



experience | heritage

**MOLA**



Both the onsite team and the office support staff have been a pleasure to work with. The flexible, helpful and professional approach adopted by MOLA has been most appreciated.

Flan McNamara, Sellar Developments



## Looking to the future

When a small team of dedicated archaeologists joined forces in the 1970s, literally to rescue London's heritage during unprecedented levels of redevelopment, they may not have anticipated how dramatically heritage management would change. In the decades since, MOLA has worked hard to show how archaeology and built heritage work can dovetail successfully with development, how well archaeologists can manage risk and how heritage can be a transformative and inspiring asset for developer and development.

Today, MOLA occupies a very different place in the planning and development process and in society as a whole. Everything we do today is focused on helping our clients and partners to develop for the future, and to derive real benefit from the work we carry out. These two connected aspirations are what drive us. We restructured in 2011 as an independent charitable company, and now operate across the UK and internationally from our bases in London, Northampton and Birmingham. Our professional staff of around 300 are specialists in archaeology, built heritage, material culture, earth sciences and social geography. We have created recording and analysis systems and use new technologies to streamline our processes. We are members of the Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, and an accredited Independent Research Organisation (IRO).

And because we believe that history matters, and that understanding where we came from helps us to make better decisions about our future, we are passionate about connecting communities with their own heritage and identity and sense of place. Our commitment, to all our valued clients, partners, supporters and volunteers, is to continue to look for innovative and improved ways of working - both to save cost and to use the extraordinary wealth of educational discoveries from development-led archaeology to help deliver real benefits, for our clients and their developments and for society at large.

**Taryn Nixon, Chief Executive**

“ Our experience of working with MOLA was second to none. Following the discovery [of the Curtain playhouse], the advice from MOLA continued to be practical, striking the right balance between the heritage outlook and commercial pressures. ”

Director of Plough Yard Developments Ltd



## Risk appraisal, feasibility and acquisition advice

MOLA's expertise was called on to assess the risk of developing on London Wall Place, an area of known archaeological and built heritage potential in the City of London.

London Wall Place

Through heritage risk appraisal and exploratory excavation, we helped the client to develop a cost-effective and efficient scheme design. Historic features have been incorporated into the visual permeability of the space, affording the development a distinct sense of place.



courtesy of Leica Geosystems

MOLA specialists were commissioned by Plough Yard Developments to help assess site feasibility with a view to achieving planning consent on a site known to be located on the remains of Shakespeare's Curtain playhouse. Our consultants first determined the nature of the archaeology through desk-based assessment and trial excavation. In an advisory capacity we worked with the developer to progress their project design, both to minimise the impact on the buried archaeology and to maximise its potential as an asset to the development and the wider community. As a result, plans for the site developed to incorporate a centre for culture and learning, and Plough Yard Developments achieved planning.

The Curtain Theatre

Thorough research and carefully planned site investigations by MOLA enabled the University to fully investigate the archaeology in advance of seeking planning approval on a phased development basis.

Colin McAuley, Oxford University Estates Services



## Archaeological assessments and site investigations for planning applications

MOLA was asked to undertake an archaeological desk-based assessment to assist with the redevelopment of Admiralty Arch. We were able to assist the client in achieving planning permission for this prestigious scheme. Specialist in-house resources, including historic mapping, archaeological reports and GIS data were combined with geoarchaeological information and a photographic site record. Potential risks were identified and recommendations made for the mitigation strategy.

### Admiralty Arch



Working alongside Oxford University Estates Services and Oxford City Council, MOLA carried out a detailed archaeological investigation, during the demolition of the Radcliffe Infirmary.

An initial desk-based assessment and environmental statement were undertaken in addition to a preliminary study of the burial ground. The excavation of trial trenches and a subsequent open area were phased to operate within the developers' multi-phase schedule and ensure no delays to the work programme. Despite the complexity of the scheme and the importance of the archaeology, our large multidisciplinary team ensured that the programme ran smoothly.

### Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford

It has been a pleasure working with MOLA during the archaeological work carried out here at Old Kent Road Fire Station and we look forward to working with them again in the future.

