

HOBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

<p>STATISTICAL INFORMATION</p> <p>There is one registered disabled person on the site and one person from an Asian background. There are no Afro-Caribbean people.</p>	<p>MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER</p>
<p>DISCIPLINARY MATTERS</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>GENERAL COMMENTS</p> <p>January was a difficult month owing to adverse weather conditions but steady progress was made with the project as a whole. There were no unforeseen occurrences.</p>	
<p>LANDSCAPE PROGRESS</p> <p>After a period of some difficulty in the supply of materials a considerable easing of the situation occurred, and January saw also the supply of a plan for further works on the monument by the sponsor, SMBC. Rapid progress was then achieved during the breaks in the bad weather. This included the laying out of a path around the eastern side of the earthwork, and the fencing in of further areas on the central platform preparatory to the laying of turf.</p>	
<p>ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS</p> <p>Having finished trenches HM1 and HM2 in December, during January further progress was made in the understanding of trench HM3. But, as detailed in December's report, the trench remains unfinished and no further work of a substantive nature can be undertaken at this time. A letter has been sent to English Heritage discussing this situation and reporting on the progress of the site as a whole.</p> <p>Elsewhere, there was a degree of diversification of archaeological activity and, as a part of this, contour and proton magnetometer surveys of the moat platform have been instituted. The results of this work is awaited with great interest.</p> <p>In the Central Library in Solihull the work of the project and its findings was detailed in an extensive exhibition which attracted a great deal of interest. Following this there were a number of press articles in local newspapers, themselves stimulated by a press release</p>	

by the Borough press officer.

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<p>DISCIPLINARY MATTERS</p> <p>None.</p>	
<p>GENERAL COMMENTS.</p> <p>The adverse weather experienced in January ameliorated and though there were very cold periods work on the site continued virtually without break during the month. Excellent progress was made.</p>	
<p>LANDSCAPE PROGRESS</p> <p>The easing of materials' supply noted in January ensured that the path around the eastern side of the earthwork developed rapidly during February, and is now almost complete as far as the sponsor's instructions allow - viz, as far as the northern edge of the 'Medieval lane'. Technical Services have been advised that we think this is an inappropriate place to finish the path - it should be continued down to the pavement alongside Hobs Moat Road - and we await their instructions accordingly.</p> <p>Elsewhere the first soil retaining boards on the south western corner of the inner rampart have now been positioned and further progress here will be made shortly.</p>	
<p>ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS</p> <p>Backfilling of trenches HM1 and HM2 began during the month (during January with HM1) and as a result the emphasis of archaeological work has changed. Currently the principal effort is concentrated in two areas - in surveying, with the Dumpy level, proton magnetometer and resistivity device; and in understanding HM3. We have corresponded with English Heritage about the future of this trench and their advice has been received. This does not conflict with our thinking, that the trench should be made the subject of an application to English Heritage for a licence for further works here. It is hoped this will be submitted soon.</p> <p>Generally, progress with the archaeological side of the project has been excellent. We are however very greatly hampered by the restrictions imposed on us by the standards of our accommodation. The facility afforded us by the Agency in sending a number of our employees to temporary office space in 142 Lode Lane is very much appreciated.</p>	

James Debney,
February 27th, 1987.

HOBBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

<p>STATISTICAL INFORMATION</p> <p>There are no registered disabled persons with the project. One person is of Asian origin</p>	<p>MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER</p>
<p>DISCIPLINARY MATTERS</p> <p>None</p>	
<p>GENERAL COMMENTS.</p> <p>Progress this month on all aspects of the project has been excellent. During the month two employees, D. Upton and A. Swingler, gained places at Dorset Institute of Higher Education to read for a diploma, HND, in practical Archaeology, and a third, M. Birch, was successful in his application to study for the ministry in the Pentecostolist Church. A fourth, D. Glover, gained a job as a landscaper, after just four weeks</p>	
<p>LANDSCAPE PROGRESS</p> <p>The path running from Castle Lane to Hobs Moat Road, down the eastern side of the monument is now virtually complete. Currently work is in progress stabilising and conserving the inner rampart on the south-western side of the site. This is well advanced.</p> <p>Tree surgeons provided by SMBC worked on the site for two or three days before they were unaccountably withdrawn. The need for their presence remains - we are at a loss to know how to pursue this matter further, after having repeatedly drawn the urgency of the situation to the Parks Dept's attention over a period of eighteen months.</p>	
<p>ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS</p> <p>The contour map of the site is now very well advanced, while the proton magnetometer and resistivity surveys continue to occupy a good deal of the team's time. The results from these have been excellent - though the data is at present 'raw', it seems to be revealing much information about the archaeological possibilities of the site.</p> <p>A meeting with representatives of BUFAU, A. Brooker-Carey and P. Leach, was held on March 23rd and this was a worthwhile affair, producing a general consensus on way forward with SMC and our approach to English Heritage. It is agreed that this should concern HM3 only for the time being, using the opportunity afforded to bring the project year into line with periods of consent from the DoE. That is to say, a further period of consent after this coming one should be budgeted to begin in September 1987.</p>	

James Debney,

March 30th, 1987.

HOBBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

There are two disabled people with the Project. One person is of Asian origin.

MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO
ADVERSE WEATHER

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

The transfer of E. Banks, former landscaping supervisor, and the loss of other key employees from the landscaping team led to difficulties with this part of the Project. These are being attended to.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

April was a good month for the Project and, once again, excellent progress was made.

A Public Meeting and Open Day were held towards the end of the month, on April 22nd and April 25th. These were well attended and excellently received.

LANDSCAPE PROGRESS

The landscaping team has now installed 2,000 metres of boarding on the western side of the monument. With this phase of activity coming to an end, the last few days of the month were spent in final preparations for topsoiling.

Mr A. Furness-Huson visited the site several times during the month, and as a result we were able to arrange the supply of suitable topsoil. This has now arrived and is dumped on the Castle Lane side of the monument.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS

The trench HM4 is situated on the proposed site of the temporary facility for the Project and the ensuing Field Studies Centre. It would be good practice to totally excavate the area before any further activity takes place. This is the intention with this trench.

The Interim Report came closer to completion during the month with the production of a draft version. This was read and examined by the team and appropriate alterations were made. The report is required by English Heritage for July 31st, 1987.

A complete list of the archive was also made during the month and a final copy of this will be made presently. This will also be sent to English Heritage..

James Debney,
May 1st, 1987

HOBBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

There are four persons who are disabled on the site, and one person who is of Asian origin. There are no Afro-Caribbeans.

**MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO
ADVERSE WEATHER**

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

A certain amount of difficulty was experienced during the month with the landscaping 'A' team. A general warning was given. Subsequently B. Williams was dismissed for poor time-keeping.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

Work proceeded satisfactorily on the archaeological side of the project. The work-load on the landscaping team increased greatly, but here too the work output was entirely satisfactory.

LANDSCAPE PROGRESS

The soil delivered to the site at the end of April was transported on to the monument during the first week of the month. It was then spread out when commitments allowed on the western ramparts system.

The first works for the project's new facility were then undertaken using labour from the landscaping team. This caused some slowing down of conservation works. By May 29th the excavation for the outfall sewer, which required the exposing of services in Hobbs Moat Road, had been largely completed.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS

The archaeology team confined itself largely to work on HM4, but resistivity survey work continued in the playing field alongside the monument. The contour survey was also extended on the earthwork. All the platform and most of the ramparts have now been surveyed.

As anticipated, by the middle of the month the Interim Report was finished; currently it awaits re-typing. It was expected that it would have been delivered to English Heritage by mid May, but the site licence requirement is that it be produced by June 31st.

An exhibition featuring leisure activities in the borough was mounted in the Central Library during the month and the project contributed an extensive display. This was very well received. The mayor saw the exhibition and expressed a wish to visit the site.

One employee, A Tideswell, gained a permanent job during the month.

J. Debney,
June 1st, 1987.

HOBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

There are four disabled persons on the site. One person is of Asian origin. There is one Afro-Caribbean.

MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Four persons received verbal warnings for various matters. These are recorded in the site note book.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

The month was characterised by persistent rain, often very heavy, with very few 'good' days. This hampered progress on the site but did not greatly affect our schedule. By the end of the month almost every aspect was up to date.

LANDSCAPE PROGRESS

Last month soil delivered to site in April was spread out on the western rampart system - approximately 400 tons in total. At the beginning of this month turving of these landscaped areas began, along with the further raking out of the topsoil. Currently 1,500 square yards of turf have been laid. This is a noteworthy achievement in view of the weather conditions experienced during the month.

The project's new facility is under construction under the supervision of D. Bayliss. This too has made progress during the month.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS

Trench HM4 was finished last month and backfilled by the archaeology team. It was a disappointing investigation, showing only that this part of the moat environs had been extensively ploughed in post-medieval times, leading to the almost total destruction of the earlier layers. However, a palaeolithic or mesolithic flint was found in the ploughed layers, which was a considerable bonus.

