

Sustain Ability on Show

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Guests

Amy Stewart (UK) and Dr Silje Evjenth Bentsen (NO)

Introduction

This month we consider open-air museums and cultural heritage sites from the perspective of the Sustainable Development Goals, as Matilda chats with guests **Amy Stewart** and **Silje Evjenth Bentsen**. Amy Stewart is the curator at the Crannog Centre Open Air Museum in Scotland, and Dr Silje Evjenth Bentsen is the project manager of "Fotefar mot nord" ("Traces towards the North") in Norway. Together, they discuss issues of social, material, and environmental sustainability when rebuilding cultural heritage sites.

Transcript

It's the first Friday of the month, which means that it's time for the next episode of #FinallyFriday, bringing you insights and discussions from around the world focussing on experimental archaeology, ancient technology, archaeological open-air museums and interpretation.

Matilda: Hello and welcome to #FinallyFriday. My name is Matilda Siebrecht and today I'm joined by two specialists from our EXARC community, focussing on the application of Sustainable Development Goals in cultural heritage management.

Amy Stewart is the curator of the Crannog Centre open-air museum in Scotland. Since the unfortunate destruction of the central crannog several years ago, Amy has become involved in planning the new build and part of this job involves considering the implications of sustainability at the museum site. Dr. Silje Evjenth Bentsen is the project manager of Fotefar Mot Nord, Traces

towards the North, in Norway. This project aims to promote cultural heritage as a resource for both the local community and the tourism industry, and one of the main themes of developing it further is that of sustainability.

So first of all, thank you so, so much to both of you for joining me here today on this podcast. I have a very quick question, very simple one, to start you off. How did the projects that you're working with originally start and how did you first get involved? Perhaps Amy, you'd like to go first?

Amy: I can do. Like you mentioned, we had a reconstruction crannog on our site and it sadly burnt down in 2021. So that is really where our project began. So we had to think about what our future might look like without a crannog. And at this point we had just secured a new piece of land, which was really amazing. We decided we would just move straight over there and start building straight away on the new site rather than trying to repair things on our old site, just because there's a lot more space over there and it seemed like a perfect time to move, really. So I got involved last year actually. I finished my master's degree in Museum and Artefact Studies at Durham University and I basically came straight out of that to the Crannog Centre. I started as a volunteer and I worked really closely with the previous curator, Fran, and she was really amazing and let me get a lot of work experience here and let me get involved in a lot of different projects that were running at the time including the move to our new site as well. And then after that I left for a little bit and Fran left earlier this year and I got her job from that so that was really great. So I'm now the curator here, so I look after the museum collection but because I've started at a point where we are looking at a whole new museum being built and the collection moving over, I have been quite involved in the whole process of rebuilding - not just the museum - but the village and everything that comes along with the new Crannog Centre site.

Matilda: So actually, yeah, a really nice moment to get involved, I mean, unfortunate of course, but a really nice point to start anew with the project, you could say. Silje, I believe your project is a little wider ranging?

Silje: Yeah, hello, thanks for having me and hello to all the listeners. So this project has a very long history, so just buckle up and I'll try to make it as short as possible. So with Fotefar Mot Nord, it originally started in the 1990s, and it was the four northernmost counties - so that means regions in Norway - at the time, who collaborated on making a cultural route through northern Norway. And just to give you an idea of the distance, if you look at Google Maps, it's about 1,500 kilometres from the northernmost to the southernmost point of the route. So that means you would be on the road in a car for like 20 hours non-stop to get from one end to the other. And that's without visiting any sites or taking any side roads to get to sites that are not along the main road. This cultural route was meant to showcase 10,000 years of cultural history in the area. And 103 sites were selected to form stops along the route. And these sites include, for example, rock art sites, marketplaces, heritage trails through towns, across different archaeological sites and museums. We're seeing an EXARC member on the route. It's the Lofotr Viking Museum in Lofoten, which many of the listeners might know. It was important to show a range of sites and include Sámi cultures and memories of the Finnish expansion into Norway as well. The project was at one point referred to as the world's largest open-air museum because it included all these sites. But one of the ideas behind this cultural route was to promote cultural heritage as a resource to both the community and the tourism industry. So you weren't meant to visit all the sites in one go, of course, but just to get a taste of the heritage of your local area, in the area you were visiting, and perhaps come back for more. You would also choose to visit sites, you could choose one specific theme. It could be cultural heritage, it could be archaeology, it could be Second World War memorials. The project got its own logo and signs for distinct graphical design, and all the sites got one or more of these signs. Then an