Rob Palmer, Kier Construction



## Heritage statements and built heritage investigations for planning applications

### New fire stations for London

MOLA prepared heritage statements for eight fire stations across Greater London in advance of their redevelopment.

Using specialist in-house resources, studies of the buildings were undertaken, including archive research. Following assessment, our buildings archaeologists recorded the fire stations in accordance with English Heritage requirements. A below-ground archaeological desk-based assessment was completed and subsequent fieldwork included watching briefs and trial trenches. Drawing on the full range of capabilities across the organisation allowed for a timely and efficient delivery of the planning requirements.

The Canal and River Trust commissioned MOLA to prepare a heritage statement to determine the historic significance of Old Mill Cottage in Berkhamsted, Hertfordshire.

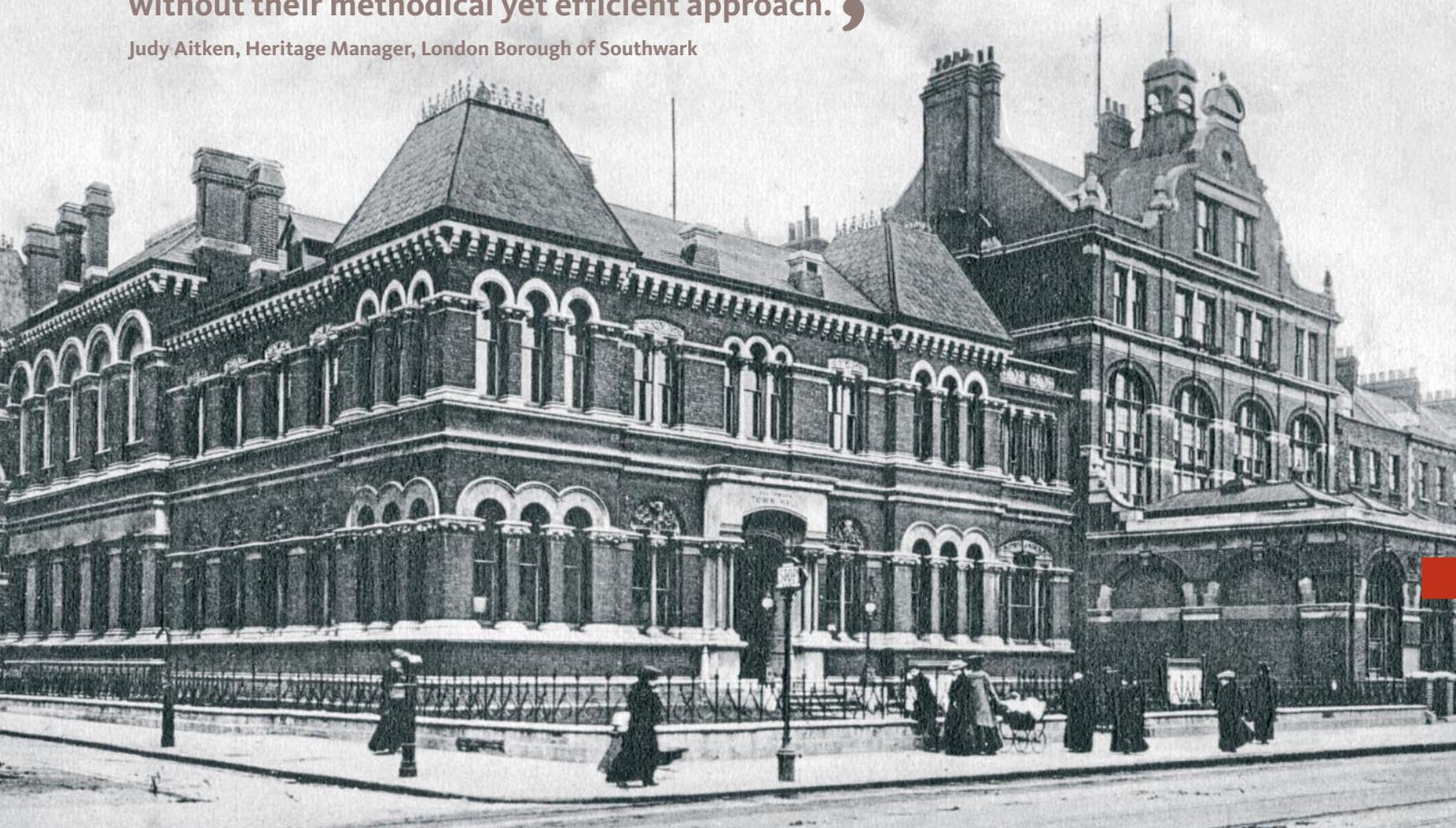
### Bank Mill Cottage

Original documents and maps from Hertfordshire Archives and Local Studies were reviewed and, alongside site visits, enabled our built heritage specialists to understand the complex history of the cottage and wharf. A photographic record, a floor plan and drawings of key features were produced. Our findings informed the client's plans for future development on the site.



‘ MOLA’s help made a massive difference to the recovery of the collections during our salvage operations. It’s possible we would not have recovered so much of our collection so quickly and in such remarkable condition without their methodical yet efficient approach. ’

Judy Aitken, Heritage Manager, London Borough of Southwark



© Cuming Museum

## Heritage consultancy and project design

Our involvement in one of the largest development projects London has ever seen, the Olympic Park, began in 2004.

From site feasibility

### The Olympic Park

and the environmental statement to project design and excavation, we were called upon as a reliable and expert heritage consultant. We worked with the London Development Agency and the Olympic Delivery Authority to reduce the impact of archaeology on the project. Geoarchaeological deposit modelling was employed to identify areas of high archaeological potential, allowing for subsequent fieldwork to be targeted.



### Cuming Museum

Following a devastating fire at the Cuming Museum, Southwark, in 2013, MOLA was asked to assist with the recovery of museum artefacts and to create an accurate record of surviving building features.