Meanwhile further sections on the eastern side of the moat counterscarp were fenced off and as part of this trench HM6 was opened, creating a further barrier to persons casually walking on the earthwork itself. The trench is situated on the north-east corner of the moat and is intended to investigate the so-called medieval lane. Early indications are that this will be an interesting area and good progress has been made so far.

On June 14th, as part of the educational brief of the project, a talk was given to the Brownies by J. Debney and J.J. McIlwaine (a difficult assignment). This was very interesting to the Brownie group, we were assured.

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<p>STATISTICAL INFORMATION There are four disabled persons on the site, and one person is of Asian origin. There is one Afro-Caribbean</p>	<p>MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER</p>
<p>DISCIPLINARY MATTERS During the month, on separate occasions, two Olympus OM20 photographic cameras plus lenses were stolen from the project office. These incidents are being investigated.</p>	
<p>GENERAL COMMENTS The steady progress of recent months was maintained during July aided by the general improvement in the weather. The site facility is approaching completion, and it will be commissioned before the end of August. <u>Reinstatement work in the existing facility has begun.</u></p>	
<p>LANDSCAPE PROGRESS Turving work on the western rampart system, begun last month, is now at an advanced stage and currently both sides of the moat ditch have been 'greened up', while preparation work has begun on the scarp and counter-scarp crowns. This work is being extended on to the moat platform, so that quite soon we will be able to extend the reinstatement works to this part of the site. Generally throughout the month the monument was also maintained on a 'tick over' basis - its appearance is better now than at any time in the past thirty years.</p>	
<p>ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS Work on the archaeology side of the project has progressed in several directions during the month. Principal among these is the contour survey of the earthwork - which is now approaching completion - and the preparation of a revised, updated archive list, together with further preparation works in advance of the forthcoming published site report on areas HM1, HM2 and HM3 (this is the final version of the Interim Report). Work continued on HM6, while a revised appraisal of future proposed works on the scheduled area on the monument was outlined during the month by D. Wicks in consultation with myself. The trench HM6 is at an early stage in development but has attracted a great deal of attention from the general public.</p>	

J. Debney,

August 3rd, 1987

HOBBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

There are four disabled persons on the site. There is one person of Asian origin, one Turk, and one Afro-Caribbean

**MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO
ADVERSE WEATHER**

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

None

GENERAL COMMENTS.

The progress of recent months was maintained during August despite the heavy workload on the two teams. Currently all aspects of the project are on schedule.

During the month the project moved into the new facility, now almost complete. Presently mains services await connection.

LANDSCAPE PROGRESS

Further work was undertaken on the final phase of greening up the western rampart system. This consisted of preparing the crowns of the ramparts for seeding and the bottom of the ditch. This work was extended to a large part of the moat platform which also now awaits seeding.

Otherwise the landscaping team concerned itself with the maintainance of the monument generally, continuing the ongoing tidy-up of the site.

As part of these activities a further section of the moat platform was fenced off. At the present time this fencing extends to about a third of the platform, and to about half of the ditch/rampart system.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS

Archaeological activity continued as before, with the processing of the data from the contour survey, with the various physical surveys of the earthwork, and with the excavation of HM6, the 'medieval' lane. Progress was generally satisfactory.

During the month the mayor of Solihull, Cllr. R. Lewis, visited the site with the Lady Mayoress and was given a conducted tour of the project. The visit began with an explanatory exhibition, proceeded to the conservation/preservation aspect of the project, and ended with a look at the archaeology. The Mayor expressed himself as very greatly interested in the project and concerned about its future activities and well-being. He asked for some written material for the mayor's parlour and asked that this should include a large photograph (which I understood was for the wall). The visit attracted a considerable amount of press attention, as a result of which some articles in local newspapers were generated.

James Debney,

September 3rd, 1987

HOBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

There are four disabled persons on the site. There are two Afro-Caribbeans and one Turk.

**MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO
ADVERSE WEATHER**

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

None.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

September has seen extensive changes of personnel on the site leading to potential difficulties with some aspects of the project. But these were not realised and continuity generally was maintained. Progress during the month with both sides of the project, landscaping and archaeology, was steady if unspectacular.

LANDSCAPE PROGRESS

By the end of last month the western rampart system awaited seeding of the remaining areas not so far greened-up, along with part of the moat platform which had been prepared for seeding with a woodland grass/wild flower mixture. These tasks were accomplished during the month. By the end of the month all areas were showing signs of germination.