information pamphlet was also made for each selected site. And then as the years went by, some of the sites were well-tended, and they got updated signage and everything, but for other sites, the signs with Fotefar Mot Nord decayed, or they were removed. So in 2019 a survey was made and it showed that 80% of the sites needed updated signs and many of these also needed other maintenance. That could be grass that needed to be cut, but it could be buildings that needed maintenance. So the project was still popular among many, so locals wanted their site to be taken care of and to get new signs, etc. And the tourism industry also wanted heritage sites as potential points of interest in the area and to promote the area. And then we had researchers who showed that many of the sites were local meeting places, so that activities such as festivals or shows took place at some of the sites. In that way they actually already contributed to the social dimension of sustainability for many communities. There are now three counties involved in the project. There will be four again from next year and the Sámi Parliament in Norway is also an active partner in the project. These partners decided to revive the project, which means updating signage, those practical things, but also how we communicate about and promote the sites and to better include concepts such as public health, visitor management and sustainability into the project. In 2021, I was hired as a project manager to plan and coordinate this work. So that's how it started for me.

Matilda: Amy, you mentioned that there's a new site for the Crannog Centre being built and Silje, you were also talking about how much the surrounding communities become a lot more involved in this. For both of these projects, is the sense of importance of these sites kind of understood or acknowledged by the local communities? Amy, I don't know if you want to start?

Amy: Yeah, absolutely. We were really grateful after the crannog burnt down we had so much support from the local community, which was just amazing. We had a fundraising page, for example, and we got loads of money within the first week because people were just donating. And then even more importantly, people were donating their time as well, which was amazing. So our new crannog, for example, is going to be built by a volunteer group. So we have a women's cooperative group from Glasgow. They're going to come in and do a lot of the building, which we are so, so grateful for. People pop in all the time, day to day, just to check in on how the site is looking and how things are progressing, which is really lovely. So yeah, a lot of local community input, which has just been amazing.

Matilda: That's really cool because, Silje, do the sites get maintained on a local level or is it the project has to arrange for people to go and visit and maintain these sites?

Silje: Oh, it's different from site to site. Those that are museums, the museums will take care of it. In some cases, there are museums that have arranged to take care of sites that are not technically theirs. And in other cases there are like local groups or local communities that help maintain, cut the grass, maintain the path, etc. So it varies a bit, but there is quite a lot of community engagement and some of these volunteers coming to help, as I hear they have in Scotland too. So the community for some of these sites are really interested in getting it up and running.

Matilda: That's great to hear. So to sort of move a little towards the part that this episode is focussing on, I guess, and both of you have mentioned is that of sustainability. I suppose social sustainability is indeed one of those things and it could be argued that local interest will help that social sustainability. You mentioned, Amy, there's a lot of people that just come in, day to day. Is this something that provides a lot of jobs locally as well? Is it something that can be maintained by locals? How is that sustainability aspect, shall we say, being developed?

Amy: Yeah, we run an apprenticeship scheme. We get a lot of kids coming straight out of school who come to us. And instead of going down the kind of college, university routes which doesn't necessarily suit them, they'll come here and work here instead. So that has been really lovely. We've got two new apprentices this year, Ellie and Fraser, who have both been just fab. They only started a few months ago and they're doing really, really well. We've had a couple that have stayed on since last year. So last year we had five in total and two have stayed on. They're still here, they're still working, which is really lovely. We do see a lot of younger people from the area coming in to get jobs with us, which is really beneficial to them as well, working in the local area too. So that is something we hope we can continue on the new site as well. Bigger space, more room to get more people in and different apprenticeships. At the moment we're running a customer service apprenticeship, but we're in talks about doing more crafty ones, green woodworking for example and all these kind of traditional craft skills as well could be interesting to try and see if people would want to come in and work there. So definitely, we're always looking to try and get more local people employed here.

Matilda: That's really cool. That's very interesting. Do you find something similar, Silje, is there a lot of interest from the kind of younger generation?

