

# Na Nova: Community archaeology in the East of Mallorca

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## 1. The site

The archaeological site of **Na Nova** is a prehistoric village from the Talaiotic period or Iron Age (c. 1000-550 BC). It is located in Cala Llombards (Santanyí), a residential area in the Eastern Mallorcan coast. The main building of the site is a circular **talaiot** of diameter 12m and height more than 2m. It is surrounded by several structures whose function is still unknown.

In 2019 we started an archaeological project to improve the condition of the site by clearing the vegetation and rubble that covered it. From the very beginning the intervention has followed a bottom-up strategy, since it was a cultural association from Santanyí (**Lausa**) that decided to promote a project in Na Nova.



## 2. A community-based initiative

This is a unique project because it involves local residents both in the project's design and its implementation. By collaborating with the community that will most benefit from it, we seek to **enhance the social values** of a site that, for many years, went unnoticed by the neighbours. As Marshall (2002) points out, the only link between the site and the locals is defined by its closeness to their place of residence. This sociocultural discontinuity has shaped the approach of the intervention.

Unlike most archaeological projects in Mallorca, our main motivation is to promote community involvement in the site and not just answer scientific questions regarding the past. The local stakeholders work to transform an abandoned archaeological site into an **heritage asset**, with the support of professional archaeologists.

## 3. Approach and development

To encourage participation in the project we follow the **community engagement** model adapted by De Leuien and Arthure (2016). These authors use a five-step plan to articulate local stakeholders' involvement:

**INFORM – CONSULT – INVOLVE – COLLABORATE – EMPOWER**

From here on, we established a **horizontal** relationship with the locals interested in the project. Our aims are revisited in regular meetings and debated within the community. We involve the volunteers in field and lab work by providing them adequate training. We are also available on WhatsApp to inform, answer questions and engage in discussions that may improve the project's outcomes.



## 4. Conclusions: questions for reflection

- How can we overcome bureaucracy handicaps to articulate heritage-making processes from a more democratic perspective?
- How do we work to integrate community members in archaeological research and management? What roles can they adopt?
- How can we successfully evaluate the impact of the project?
- What is the role of the community after the intervention is finished?

### References

De Leuien, C. & Arthure, S. (2016). "Collaboration on Whose Terms? Using the IAP2 Community Engagement Model for Archaeology in Kapunda, South Australia". *Journal of Community Archaeology and Heritage*, 3(2), 81-98.  
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