Our heritage consultants identified an appropriate and efficient methodology for the challenge. Building specialists undertook a programme of monitoring during the removal of charred building material and recovery of archaeological artefacts. These were referenced against the museum’s collection-inventory and made stable. The design of the salvage project has provided the Cuming Museum with a solid foundation to move forward with reinstating the collection and reopening the galleries.

‘ The field surveys received from MOLA on foreshore archaeology enable emergency repairs to be design and installed at the sensitive setting of the Tower of London without compromising the heritage of the site. MOLA’s advice gave confidence in the proposals during negotiation with the regulators responsible for safeguarding the nation’s heritage. ’

David Short, Arup



## Coastal and intertidal heritage services

Work carried out by the Thames Discovery Programme, run by MOLA, led to the discovery of the foundations of the 14th-century Thames riverwall at the Tower of London foreshore. Historic Royal Palaces commissioned further investigation work, including systematic survey, watching briefs and site visits, which have informed plans for protection and maintenance of the wall.

### Thames Historic Riverwall



English Heritage appointed MOLA to undertake a thematic survey of hulk assemblages in England, to form part of a resource management strategy.

### The Hulk Assemblage Project

Hulks are ships that have been abandoned and subsequently stripped of their fittings, and permanently moored within intertidal areas, estuaries, canals and rivers. We adopted a multidisciplinary approach, drawing on internal expertise. Geographic, thematic and temporal gaps were identified and plotted to aid prioritisation for future survey work and to inform proposals for future management and asset designation frameworks.



“ This MOLA undertaking was highly successful and innovative, comparable to the objectives of the cutting-edge engineering design and functions of the project. ”

Richard Hughes, ARUP

## Deposit modelling and landscape interpretation

MOLA archaeologists undertook site investigations as part of the redevelopment of the SouthGate shopping centre in Bath. These included geoarchaeological investigations to ascertain the archaeological and palaeoenvironmental potential of the River Avon floodplain. Over 140 boreholes were drilled across the site to record the deposit sequence and a deposit model was created, using borehole modelling software and GIS. Specialist recording and sampling of the alluvial and fluvial deposits enabled reconstruction of past landscapes. We took a flexible approach to deal with unforeseen site constraints and work programme changes.