Silje: There is some, you know, it's different from site to site. I did hear Amy talk about how people get involved in craft skills, for example, in a museum, that some museums or sites have organised courses or markets where you can buy local crafts or learn local crafts. One of the sites is actually not a physical site. It's boat building tradition, a special boat building technique, in one area. But we want to get local involvement. That's part of the point, this is an important part of the sustainability aspect of our work. We want there to be local values left to the project, and that could mean that they are meeting places for people, so that you contribute to sort of public health and the mental aspect or the physical aspect, that you can walk along a heritage trail and keep fit. It could also mean that you empower people by teaching them about their heritage or allowing them to explore, giving them a space to explore their identity. But also that we encourage engagement and that, in practical terms, that locals get values from the project and also economically, environmentally. That there are local restaurants or local hotels with local owners that can provide services, maybe local guide services. That we create good services where people want to live and where young people can have possibilities to both do work and to develop themselves and the society around them.

Matilda: That's really interesting. Do you both think that there is more of a move towards this kind of engagement with sort of more, shall we say, social sustainability, indeed engaging with locals, making sure that people want it to continue, making sure that the interaction with heritage remains sustainable? Do you think that that is something that's improving or has always been good or, it could be done better at different open-air museums or heritage sites in other regions or areas that you've seen?

Amy: Yeah, I think there is more of a swing towards it being important to engage the local community with their local heritage. Something we focus on a lot. One of the problems we found is that we're a very remote area. So access to our site is not always possible for a lot of groups of people. Public transport in this area is not great either. So realistically, you have to have a car to get to where we are. So we have been thinking a lot about that in the run-up to moving to our new site. What we have been looking into is the fact that we could go out to people, so we could go out to the local area to various schools, different community groups and do work with them away from the site, so bringing the site to them. And also, for example, our learning officer Dylan, he works a lot with local schools and something he'll do is do little zoom calls with them beforehand. They get an introduction to the site as well and quite often people will call up and say: it's not possible for us to

get to you but is there anything we can do online or can you come out to us? Which I think is really important, I mean especially for us. I know a lot of other museums who are in more built-up areas, they'd have less of this difficulty, but it's something we've been really trying to work on too. And trying to get around the public transport aspect as well. They're talking about making more pathways, for example, so that you'll be able to walk and bike routes and things like that, just so people have different options to get to us. Because it's definitely very important for all these local groups to come in.

Silje: So Amy, I think it's really interesting what you're saying, that you're bringing the museum to people as opposed to people coming to visit. That seems to be a really good way of doing it. I've been working with visitor management for many museums or other sites, they think about how to bring people to their site. So if they don't have public transport, just sort of create this transport and have maybe a place where people can park or take a bus to and then you have a bus or some kind of transport to the museum. So I was just wondering, have you looked into solutions like that as well?

Amy: Yeah, I think there was talk of trying to get a bus route in as well, because our local town is Aberfeldy, which you can get to by train, bus, for example. And yeah, trying to figure out a bus route that hits all these kind of bus stations, train stations, so people can get out to us. It's definitely something that's been in the back of our minds when we are thinking about building a new site. Because something we experience quite a lot is just the difficulty of people getting to us.

Matilda: Silje, we didn't come to your response to the general question. You've been working in this sector for quite a while. Do you think that there is improvement, there is a need for improvement, there has been improvement?

Silje: We just need to think differently about these kind of things. I was very interested when Amy talked about transport, because it's one of the things we work with most. There's been a big project where I work in Nordland County Council on visitor management, not just related to heritage sites, but also to some of the bigger tourism hubs in Northern Norway and how the tourists sort of overtake the local community when they come. So you want to create a space where the local community and people who live there, they want to live their everyday lives and then the tourists or visitors, they want to visit the museums or sites or whatever is there, but you have to find a balance so you don't have people parking in your garden or walking through your property or your garden to get somewhere. So you try to think about creating these hubs to get to these places, both to transport people in, but also the interesting aspect of what Amy said was you transport the museum to them, so you transport what they want to see to them, which is also in a sustainability perspective very important, that you create that balance and maybe also help with reducing the negative environmental impact. So instead of 20, 30, 40 cars driving down a road, you can have a bus or you create possibilities that people can visit you digitally. And maybe see much of what you can offer and that the traffic is reduced.

Amy: I think that's an interesting aspect. Something I've not really seen before in museums until coming here, is the kind of idea of going out to people. Another thing when we first started was, I mentioned the Zoom workshops we've been doing, but what they were doing at that point was sending packs out to people so they could still do various activities because we'd send the equipment out to them. And then they'd log on to a Zoom call and they'd do it over the camera instead, which at this point - it was February when I started so weather was bad and our site was actually shut for the season as well. So yeah, again, less cars on the road is definitely important.

