in priorities (caused by new threats, for example) and plan accordingly.

Alison demonstrated a confident decision making ability through both her annual risk assessment work for Heritage at Risk audit purposes and through her work helping to bring a number of large scale excavation projects (notably on the *London*, Swash Channel and recently on the *Rooswijk*) to completion.

Alison used her own professional judgement to assess the significance/value of candidate sites for designation under the Protection of Wrecks Act, 1973, prior to commissioning a full assessment. In some cases, this required liaison with colleagues in the regional teams and within the Marine Planning Unit. Alison regularly dealt with, and advised on, licensing applications and queries enabling third party access to designated wrecks. This involved problem solving and a high degree of negotiation and conflict resolution where there is no set precedent, often involving dealing with challenging external customers.

Alison's work with volunteer stakeholders for protected wreck sites involved a large amount of high level work to provide conflict resolution and negotiation between individuals for the benefit of the sites. Alternative approaches regularly need to be devised to tackle disputes and situations that often have no clear way forward and need tackling sensitively. A recent project she is involved with involves a number of volunteer stakeholders, the Dutch Government and an individual with a salvage agreement. Her liaison work between all parties has shown that she is able to demonstrate a high level of understanding of the bigger picture and is helping to ensure that a project to excavate a high risk, high profile site is able to happen despite a lot of conflicting views and historical conflict.

Education Officer, Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology

January 2005 – January 2009

Alison's role included managing HLF and other projects (including a large European Leader + funded programme), fundraising including grant applications, providing educational activities for the community, planning and delivering educational talks, managing the running of the Underwater Archaeology Centre including organising and delivering school visits, planning and organising outreach activities and the creation of educational resources.

One notable element of this role was the Southampton Young Archaeologists Dive In! HLF Project. Alison developed the project and gained funding to run it in response to identifying a need to involve more young people with maritime archaeology. The project involved taking a group of eight young people and enthusing them with the rich and varied heritage of the Solent through diving and intertidal fieldwork, and then enabling them to spread awareness of the regions submerged heritage to the wider public. This was achieved through the creation of a website and numerous displays at regional events. Out of the eight young people involved two went on to undertake archaeology degrees, one became a marine biologist and the others have stayed diving – a high success rate!

Alison also planned and delivered a series of workshops for a group of adults with Special Educational Needs resulting in a travelling exhibition of their history related artwork. Alison was responsible for planning and promoting the Winter Lecture Series which the Hampshire and Wight Trust for Maritime Archaeology held for the Friends of HWTMA and the general public in 2005 and 2006. The last series was so successful it sold out from the first lecture onwards.

Alison was responsible for the running and management of the Underwater Archaeology Centre on the Isle of Wight. She directly managed the budgets associated with the day to day running of the Centre and have also run two associated grant funded projects. Alison planned, managed and completed the successful refurbishment of the Centres Exhibition and Shop. This project involved mobilising and enthusing the paid team of staff and a large team of volunteers. This culminated in a day of celebration and a public opening.

Select Publications

- James, A.** (forthcoming). *Heritage Crime: Protected Wreck Management Case Study*
- James, A.** (2018). *Review of the Virtual Dive Trails Scheme (7374): A big splash or a damp squib?*, Historic England.
- James, A.** (2017). *England's Protected Wreck Sites: Underwater Exploration Without Getting Wet!*, Historic England Research News.
- James, A.** (2016). *Diving into History: 42 Year of BSAC and England's Protected Wrecks*, SCUBA Magazine .
- James, A.** (2015). *Accessing England's Protected Wreck Sites: Guidance for Divers and Archaeologists, 3rd Edition*, Historic England.
- James, A.** (2015). *Accessing England's Protected Wreck Sites: Guidance for Divers and Archaeologists, 3rd Edition*, Historic England.
- James, A.** (2013). *Researching, Protecting and Managing England's Marine Historic Environment*, SHA 2013
- James, A.** (2013). *Diving into History with the English Heritage Dive Trails*, Heritage Calling Blog
- James, A.** (2013). *The London: A Case Study in England's Shipwreck Heritage* by Serena Cant, Historic England

James, A. (2009). *Engaging Audiences with Maritime Archaeology: Delivering education, learning and training experiences from the classroom to the field*, Proceedings of the 13th Annual EAA Conference