OUR SUSTAINABLE ANCESTORS

Lifelong Learning Programme

**UNIT 6.**

# SUSTAINABLE RURAL DEVELOPMENT – FOCUS ON CULTURE AND NATURE

Green Village

Exploring Sustainable Aspects of Village Life in Europe

## Introduction

The module 'Our Sustainable Ancestors' was created within the 'Leonardo da Vinci – Development of Innovation' project 'Green Village'. It is a vocational module where learners will learn about ways to discover about their own ancestors and perhaps re-enact an element of what they did.

The module is classed as CVT (Continuous Vocational Training) and links to other more practical (IVT) elements of the course 'Sustainable Rural Development – Focus on Culture and Nature'.

In Green Village, Satul Verde Association (Romania), Ipel' Eko (Slovakia), Grampus Heritage (United Kingdom) and NAVE (Iceland) worked together to deliver four community interactive 'Our Sustainable Ancestors' actions, which tested ideas and training models. Before any community can open its doors to learners from other countries, it must be engaged and Satul Verde in Romania ran Work Package One, 'Engaging Communities', which guided and informed all the partners on how to engage with a rural community.

The work of Green Village resulted in this module, which has three alternative elements. Learners select one of these three depending on the nature of their college/University course topic or personal training plan. The three alternative elements are….

**i) COMMUNITY INTERACTIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

**ii) COMMUNITY INTERACTIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION**

**iii) APPLYING ANCIENT SKILLS**

This module booklet describes each element and lists learning outcomes. Learning resources are to be found on the Green Village web-site; http://www.greenvillage-europe.com

***Mark Graham of Grampus Heritage explains the results of the interactive survey near Šahy, Slovakia, undertaken as part of the 'Our Sustainable Ancestors' there.***

# i) COMMUNITY-INTERACTIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL SURVEY

**Introduction**

This version of the module was developed and tested in the United Kingdom and Slovakia by Grampus Heritage and Ipel Eko, with inputs from NAVE in Iceland. The critical two actions were 'Re-Living the Bronze-Age – Hatvan Culture of Central Europe' and 'Discovering Roman Britain at Derventio in Cumbria'.

The equipment required to carry out some of the surveying techniques is considerable. For the network, Grampus Heritage in the United Kingdom, have this equipment (for geophysical and topographic surveys) and are able to travel with it to any one of the eight Green Village partners.

The module requires 40 learner hours (5 days) and follows a pre-determined structure.

**Pre-requisites**

This module is transversal; it is cross-disciplinary and has a wide target audience of learners who study heritage management, archaeology, environment, tourism and leisure, applied geography and history. The module is suitable as an elective not linked directly to any course of study – and taken for its cultural significance. Learners are expected to have some basic understanding of history.

The module also targets older learners and even teachers / trainers completing continuous professional development (CPD). In the case of the latter, a more complex and professional result is expected.

**Level**

The Green Village partnership try to marry the National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) of their respective countries with the European Quality Framework (EQF). This module targets technical and vocational students at level 4 to 5 of the EQF. They may be completing a college diploma, foundation degree or the 1st year of a technical honours degree. For the higher level and CPD learner, Level 6 and 7 of the EQF may be applicable.

## Module Structure

### DAY ONE

Meet with the Survey Team and the local villagers who will take part in the survey. The lead archaeologist gives the background to the survey and outlines the objectives of the survey, why it is being done and where it fits into the spectrum of local, regional, even national historical research. For this module, we are interested in how the people lived here in the past, we could create a set of questions through discussion:

- What position did they occupy in the landscape in relation to resources?
- Did they manage and modify the local landscape?
- Can we surmise anything of the relationship they had with their neighbours?
- Did they respect evidence from previous dominant cultures?
- Did they add value to local products?
- Were they traders, farmers, soldiers?

The survey to be completed in a 'non-destructive' one, there will (at this stage) be no excavation, so we aim to raise questions and generate discussion that has a contemporary relevance. The community members doing the survey are not (usually) professional historians or archaeologists and their interest may lie in what they can discover that interests and informs them in a current context.

The lead archaeologist describes the process of gaining permissions and also the etiquette of professional archaeology (which has commonalities all over Europe). The venue for this first meeting should be within the community, for example in a village community or farm house.

The team go to the site and lay out the boundaries of the survey. There are different levels of surveying depending on complexity and availability of equipment and the skills and knowledge of the experts who lead and assist.