Silje: That's such a lovely concept to just send them packages and have them participate from home, basically. That's a really neat idea.

Amy: A lot of people, especially after COVID, are a little bit more wary about coming out to public places. So it's nice that people can still experience the museum, but from the comfort of their own home.

Matilda: I can imagine that might be a little more difficult with the amount of sites that are part of the Fotefar Mot Nord project. I can imagine something like the concept of environmental sustainability is also something important just because of the amount of kilometres between all these sites. That's a very broad area of people travelling around, of needing to be maintained. How is that being managed?

Silje: I manage and coordinate the project in itself. So we're trying to create possibilities for people to visit the sites or be aware of these sites. The county council as a whole, they've maintained the roads and take care of these things. It's difficult to reduce the transport in this large area, obviously. People will visit what they visit, but I like the idea that Amy had of presenting packages, because many of these sites, you can group them into themes. So you could say, visit one site and then maybe get a package or an idea of other sites you could visit at a different time. But one of the points of the whole cultural route, so to speak, is to create points for people to visit locally, and maybe you stay longer in a place, so maybe you want to visit three or four sites and that makes you stay at one place for three or four days, which means you will need less transport. You become a little bit more environmentally friendly, in that you don't move around. It's also better for the local community that there's not a lot of traffic in and out to a specific place. But in addition, in Norway there is talk about so-called regenerative tourism. So that you visit a place and then you contribute something, you help something, you leave the society better than it was when you visited. It fits in with a sort of heritage slogan of 'leave only footprints behind and take only photos with you'. And I know that some places have had trials where they try to make people help them, for example, maintain paths or helping maintain houses or things like that as activities, so that when you go on holiday, you go on a work holiday, so to speak. So it's possible to incorporate many of these things into tourism industry, but also into the heritage sector and think about how you can include people in all the activities that you need to do in order to maintain the sites. Then there's also the fact that some of these sites, they can't have many visitors. They're small and all the visitors would perhaps destroy the site. So there's also a balance there between how many visitors you can invite in to the site itself and how many visitors maybe have to visit the site digitally or, as Amy said, get a package from the museum that you can do at home.

Matilda: I really like that idea of going on holidays where you go and it's like, oh yes, and then this place you can go diving and see the beautiful coral reef, but you also help clean up the beach or something. That's a very random example, but I can imagine that something like that would work nicely as well.

Silje: I know that the Viking Museum in Lofoten, which I mentioned earlier, they have a Viking festival and I know they get a lot of volunteers to come there and help with the festival. And I also know that other sites in sort of the Fotefar portfolio, they have festivals where locals or visitors contribute as volunteers. I think that's a really nice idea. I don't know other sites that have used it to say, okay, you can come visit, but you're going to have to help us build the path or whatever it is. It's a really nice way of incorporating people and include them in daily life. So you also include them with the local community and allow there to be connections and conversations and really good times between people and that's what you want.

Matilda: Yeah, definitely. That actually reminds me a bit of something I've seen from the Crannog Centre recently is a lot of online outreach and digital interactions. I think there was like a 'Desperate Housewives of the Crannog Centre' or something that they did at some point and they were showing all the drama going on between the volunteers or something and it was quite funny. Do you find a lot of people engage digitally also with the Crannog Centre, so not just with these packages that you were mentioning, but also through that kind of outreach?

Amy: No, absolutely. I like that you did bring up that... TikTok, yes, I think I was in that one. A lot of people really enjoyed that video that we posted which was really just a little bit of fun. So we have a marketing officer, Chantel, and she's been really great. She's been doing a lot of this kind of connecting with people online. And that is something that actually worked really, really well. We were just having a bit of fun with it, but we get visitors and they'll say: oh, I recognize you from the Real Housewives of the Iron Age. We had a podcast series for a bit as well, which was really nice and just a way for people to get to know us a little bit better too. Because we are a fairly small team, so people are seeing the same faces every time they come in. And also with the development on our new site it's been really lovely that people can watch that happening online as well. So Chantel's been running Dalerb Diaries, so that's on Facebook and YouTube and things, and every week or so she'll post a little update about what's happening on the site that week and what's been finished building and what's in the process and that's a really lovely way for people to engage as well.

