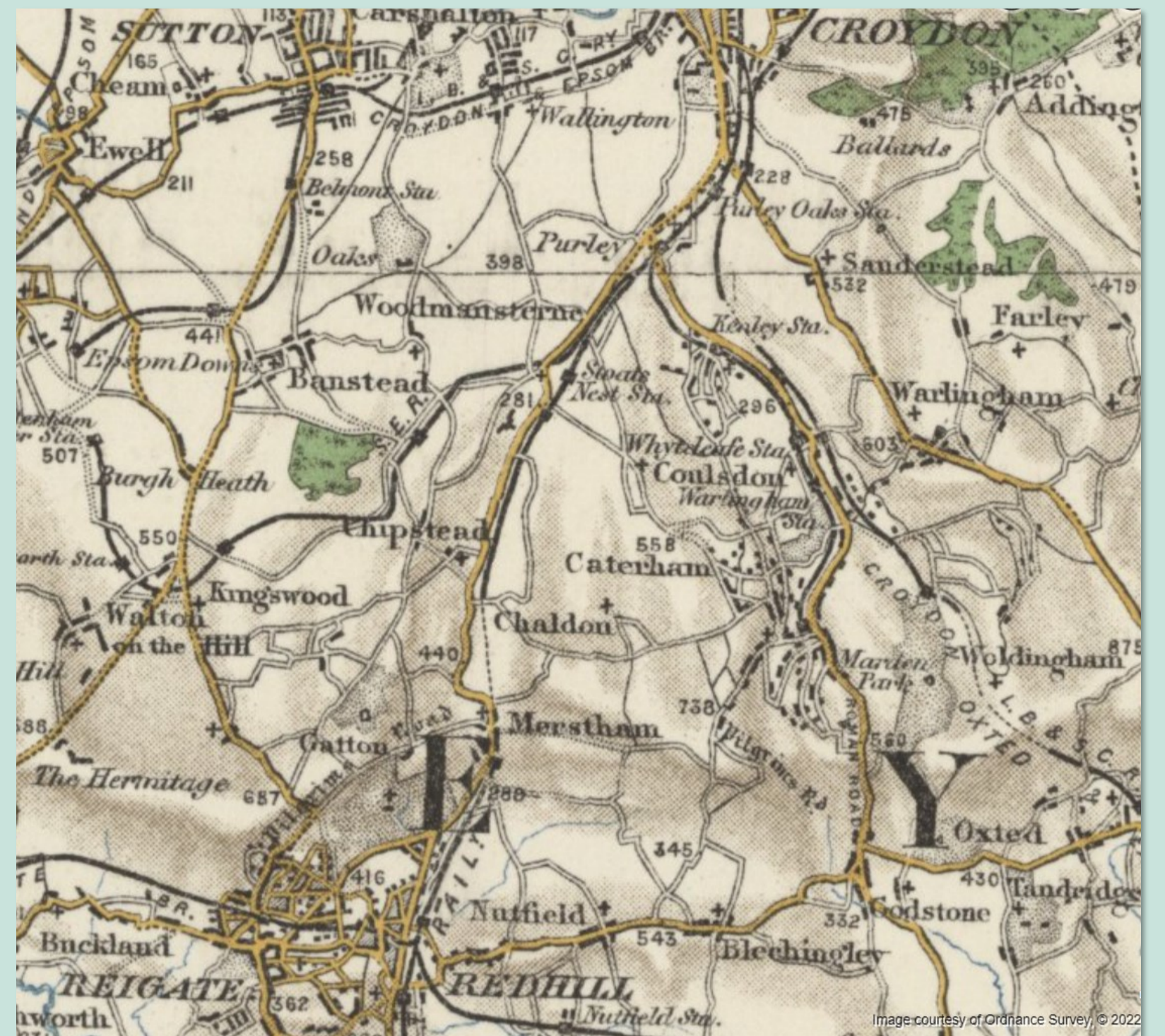


# Neale's Field, Chipstead – history

The 1838 tithe map of Chipstead parish is one of the earliest records we have of the local landscape, particularly in terms of landownership and field boundaries.