Before the day ends, each learner is given basic instruction in using the equipment; for this reason, the number of individuals on the survey and completing the module has a ceiling of nine persons. Other persons are volunteers from the community and may not be doing the module (although within the ethos of the LLP, we would like them to complete it)

### DAY TWO

The process of the survey could include archive research, discussions with local people, field walking, observation, topographical measuring and geophysical (magnetometer) surveying. The tasks are assigned to learners and all will complete them in rotation.

The more complex part of the survey is conducted using a Geoscan FM256 dual fluxgate gradiometer system, with data processed using Geoscan's Geoplot 3 software. All of the fieldwork will be carried out by the learners with supervision and training provided by Grampus staff. Data will be downloaded on-site using a laptop computer, which enables learners to see the results of the squares they had surveyed. In addition, a printed copy of the survey data will be produced each evening and brought to site the following day. This will enable all learners to participate in continuous discussion and interpretation of the anomalies being discovered.

A 20 X 20m grid is established on the selected site using hand tapes. The survey is conducted at the following resolution: 0.1nT readings, traverse interval 0.5m, readings taken every 0.25m in the traverse direction. The final results are geo-referenced within Ordnance Survey (or other national equivalent) map data using the total station (Leica TCR 307) to plot the grid position in association with field boundaries.

**DAY THREE**

Another surveying day. As before, after working, the lead archaeologist downloads and assembles data each evening; the process of doing this is described and demonstrated but it is not the intention to teach the learner how to do this alone. The results of the survey inform the direction to take – whether the selected survey grid is to be extended in any given direction based on what is discovered / indicated.

**DAY FOUR**

The final full surveying day – by the end of this day, all the grids will be completed. Also one rotating team of three learners has been in the local museum / Public Records Office / archive, on a rotating basis and their research will also finish on this day

**DAY FIVE**

In the morning, the learners, the Grampus team plus local archaeologists and community volunteers all meet at the community venue (village hall, etc.). The survey results are presented (2 hour session) and discussed – what has been 'discovered' is outlined. There is a focus on how people lived here and the initial questions set about their sustainable lifestyle or otherwise are discussed – with a conclusion of what they did or did not do, that is relevant for us today.

All then go to the site and walk over it, continuing the discussion.

The site is cleaned of posts, lines, etc., and the landowner joins the final discussion and is thanked for giving the necessary permissions.

There is then an assessment and feedback, followed by an 'end of survey' celebratory meal.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this version of the module the learners will be able to…

- Discuss the objectives of an archaeological survey and assist in setting them
- Use a range of field equipment with supervision
- Lay out a survey grid
- Organise volunteers in a field walking exercise
- Interpret geophysical / magnetometer results
- Carry out a desk study / archive research using local sources
- Discuss how people might have lived here in the past and draw out relevance for today
- Work within a team, accepting and acting on instructions from the lead archaeologist and assistants

***Aerial photo-image with survey grid marked on***

# ii) COMMUNITY-INTERACTIVE ARCHAEOLOGICAL EXCAVATION

## Introduction

Over the 30 months of the Green Village project, the 'Work Package 3 – Learning By Doing' part element made it possible to develop this version of the 'Our Sustainable Ancestors' module. Grampus joined forces with Hylates (Cyprus), Satul Verde Association (Romania), Devetaki Plateau Association (Bulgaria), Dübener Heide Naturpark (Germany), NAVE (Iceland) and Ipel Eko (Slovakia) to run archaeological excavations investigating Roman, Hellenic, Bronze-Age, Norse and medieval sites. Grampus also led three major excavations within Cumbria in the United Kingdom. All these excavations informed the content of this module and make it possible for it to be delivered in all those countries, with Grampus acting in partnership with their Green Village colleagues. A further series of Grampus excavations in Italy, Portugal, Latvia and Finland can be prepared for delivery of the module.

### Pre-requisites

This module is transversal; it is cross-disciplinary and has a wide target audience of learners who study heritage management, anthropology, archaeology, environment, tourism and leisure, applied geography and history. The module is suitable as an elective not linked directly to any course of study – and taken for its cultural significance. Learners are expected to have some basic understanding of history.

The module also targets older learners and even teachers / trainers completing continuous professional development (CPD). In the case of the latter, a more complex and professional result is expected.

### Level

The Green Village partnership try to marry the National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) of their respective countries with the European Quality Framework (EQF). This module targets technical and vocational students at level 4 to 5 of the EQF. They may be completing a college diploma, foundation degree or the 1st year of a technical honours degree. For the higher level and CPD learner, Level 6 and 7 of the EQF may be applicable.