Elsewhere, as with August, the landscaping team ^{concerned} ~~concerned~~ itself with the care and commissioning of the project's new facility.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS

The advent of a new, much changed team necessarily entailed a process of assessment this month, and a considerable effort was put into the training of new team members. However, the signs are good and I am confident that the archaeological personnel for 1987/1988 will be no less effective than the excellent team of the preceding year.

On site progress was somewhat modest during the period, but effective substantial work was undertaken. This was noteworthy particularly with the project archive which now, for the first time, is a coherent, indexed body of work. This development is most pleasing.

J. Debney

September 30th, 1987.

HOBBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

There are three disabled persons with the project. There are two persons of Afro-Caribbean descent.

**MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO
ADVERSE WEATHER**

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

The establishment of new teams last month led to an upsurge in disciplinary occurrences. A total of thirteen verbal warnings were given along with one verbal warning. Three persons were dismissed.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

The very damp weather during the month led to some dislocation of work schedules but these were redressed as the opportunity arose. By the end of the month all aspects of the project were up to date and in line with earlier predictions (or somewhat in advance - see below).

In October three persons with the project gained full-time employment, while two persons left to join full-time state funded further education.

LANDSCAPE PROGRESS

The inclement weather made this side of the project difficult to manage this month. The team was kept working for much of the time on a 'site maintenance' basis and switched to conservation work when the opportunity arose. By the end of the month this aspect of their work was, oddly, considerably ahead of schedule.

Currently the reinstatement programme of the monument's ramparts has proceeded to the north and south of the site, leaving the eastern side of the monument for a further (final) phase next year. This work is well ahead of schedule.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS

The new team this month was kept busy with HM6 the archaeological trench sectioning the 'Medieval' lane on the northern perimeter of the monument. Although a rather unrewarding excavation it is an excellent training area; it demonstrated its worth in this regard during October.

Elsewhere the team continued to survey the monument in various different ways and this continues to be a most noteworthy aspect of the project's activities. Aside from the benefits to local history, the survey work has additional benefits for team members. These include literacy and numeracy, skills often alien to community programmers (despite 'teaching' in schools), and the fact that many leave the project able to survey in quite a sophisticated way, an achievement by anybody's standards.

During the month I gave the annual inaugural lecture to Solihull Archaeological Group and there were several visits to the site by interested persons and parties.

HOBBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION	MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO ADVERSE WEATHER
There are three disabled persons with the project, and two persons of Afro-Caribbean descent	
DISCIPLINARY MATTERS	
Six verbal warnings for various matters were issued during the period and one written warning. On my instruction a number of written warnings were given, also, by Wages Dept.	
GENERAL COMMENTS.	
The month was a quiet period in the project's activities, and the steady progress of the last few months was maintained.	
LANDSCAPE PROGRESS	
The growing cold during the month and the heavy rainfall at times created special difficulties for the landscaping team. For much of the times maintenance work only was possible. Nevertheless the scheduled conservation work was accomplished and this side of the project remains considerably ahead of predicted activity.	
ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS	
The archaeological team continued with the activities of previous months. The physical survey of the earthwork proceeded nearer to completion whilst the contour survey made steady progress. On the 'practical' side the excavation of HM6 continued and this is now almost complete. Other than some additional work generated by the results of the excavation, which will be undertaken during the next few weeks, the trench is virtually complete.	
A new trench will be opened shortly on the southern side of the earthwork. This will have the objective of investigating the field boundary at this point and in determining whether the earthwork may perhaps have further elements hereabouts.	

J. Debney,

November 27th, 1987

HOBBS MOAT ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROJECT

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

There are three disabled persons with the project. Two people are of Afro-Caribbean descent.

**MAN HOURS LOST DUE TO
ADVERSE WEATHER**

DISCIPLINARY MATTERS

Six verbal warnings were given during the period and two written warnings. There were no dismissals.

GENERAL COMMENTS.

The festive season and staff and employees holidays made this a very quiet month in the project's activities. Everything proceeded normally.

LANDSCAPE PROGRESS

This side of the project remains considerably ahead of schedule and no difficulties were encountered. During the period the team continued with maintenance work and with the consolidation of work already accomplished.

Currently the team awaits a further supply of the Sponsor's materials to initiate the next phase in the conservation of the monument.

ARCHAEOLOGICAL PROGRESS

Archaeologically the project proceeded at a reduced rate owing to occasional difficulties with the weather and because of the dislocation caused by the festive season.

On the site HM6 came closer to completion while further preparation work for the new trench, shortly to be opened on the southern side of the monument, was undertaken. Additionally much data was processed - advantage was taken of the time to accomplish this.

At the end of the month the archaeological side of the project was on schedule.

J. Debney,

January 4th, 1987