The tithe map shows the field split into three individual fields: 'The twelve acres' in the north-west corner, 'Yew tree field' in the south-west, and 'Portnall's Lissoms Field' in the eastern half. (Map extract © Surrey History Centre)



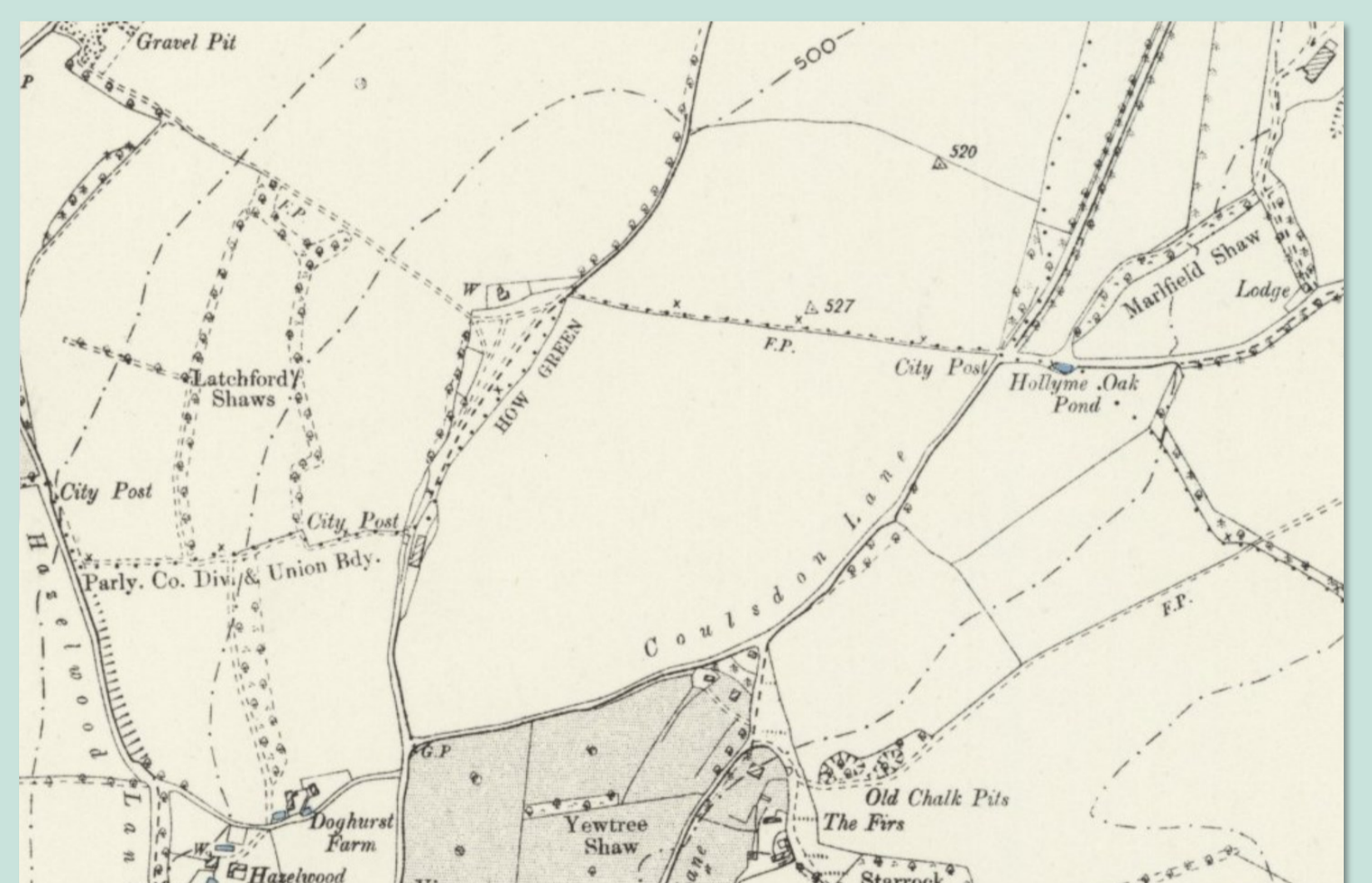
In its wider context, Coulsdon Lane (to the south) was likely the main direct historic route between Croydon and Reigate, both medieval towns, while How Lane (on the western side) led to both Woodmansterne and Banstead.