### Module Structure

#### DAY ONE

Meet with the Excavation Team and the local villagers who will take part in the excavation. The lead archaeologist gives the background to the excavation and outlines the objectives, why it is being done and where it fits into the spectrum of local, regional, even national historical research. For this module,

we ask the same questions as the 'survey' version, with some additional ones due to the possibility to recover artefacts/ archaeological finds; we are interested in how the people lived here in the past, we could create a set of questions through discussion:

- What position did they occupy in the landscape in relation to resources?
- Did they manage and modify the local landscape?
- Can we surmise anything of the relationship they had with their neighbours?
- Did they respect evidence from previous dominant cultures?
- What were they eating?
- How were they building houses, shops, workshops, other structures?
- Did they add value to local products?
- Were they traders, farmers, soldiers?

The community members joining the excavation are not (usually) professional historians or archaeologists and their interest may lie in what they can discover that interests and informs them in a current context.

The lead archaeologist describes the process of gaining permissions and also the etiquette of professional archaeology (which has commonalities all over Europe) as it relates to excavation. The venue for this first meeting should be within the community, for example in a village community or farm house. The results of a previous survey are shown and objectives are discussed; they might consist:

- To establish the presence/absence, nature, extent and state of preservation of archaeological remains and to record these where they were observed;
- To establish the character of those features in terms of cuts, soil matrices and interfaces;
- To recover artefactual material, especially that useful for dating purposes;
- To recover palaeoenvironmental material where it survives in order to understand site and landscape formation processes.

The team go to the site and mark out significant points based on the survey results. There are different levels of excavations depending on time available, complexity, availability of equipment, financial resources and the skills and knowledge of the experts who lead and assist.

By the end of the day, the sites for excavation trenches are marked out

**DAY TWO**

The process of the excavation follows a pre-accepted project design (submitted to the County Archaeologist and on which basis the permission to excavate has been given). All excavation is consistent with the relevant standards and procedures of the Institute for Archaeologists (IfA), and generally accepted best practice. The following is usual:

- Turf removed by hand and stored for replacement

- Topsoil to be removed using a mechanical excavator under strict archaeological observation and supervision.
- Trial trenches are subsequently cleaned by hand
- All features were investigated and recorded according to the standard procedure as set out in the Excavation Manual
- All finds encountered were retained, including those from excavated topsoil
- All finds are cleaned and packaged according to standard guidelines Evaluation trenches are backfilled following the excavation and recording

**DAY THREE**

Another excavation day; working through the process outlined above.

**DAY FOUR**

A final excavation day.

In the afternoon, finds are cleaned; where it is feasible volunteers take part in the process. Children may like to join in the cleaning of artefacts.

**DAY FIVE**

On this final day, there is an assessment of the data as set out in the Management of Archaeological Projects (2nd Edition, 1991). In the morning, the learners, the Grampus team plus local archaeologists and community volunteers all meet at the community venue (village hall, etc.). The excavation results are presented (2 hour session) and discussed – what has been 'discovered' is outlined. There is a focus on how people lived here and the initial questions set about their sustainable lifestyle or otherwise are discussed – with a conclusion of what they did or did not do, that is relevant today.

All then go to the site and walk over it, continuing the discussion.

There is then an assessment and feedback, followed by an 'end of excavation' celebratory meal.

Note* few excavations can be completed in a week; as long as the full process is experienced in the five learning days, the module can be fully delivered.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this version of the module the learners will be able to…

- Discuss the objectives of an archaeological excavation and assist in setting them
- Use a range of field equipment with supervision for the purpose of excavation
- Lay out the boundaries of trial excavation trenches
- Remove by hand and store turf for later replacement
- Observe supervised mechanical removal of topsoil
- Hand clean the excavation trench following standard procedures
- Record finds using standard method

- Package, label and store finds
- Take part in a finds cleaning process
- Discuss how people might have lived here in the past and draw out relevance for today
- Work within a team, accepting and acting on instructions from the lead archaeologist and assistants

Finds range from burnt layers to tangible objects - both inform us of what our ancestors were doing

## iii) APPLYING ANCIENT SKILLS

**Introduction**

Throughout the Green Village project, great attention was paid to traditional skills. Learners, volunteers, villagers and visitors all got involved. Some of those skills were considered to be so pertinent to today's countryside in Europe that modules were created to teach them; included was '*Traditional Lime-Burning', 'Fencing Without Wire', 'Wood Tar/Pitch Production'*. Other traditional skills are important for cultural and environmental sustainability but they are offered more as a way to understand sustainability than to seriously prepare proficient producers and makers.