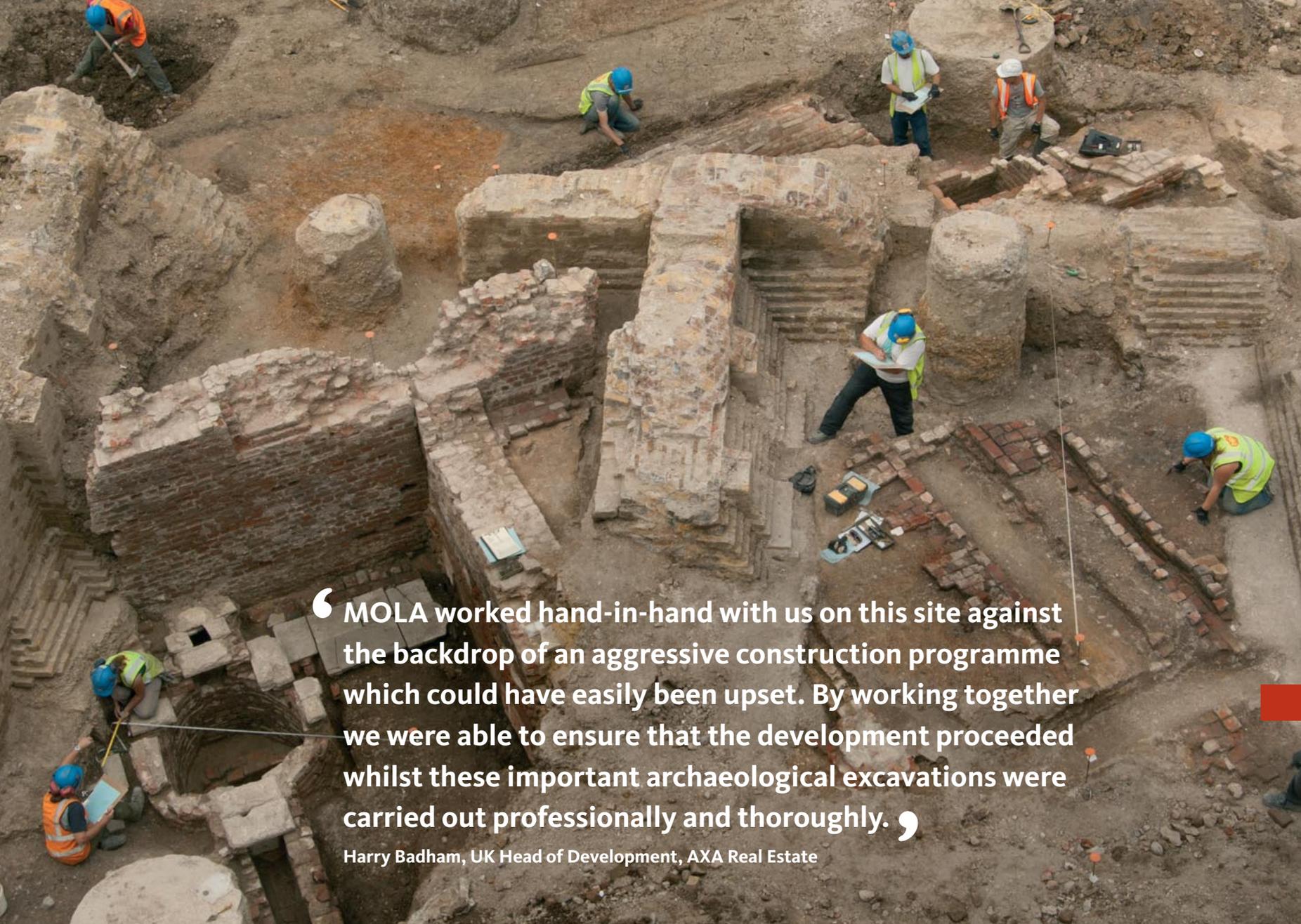
SouthGate, Bath



Desk-based assessment and geoarchaeological deposit modelling at the new Siemens Urban Sustainability Centre, on the Royal Victoria Docks, identified palaeoenvironmental soil formations at the junction of the Thames and Lea prehistoric river systems.