Matilda: And mentioning the rebuild brings us on to probably, I guess, one of the first things that people think of when they think of sustainability of a site is the materials, of course, and the actual physicality of the site itself. How important would you say, Amy, is kind of material sustainability in this new rebuild project of the Crannog Centre?

Amy: Really, really important. The idea with our new site was that we were going to try and be as Iron Age as possible, I guess. So we are an Iron Age site, so the idea was that we would try and recreate what we see from the Iron Age, but today, with the new buildings that are going up, they're all being done with traditional tools and traditional skills and various things like that. So yeah, material is definitely very important. The other thing was that a lot of these structures are wooden. So cutting down a whole bunch of trees just to build our site is not sustainable at all. So we have been looking into using the area around us. We have a piece of land at the moment where we've hired a coppicer. Ian's our coppicer now and he is working on the piece of land we have, so he's going to be growing our own materials. So the idea is that we will eventually get to a point where we just constantly have a supply of materials ready because we will constantly be harvesting and regrowing. And that's really nice as well because this is what we're seeing a lot of in the Iron Age, I mean you can imagine wooden buildings tend to need repairing quite often. Material has been pretty vital to what we're looking into at the moment. So we've just been trying to find ways to do this as sustainably as possible. We've been working with different craftspeople to try and reduce the amount of trees we've cut down so we've barely touched the forest area. We're also trying to source these materials locally at the moment. So a lot of it has been things that people have left over that have been brought up to us so we can reuse them. We will look at regrowing too. And then we've got Jenny. She does a lot of the cooking aspect of things. We have a cooking area outside, for example, where we cook with things that we see from the Iron Age as well. We found 167 different plant materials in the crannog. We try and use those and see what kind of foods they might have been eating then. Jenny's really excited about growing a forest garden on the new site, which eventually could then be used to feed the cafe. So we would be growing our own food for the cafe, which is important, because we are now doing exactly what they were doing in the Iron Age, and that has that really nice sustainability aspect to it as well.

Matilda: And I can imagine in Norway there's the maybe harsher climatic conditions which means that materially things might degrade quicker or things might need renewing a lot quicker. Is it difficult to balance that kind of sustainability with just making sure that things last or is it quite possible, actually?

Silje: Yes, and no. So for the materials, for the signage and everything, for example, in the 1990s they used not very environmentally friendly materials that we now have to dispose of. So we're trying to move some of the information over digitally, we just have to find out how to do that, because not all the tourists will have internet connections when they visit, but for the buildings or the sites themselves, you know, you need to maintain them all the time, you need to use old techniques and also like Amy talked about, sourcing local materials and finding the people who can do that, really. That can be a challenge. We don't necessarily have that many people that know how to maintain things the old way or that are interested in learning it. So it's also an aspect of the cultural heritage management or protection - that you protect also the knowledge about techniques and this is of course where, for example, experimental archaeology has had impact in preserving or maintaining old techniques and both how you do things, but also how it impacts the building, how it can be good for the environment to use old craft techniques and how people adapted to climate change before and how you can still do it by using the older skills.

Amy: That's an interesting point, the skills aspect, people not knowing how to keep these things up and repair them. Which is also something we experienced, looking at our wooden structures. If they last 10 years, not all of us, or the ones that worked on it anyway, might not still be at The Crannog and gone elsewhere. Then you lose that skill set. So we thought about that as well, looking really far forward into the future. Our apprentices, for example, have been going over to the new site to learn some of these techniques. I was building a hazel hurdle wall the other week, rather than being in the museum, which was lovely. So yeah, we are trying to kind of open that up to all members of staff too, which again is, when you mentioned the idea of people not knowing how to continue these things, I think that is something that we definitely need to focus on here as well.

Matilda: We've talked about a couple of different aspects of sustainability in relation to the two projects, but obviously there's a lot of different parts in the Sustainable Development Goals. Would you say that there is a different one or one that we've spoken about that's more of a priority? Which of the sustainable development goals is more of a priority for these two projects that you're doing? Amy, if you want to go first?