The field is located along the highest ground of the Chipstead ridge and a prominent site within the landscape. (Map extracts Second Edition Ordnance Survey © National Libraries Scotland)

Placename evidence can provide a wealth of information about site history, including a settlement's estimated age or indications about its use. The name of Chipstead is derived from the Old English *Ceapstede*, meaning "market place."

The earliest reference of a fair being held at Chipstead is in the rolls of the 1258-59 Special Eyre of Surrey and Kent, which records a fair at Chipstead ('Nundinas de Chepsted') held on the feast of St Margaret (the patron saint of Chipstead church). The specific legal reference made note of the manorial bailiff not collecting the usual toll from all who bought or sold at the fair when 'the manor was in the hands of Odo Damaroy[n] and Alice'. As Odo Dan Martin had died by 1230, the fair at Chipstead is likely to have been in existence by at least this date.

(Historical research undertaken by Rob Briggs; Watercolour of Chipstead Fair, 1809 by Peter De Wint, courtesy of The Keepers and Governors of Harrow School)



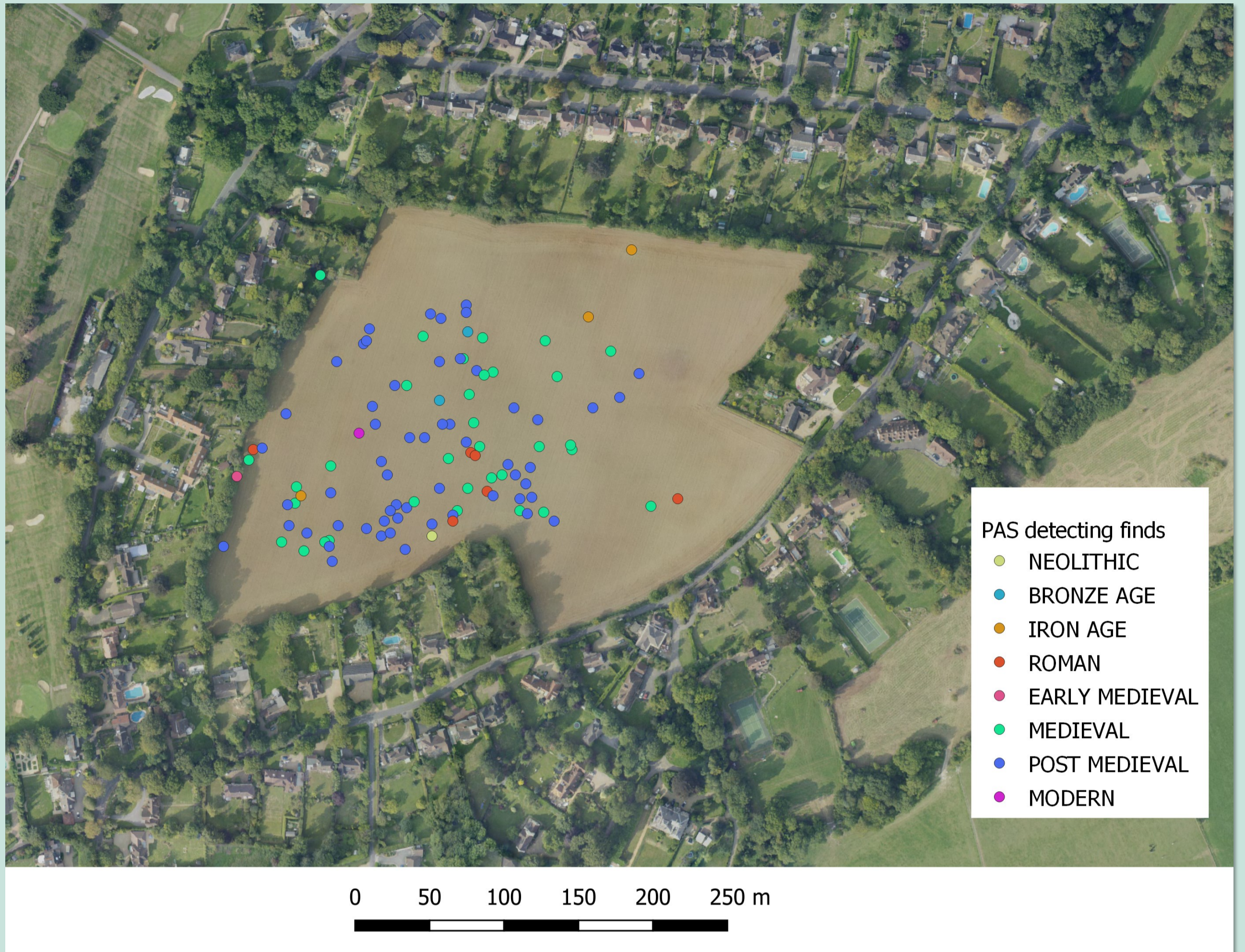
# Neale's Field – artefacts

The large number of finds from the prehistoric onwards recovered from metal detecting within Neale's Field has raised speculation over the site's significance and possible history.

The impressive array includes a collection of 15th century coins and late medieval purse bar, suggesting a clutch of coins may have been dropped in the field at some point.

It is possible that the field was once the site of Chipstead's medieval fair, though this is of course only a theory.

(Data derived from the Portable Antiquities Scheme and finds reported by Gregory Wales)



Fragment of copper alloy early Bronze Age flat axe, c2000-1750BC (© Surrey County Council)



Cast copper alloy early medieval openwork strap end, c950-1100 (© Surrey County Council)



Part of an early 1st century Roman cast copper alloy two-piece brooch (© Surrey County Council)



Medieval gilded cast copper alloy mount displaying a lion of 12th or 13th century date (© Surrey County Council)



Surrey whiteware fragment of 14th-15th century date (© Gregory Wales)



Late Medieval cast copper alloy purse bar, c1450-1550 (© Gregory Wales)



Clipped Medieval silver penny of Henry IV (1399-1413), minted at Durham (© Gregory Wales)