The Urban Sustainability Centre

These deep deposits could not be managed using normal excavation technique so our geoarchaeologists implemented a strategy based on core sampling and laboratory research, targeted at the new pile locations. This approach preserved the industrial heritage of the docks under the new building and avoided a major programme of archaeological excavation.



**“MOLA worked hand-in-hand with us on this site against the backdrop of an aggressive construction programme which could have easily been upset. By working together we were able to ensure that the development proceeded whilst these important archaeological excavations were carried out professionally and thoroughly.”**

Harry Badham, UK Head of Development, AXA Real Estate

## Archaeological fieldwork

MOLA's Northampton-based team was commissioned by Hanson Cement to provide archaeological input into their environmental statement, covering future extensions to

### Ketton Quarry, Rutland

A programme of Desk-Based Assessment, Geophysical Survey, fieldwalking and targeted trial trenching defined the nature of the archaeological resource. There has been a subsequent on-going programme of fieldwork and targeted excavation of threatened sites, including a Bronze Age round barrow, an Anglo-Saxon settlement with an early timber church and cemetery and, most recently, the stone-built houses of the lost medieval hamlet of Newbottle.



Archaeological excavation was carried out by MOLA during the redevelopment of 60 Holborn Viaduct by AXA Real Estate.

### 60 Holborn Viaduct

Ground-raising during the construction of the Holborn Viaduct in the 1870s resulted in areas of unexpectedly high archaeological preservation. We responded by dedicating considerable resources to the project, enabling the work to be completed within the programme agreed with the client. We helped to generate positive media coverage for the development and the excavation following the discovery of the remains of the Three Tuns public house within the site.



“The quality of their work, track record and relationships made a positive contribution to negotiations with relevant stakeholders including Westminster Council and English Heritage.”

Tim Davis, London Estate Senior Development Manager, Grosvenor Great Britain & Ireland

## Built heritage recording and interpretation

A historic building survey was carried out by MOLA in advance of partial demolition and alteration to buildings in Mayfair.

### 18–20 Grosvenor Street

Analysis of the buildings' material fabric and research of documentary sources identified several phases of alterations to the buildings. Special attention was paid to the 18th century drawing room, ahead of the temporary removal of the wooden panelling. Ceiling and wall panelling was drawn to scale by hand and the data transferred into CAD drawings. These drawings were supplied to the client ahead of the submission of the report, as requested, allowing them to reconstruct areas of decorative plaster work and panelling removed during the alterations.

MOLA was involved in both the upgrade at the Grade I listed King's Cross station and the redevelopment of the former goods yard to the north, both built in the 1850s.

At the station we undertook watching briefs, assessments

### King's Cross Station

and building recording, fulfilling planning requirements. Work included a survey of the iconic, double-barrelled train shed roof. The redevelopment of the historic goods yard, set within a conservation area, embraced reuse of Grade II listed structures and demolition of other buildings. We carried out archive research alongside a detailed level of building recording to produce the required reports to the client's deadlines.





## Advanced survey and spatial data management

As part of the National Trust's flagship project to conserve and restore Knole, in Kent, MOLA's Geomatics team carried out a metric survey of interior showrooms and spaces. A network of control stations was created using total stations and tied into Ordnance Survey coordinates with a *Global Navigation Satellite System*. This enabled accurate 3D-data capture of all architectural features including doors, windows, fireplaces, panelling and ceilings. Plans and wall elevations were then created in CAD, which, together with a photographic record, can be used for conservation and restoration works.

### Knole

“MOLA's insight reading the material evidence has been invaluable and enables us so make informed decisions as to how we should be repairing the building.”

Emma Slocombe, Curator, National Trust

MOLA's Northampton team was commissioned by Wardell-Armstrong on behalf of Bela Partnerships to undertake a geophysical magnetometer survey and trial trenching on a major housing project at Priors Hall Park.