Amy: I think probably the Education aspect of that, but also the Sustainable Development Goals. I feel like education is probably the one we are focussing on a lot, just the idea of getting that information out there. I mentioned that Chantel is quite good on social media, keeping people updated about what we're doing and that has led to an increase in volunteers who are coming onto the new site to help build and learn these skills. But it then also feeds back into what we see in our tours, so how our site runs at the moment is we do guided tours, so we have tour guides and they go around the museum and then there's different areas outside that the visitor will go around. And yeah, that brings out really interesting conversations, especially around sustainability, for example, and I feel like getting that information out there and showing people that they can do these things as well - is a really interesting aspect of what we're seeing. Especially looking at building a new museum, for example, we've had quite a lot of challenges around trying to keep it sustainable, as you can imagine, it's quite a big task. So one of the things we looked at was when we were building the new cafe in the museum, pods, how we would keep that as low impact as possible. So we were trying to get buildings that wouldn't have concrete foundations, for example, so it wouldn't really affect the ground underneath because these pods might change in the future. So they are built to

be temporary at the moment. The idea is that they can just be moved and used for something else, but what they are is they're sitting on little screws at the moment, they're balanced on top of these screws, which is no concrete, it's a lot less steel being used, and it's not damaging the ground underneath, so it's got a good impact in the long run as well. I feel like that again is another way of educating ourselves and others about how these different buildings could be used. The contractors had a really tricky time trying to figure that one out with us too, but they've done a really amazing job. So we're working with JML, and they just have done fantastic jobs with the new pods, but they've learned a lot and we've learned a lot. And I think that constant flow of information and thinking about how you can adjust to these problems, find solutions is really, really important.

Silje: Yeah, I would agree. For the Fotefar Mot Nord we're being revived in the context of Goal 11, which is Sustainable Cities and Communities. And it was also..., although the goal wasn't invented in the 1990s, it was also an important aspect of it when the project started, that you want to create sustainable cities and communities where there are possibilities for work, where you have an identity, where you want to visit and you want visitors to come. So in that context, Fotefar mot Nord, the project as a whole, contributes to the planning and management of cultural heritage, but also other aspects. It's sort of a big perspective. But there are also other goals that would be applicable to us, like the Responsible Consumption and Production, the Education aspects. So it's a big project, hence we connect to many of the goals. But the baseline for the whole project is to create good communities where people want to live that are sustainable economically, environmentally, socially, culturally. We try to look at all sorts of aspects and how cultural heritage can be a piece in the puzzle. Because an archaeological site or an archaeological museum cannot run the whole community by itself. It cannot provide enough work for the entire town, but it can provide work for some and generate income and generate visitors and interest and learning possibilities for those that are in school, so that it becomes a more interesting community to live in. And I think that's a really important aspect of both archaeology and open-air museums, that they can contribute to society in that way.

Matilda: I think both of you have demonstrated really nicely how much indeed these two projects - and they're at very different scales - but how indeed they both can contribute so nicely to modern and future society by looking at the past, which indeed is the whole point of archaeology, right?

Silje: Yeah, I think we need to be much more vocal about that and tell people, because to me as an archaeologist, it's so self-evident that I can learn so much from archaeology, that I can learn how people have adapted to climate change in the past and I have a past in research where I've worked with the development of modern humans and how they adapt to different climate changes over time. We have so much to offer, but people who come from the outside, they don't necessarily know that and sometimes you have to explain them or just be vocal about it and just tell them: listen, this is how I can contribute. This is how my field actually contributes to something that is good for everyone. And then, of course, not everyone is going to be interested in archaeology or in museums, but they might be interested in the aspects that it can offer. It offers you a place where you can visit, you can go to the museum and have a nice time. The museum even has a cafe, so you can taste the local food. Many museums or places - here in Norway at least - they have maybe an extra room that you can rent and have a conference or your birthday or things like that. So, they are meeting places and they're very important pieces of the society and we can get better at showing that, I think.

Matilda: Did you have anything you wanted to add to that, Amy?

Amy: Yeah, I agree completely. It's important to get people coming in and using that space and contributing to the community. And I think open-air museums have a really nice way of doing that because, especially where I am, so Loch Tay, it's a really beautiful area, so people do come just to enjoy the scenery and when our crannog was standing, it was a really incredible structure, so people did want to come in and not necessarily see the museum or see the Iron Age village, but they just wanted to look at the structure and drink a cup of coffee, which will again be good on our new site as well, and you'll be able to see a whole new village, a whole new crannog. And yeah I think it's a really nice idea about having people coming in not just to see the museum. Because crazy as it sounds not everyone's into archaeology...

