

# Archaeology of East Oxford

## Test Pit Reporting Guide

This quick guide to report writing includes a blank copy of the report writing format for you to fill in. Once filled in you can then delete the guidance pages and send your report.

You can view complete test pit reports on the website at <https://www.archeox.net/test-pits> if you would like to look at some examples.

As ever- should you need any assistance with writing your report, contact and experienced volunteer or a member of the team.



John Fell Fund



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## **EOXP TEST PIT [write your text pit number here]**

**Location of Test pit:**

**Date of Excavation:**

**Area excavated:** e.g. 1 x 1m

**Weather conditions:** Describe the conditions- is it dry, showers, overcast etc.

**Excavators:** Names of all those involved in excavating

**Report by:** Names of all those involved in writing the report

**GPS location and height above sea-level:** If unsure, double check with a member of the team as some test pits are waiting on levels.

### **Introduction**

This section is for you to describe where you dug e.g. Blackbird Leys, maybe describe the land use- is it a back garden or an allotment perhaps. Do you have any old map evidence that tells you what the previous land use was? You could always ask a member of the team about how to check historic mapping, some free sources include Google earth which has a historic map tool, or you could use some of the following resources:

- [www.old-maps.co.uk/](http://www.old-maps.co.uk/)
- [www.british-history.ac.uk](http://www.british-history.ac.uk)
- <http://visionofbritain.org.uk/index.jsp>

Are there any key natural features nearby such as rivers, brooks or woods, and where are they in relation to you (e.g north/south and distance). This helps with the overall picture of the surrounding landscape.

### **Excavation summary**

This section is for you to describe the depths to which you dug, whether you dug a sondage (if so give its depth and location such as 'south east corner'). Did you reach the natural? If not, describe reasons such as the trench being too deep or maybe the weather caused you to stop. You could also mention here about sieving- did you sieve all the material you excavated, or maybe it was too clayey but you sorted through as much as possible.

Now describe each spit or context in words, maybe a short paragraph for each. Say how it was dug (spade, trowel, mattock) and to what depth (in millimetres or metres). Describe the soil; is it humic (organic) homogenous (uniform in its composition/ consistent throughout), is it clayey or silty. Describe what you think may be happened to your spit or context- has it been disturbed and if so how recently (you can be general here e.g. modern disturbance or undisturbed for some time). The more descriptive you can be- the better, don't be afraid to just have a go, you can always ask an experience volunteer or a member of the team for further advice if you need too.

**You now need to complete the results table (see next page)**

## Results

<b>Spit/ context</b>	<b>Type of deposit</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Soil sample</b>	<b>Comments</b>
<b>The number of the spit of context goes in this column</b>	E.g. layer, fill, structure or cut	Include all the details from your recording sheet in this section.	Put your soil sample number here if one was taken.	Any further comments you feel are worth noting regarding for example the condition of the soil and frequency of finds. Pictures can also be included in this section, please include the direction the photographer was facing when possible.

Once this standard information has been completed, feel free to include any further photographs (maybe some working photographs and general shots) and any sketches or plans if you have them scanned in.

**Recording and reporting is a crucial part of archaeology and we want you to enjoy doing it. If at any point you feel you need some extra help (remember- no question is too silly!) then either ask an experienced volunteer or a member of the team!**

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**Area excavated:**

**Weather conditions:**

**Excavators:**

**Report by:**

**GPS location and height above sea-level:**

**Introduction**

**Excavation summary**

## Results

Spit/ context	Type of deposit	Description	Soil sample	Comments