### Priors Hall Park, Northamptonshire

The initial survey identified areas of archaeological interest and trial excavation located a series of Roman stone walls. We carried out an electrical resistance survey and identified a Roman villa. The discovery of this previously unknown Roman complex at an early stage in the development enabled the layout of the village-style housing to be adjusted, so that the new development did not impact on the remains.





# Stakeholder engagement and CSR

MOLA was LOCOG's cultural heritage consultant, advising on archaeological, built and landscape heritage at the Olympic Equestrian Venue.

## London Olympics Equestrian Event

A key element of this role was to address the widely-reported concerns of stakeholders for the safety of historic assets in this part of the Greenwich Maritime World Heritage Site. Consultations, both formal and informal, played a major part in the framing of our management and mitigation plan, the implementation of which ensured that there were no impacts upon the park's monuments, archaeology and historic landscapes before, during or after the Games.



© Paul Wilkinson

“ Thank you so much for all the wonderful posts, which I have followed with fascination. They are an excellent example of how archaeology can be made available to the public. ”

Walbrook Discovery Programme blog follower

## Walbrook Discovery Programme

The development of Bloomberg London, in the heart of the modern and Roman city, was known to be located on a site of great archaeological significance.

The client and contractors worked with us to engage neighbours and stakeholders through archaeology. A pictorial hoarding was erected around the site that revealed exciting discoveries. The hoarding was linked to a dedicated blog, the Walbrook Discovery Programme, via QR codes, which provided regular and detailed information about the findings. Working with the client we publicised the extraordinary archaeology of the site through national and international media coverage, highlighting the project's investment in the area's rich heritage.



“ I’ve learned more about history and archaeology within a few months of being a FROG [Thames Discovery volunteer] than in a lifetime of visiting museums. ”

Thames Discovery Programme volunteer

## Community archaeology

A series of archaeologist-led workshops held at Camberwell Library, in conjunction with development for Southwark Council, gave local primary school children a chance to explore first-hand the history of their local area.

The children excavated Roman and Victorian objects from dig boxes and then went on to draw, record and date the items. Creative workshops, including glass window painting, and discussion sessions, exploring local historical events and landmarks, were greatly enjoyed by the pupils and commended by their teachers.