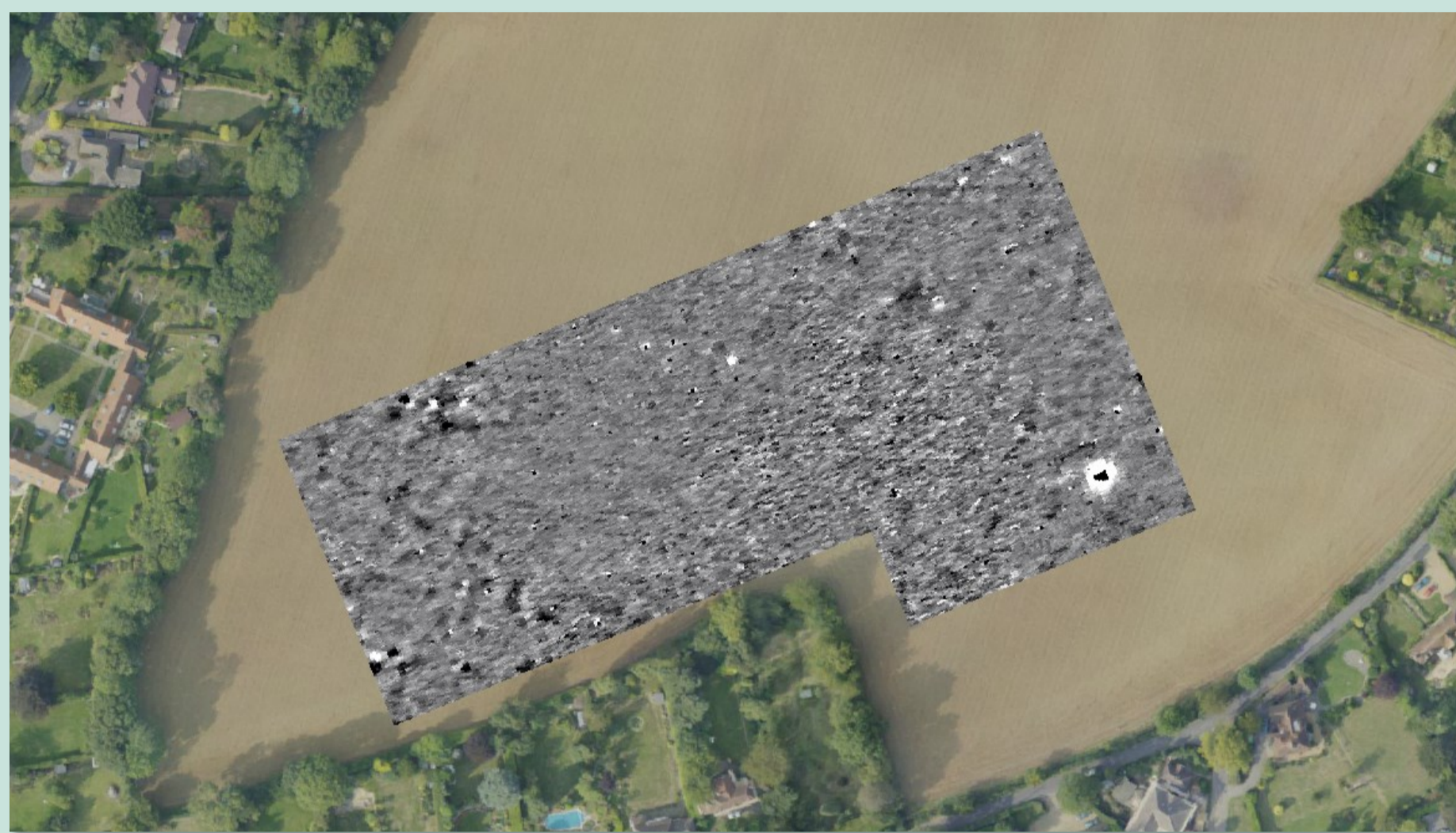
Clipped silver groat of Henry V (1413-1422), mint of London (© Gregory Wales)



Medieval silver halfgroat of Henry VI, dating to 1422-3, minted at Calais (© Gregory Wales)

# Neale's Field – fieldwork

It is only through the careful and responsible recording of metal detecting objects within the field on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database that the potential importance of the site is known. By taking careful note of the precise grid reference location for every find, their distribution – and any potential patterns – can be plotted, allowing other researchers to also make use of the data.



Magnetometry is a method of geophysical survey which maps magnetism patterns in the soil. It is particularly useful for buried features such as pits or ditches which often contain burnt material, as well as concentrations of pottery and tile (whose magnetic properties changed when the clay was fired).

As it is non-invasive, geophysics is often the first fieldwork method to take place, as it can indicate the presence and scale of a site.



Fieldwalking involves walking in a methodical gridded manner, gathering artefacts such as pottery or flint from the surface. Distribution maps can then be created which identify 'hotspots' of artefact density, indicating possible sub-surface remains.

It is also one of the least intrusive means of rapidly assessing the archaeological potential of an area, although it is very time-dependent, being best carried out after rain and at least a month after a field has been recently ploughed.

