

Vice-Chancellor Prof Eunice Simmons
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25 May 2021

Dear Vice-Chancellor

I hope this finds you well. I am writing on behalf of the Council Trustees of the Society, which met today, to express our concern at the recently announced decision to place staff delivering archaeology and heritage teaching in the University of Chester 'at risk' of redundancy.

We fully appreciate that you will have to consider many difficult decisions responding to external pressures on educational provision. The particular locus for our concern is that the University of Chester Department of History and Archaeology has a record of undertaking and publishing high quality research on Scottish topics, evidenced recently by work on the Picts, notably including Professor Gondek's contribution to *Royal Forteviot: Excavations at a Pictish power centre in eastern Scotland*. Professor Williams has been in recent discussion with our President on Early Medieval North Britain; and a recent conference proceedings on public understanding of frontiers and borders in the present and future attracted a foreword by the Head of Archaeology and World Heritage in Historic Environment Scotland which ended "I am delighted ... to read this volume and see the productive results of this student-led conference in Chester which simultaneously tackles archaeology's potential to link past worlds to present-day realities and concerns." Hillfort studies in Scotland and beyond have similarly been progressed through research published by Dr Jessica Murray, a Chester graduate, who completed her Oxford DPhil partly supervised by our President.

Beyond the traditional academic pursuits, archaeologists are required in the planning environment to help deliver aspects of key government development concerns, such as infrastructure and housing, bringing added value to this work as well as proving the foundations for understanding who we are and where we came from. Like many others, our Society looks to universities like Chester to continue your excellent tradition of teaching and encouraging the archaeologists of the future.

We wish you all the best in these unprecedented times.

Yours faithfully,



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