### School workshops, Camberwell

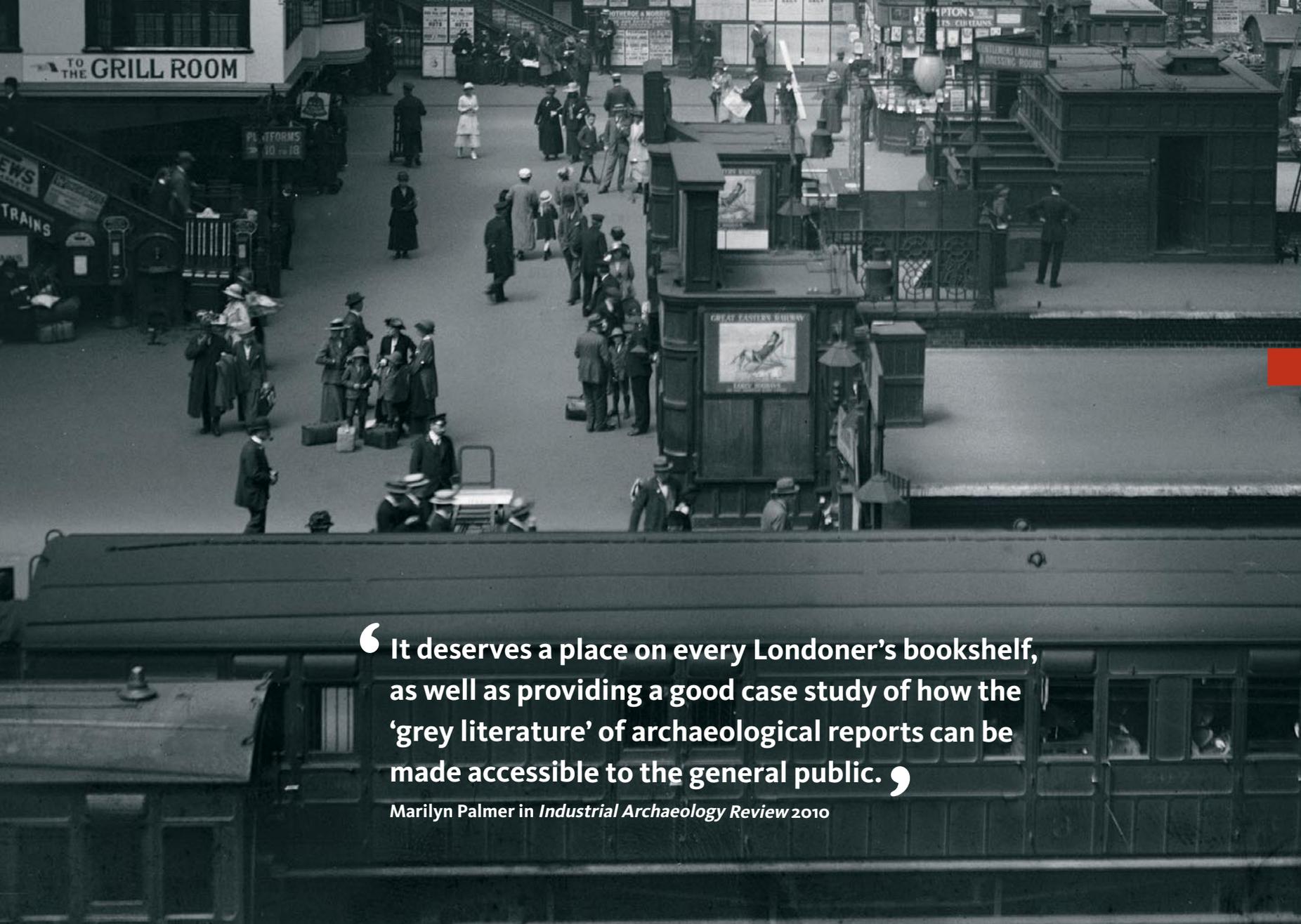


The Thames Discovery Programme, hosted by MOLA, is one of the UK’s most successful community archaeology projects, providing access to archaeology and leading efforts to record the largest archaeological site in the UK – the Thames foreshore.

### Thames Discovery Programme

The project has mobilised and trained 450 volunteers, recorded 60 sites at risk,

won three awards and reached hundreds of thousands of people through events, the project website and via social media. Amongst its many achievements the project discovered the oldest structure in central London, the Bronze Age timber bridge at Vauxhall.



## Specialist research, archive and publication services

Work carried out by MOLA for the upgrade and extension of the London Overground East London Line provided an opportunity to discover more about some of London's earliest railways, including

### 'Tracks through Time'

parts of one of the world's first passenger railways. Construction led to important archaeological discoveries

in Shoreditch, including Roman burials and the medieval Holywell Priory. The findings were published in a popular and accessible book, *Tracks through time*, for the general public to explore the rich history.

“ It deserves a place on every Londoner’s bookshelf, as well as providing a good case study of how the ‘grey literature’ of archaeological reports can be made accessible to the general public. ”

Marilyn Palmer in *Industrial Archaeology Review* 2010

Excavations by MOLA at the

### 'Doctors, dissection and resurrection men'

Royal London Hospital revealed a forgotten cemetery.

Investigations exposed 262 burials, many a confusing assortment of bones with extensive evidence of dissection. Subsequent ground-breaking research by our specialists revealed that the medical school attached to the hospital used unclaimed deceased patients for dissection practice and anatomical study in the early 19th century. Their story was the subject of a blockbuster exhibition at the Museum of London, 'Doctors, dissection and resurrection men', and a bestseller book of the same name.



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‘ Your staff were very professional  
and a pleasure to deal with. ’

Michael Shaughnessy, Project Manager, Ardmore Group

# Meet the team



# Contact us

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A decorative graphic in the bottom right corner consisting of several overlapping, wavy, horizontal bands in shades of orange, yellow, and red, resembling a stylized landscape or a modern logo element.

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