Matilda: It's bizarre, bizarre! Again, like I said, I think this has been a really nice way of showing that importance. But maybe a final question before we wrap things up, related to this. Any exciting plans for the future of the project that we haven't spoken about already? And... how do you think that the EXARC community who are listening in can help to make a difference in regards to those points that we've discussed today?

Silje: I'll take the last question first. How can the EXARC community contribute? I think, to a large extent, the EXARC community already contributes in that we learn and explore old techniques, old ways of doing it, maintain sort of a knowledge of skills and how to adapt and how to maintain things. Buildings or boats or... other techniques. It's really an important aspect, I think. For Fotefar Mot Nord, there are lots and lots of exciting plans. So we want to revive the entire project. We want to have new signage. That's sort of the physical evidence of it being part of the project. But we're also working on developing the digital aspect and sort of the modern input into the project. At the moment we are working on creating sort of a webpage. We are in the social media and I'll just have to tell all the listeners straight away that most of our posts are in Norwegian and that is because we're testing things on the Norwegian audience. But also because some of the sites aren't actually open for visitors or the signage isn't there, or it's really bad, so we don't really want to display them to all the world until we've fixed things. But they are there to visit. So if you look at the map, there are maps on our website and in our social media, you can sort of get an idea. And some of these sites are really, really nice to visit. Some of the museums are really good hubs for meeting other people in Norway that might be interested in sort of the same things that you are. And our hope is that it's going to be an active cultural route, that you will come to visit a selection of these sites or maybe collect the number of sites you visit. We've been talking about developing like a diploma or a prize. So if you visit like 70 out of the sites, for example, you can get a diploma, which would be really cool. We have lots of great ideas and now it's just getting down to it and actually doing the work.

Matilda: Always that's the issue, right? You always have to actually do these things. No, that sounds great, that sounds fantastic, good luck with everything. Amy, any exciting updates for the Crannog Centre?

Amy: There's a whole lot going on right now with the build and everything. So yeah, we are really looking forward to being open, because I think I mentioned earlier there's a lot more space we have over there and we have a lot more scope to do various things. So we do quite a bit of experimental archaeology on site, which EXARC have helped out with loads in the past and I'm sure we'll continue to work with in the future, but being on the new site will just give us more space to explore that a bit further. At the moment we have three main areas of outside work, so we've got technology, textiles and cooking, so we do things like woodturning, spinning, weaving, various cooking methods. But over in the new site we're looking at opening a lot more of these structures and better structures as well, so at the moment they're building a metalworking shelter, which I'm

very, very excited about. So Jim, our drystone waller, has just finished building the wall around that and it looks really beautiful, so that'll be something else that's a new kind of aspect for us is having this furnace area where we can try out different metalworking techniques, which again will just feed back into the interpretation of the displays as well, because I found out a lot more about various skills from the Iron Age by talking to various craftspeople, which has really helped me interpret displays in the museum and interpret the collection that we have and just understand it a bit better. Obviously I'm most excited for the museum, the new setup, and there's lots of new display ideas I have in mind. A lot of this is tied in really nicely to what they are doing outside, so all these different crafts there, continuing to work on and improve and learn more about. So I think that will be really, really fascinating to try and tie the two in really nicely on the new site. The old and the new.

Matilda: Great. Well, thank you so, so much, both Amy and Silje for joining us today and sharing your experience and expertise and input on this topic. I definitely learned a lot. I'm excited to now go to Norway and do this heritage trail and get my diploma and I'm looking forward to seeing the new Crannog Centre. So for listeners as well, do go and check out those sites on the EXARC page and hopefully you also learned something. But thank you very much to both of you for joining me today.

Amy: Thank you very much for having us.

Silje: Thank you very much to everyone who's listened to all this.

Matilda: Indeed. Thank you everyone for listening to this episode of #FinallyFriday by EXARC. And if you would like to become more involved with EXARC, as you can hear we have some really cool projects going on, you can become a member. If you want to make a more financial contribution, you can make small PayPal donations through the website to help support EXARC and its members, such as the Crannog Centre and the Viking museum, in its endeavours. All information can be found on the website www.exarc.net;

Join us next month for another episode of #FinallyFriday and learn more all about the world of experimental archaeology, ancient technology, archaeological open-air museums and interpretation. Don't forget to follow the show through exarc.net and our associated social media channels. See you soon!