The learner will 'sample' learn the skill but more importantly will prepare (as part of a team) an exhibition giving an environmental and/or cultural message liked to the skill.

We wanted to separate out 'ancient skills' – some of which could not expect to become mainstream in the 21st century.

For this version of the 'Our Sustainable Ancestors' module, offered are the following….

- Wooden tulnic / alpenhorn making in the Apuseni Mountains (Romania)
- Norse iron smelting (Iceland)
- Natural fibre rope making (Slovakia)
- Traditional lace making (Cyprus)
- Natural dyeing of wool and cloth (United Kingdom)

For all four options, the module structure remains the same. The module requires 40 learner hours (5 days).

**Pre-requisites**

This module is transversal; it is cross-disciplinary and has a wide target audience of learners who study heritage management, media, journalism, photography, anthropology, archaeology, environment, tourism and leisure, applied geography and history. The module is suitable as an elective not linked directly to any course of study – and taken for its cultural significance. Learners are expected to have some basic understanding of history and tradition.

The module also targets older learners and even teachers / trainers completing continuous professional development (CPD). In the case of the latter, a more complex and professional result is expected.

**Level**

The Green Village partnership try to marry the National Qualification Frameworks (NQF) of their respective countries with the European Quality Framework (EQF). This module targets technical and vocational students at level 4 to 5 of the EQF. They may be completing a college diploma, foundation degree or the 1st year of a technical honours degree. For the higher level and CPD learner, Level 6 and 7 of the EQF may be applicable.

**Module Structure**

**DAY ONE**

The venue is a village one – a village hall or school house and the topic is *'what's so important about traditional skills?'* A Powerpoint presentation focuses on a number of local traditional skills practiced by our sustainable ancestors in that village. There is a discussion on the value of those skills in teaching about sustainability; we also discuss the contemporisation of that skill.

In the afternoon, we visit a museum to review the ancient skill that we focus on in any of the five countries.

The museum could be the venue for the exhibition that gives the environmental and or cultural message at the end of the week. The learners will promote the exhibition – the creation of a flier/ invitation / news item / press release is part of the module.

**DAY TWO**

This day is taken up with assembling the materials necessary for the process and product that is selected. Ideally the process will be non-damaging to the environment and the materials will be local and sustainable. Where the product, process and practice of the skill led directly to environmental damage, discussing this is of equal importance to if it was passive; this was the case with smelting iron in Iceland, the extent of the process was such that the settlers decimated the existing forest cover to produce charcoal for smelting.

Ancient skill training starts in the afternoon; the teacher is a local villager. It is not the intention to teach the skill so that the learner can repeat it flawlessly.

The team of learners also begin to plan content and nature of the exhibition they will make together; they might also create a blog, virtual exhibition, etc.

**DAY THREE**

A full day of skills training – they take pictures, record the trainers thoughts…. they build a picture from the past. The story they will tell will focus on some ancestral skill, once common but now it could be almost lost to antiquity. In every case the significance of the skill to today's (unsustainable) world is important. The skills training begins to take the shape of applied social, cultural and environmental research.

**DAY FOUR**

The final researching / skills training day – by the afternoon, the group of learners are ready to begin setting up their exhibition. Their research has also taken them to the local museum / Public Records Office / Archive, on a rotating basis and their research will also finish on this day.

**DAY FIVE**

In the morning, the learners finish setting up their exhibition. They have assembled examples, images (current and from the past), text, statements and recorded their thoughts, those of the trainers and

other community members. The exhibition must have some translation into local language – they have been assigned a helper for this.

The exhibition opens and the guests arrive – the target audience has been considered in the process of designing the exhibition.

The learners gather feedback from the visitors. There might be an open forum for discussion.

There is an assessment process, in which the skills trainers, partner staff and local people have an input.

**Learning Outcomes**

On completion of this version of the module the learners will be able to…

- Discuss the objectives of applied research into an ancient skill
- 'Sample' learn a skill in order to appreciate its significance
- Source local materials for the process and product
- Gather images, text, observations, samples, that can be used to tell a story appropriate to the objectives set
- Promote an event that informs about the skill and its cultural/social/environmental significance today
- Carry out archive research using local sources
- Create an exhibition, man it and gather reaction to it
- Work within a team, respecting the views of others and sharing responsibility