

Surrey Archaeological Society

E-newsletter

No 55

July 2025

Welcome to the Society's July e-newsletter, which highlights a few of the various events – conferences, lectures, training sessions, news items, etc – which we hope to be of interest to our members. Although general queries should continue to be directed to info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk, those interested in volunteer opportunities or general outreach can contact me at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk. Please also keep up-to-date via the website and social media ([@surreyarch](https://www.surreyarchaeology.org.uk)) for group and event updates.

Anne Sassin (*SyAS Community Archaeologist*)

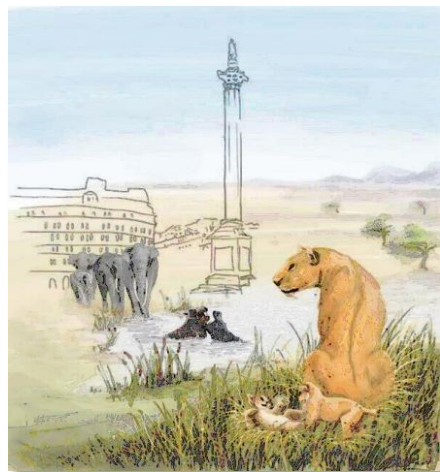
Heritage Open Days

The Society's Research Centre at Abinger Hammer will be open to visitors for a Heritage Open Day on **Sunday 14 September** (10:00-15:00). Visitors are welcome to explore the library and ask about any journals and pamphlets of interest to them, and view the work of our medieval pottery group and displays from other groups.



The Society will also be set up at the Old Saxon Church in Albury Park on **Saturday 13** and **Sunday 14 September** (10:00-17:00) with a finds display from their current investigations of the deserted settlement.

For other events in your area during the course of the celebration (**12-21 September**), see the [website](#) (for Mole Valley events, including the Society's Abinger day, see their [page](#)).



SyAS AGM and Annual Symposium

This year's Society Annual General Meeting will take place on Zoom on **Saturday 15 November** (14:00-16:00). We are delighted that the meeting will be followed by a talk by Matt Pope, Associate Professor at University College London, about Ice Age Greater London. This will include areas of Surrey and should of wide interest to members.

The 2026 Annual Symposium will be held on **Saturday 14 March** at East Horsley Village Hall. More details on both of these events will be available soon, but please save the date in the meantime.

Fetcham Spring Heritage Fund project

‘Communities at the River: Fetcham Springs Archaeology Project’ has been awarded a £250,000 grant by The National Lottery Heritage Fund to explore, preserve and share the rich archaeological heritage of Fetcham Springs. Surrey County Archaeological Unit (SCAU) will be running this five-year initiative at one of Surrey’s most important archaeological sites through hands-on community participation.

In 2009, excavations at Fetcham Springs revealed tantalising glimpses of a prehistoric hunting camp from the end of the last Ice Age and a high-status Roman building, offering an exceptional opportunity to understand human activity at the site across thousands of years. The new project, made possible by National Lottery players, will build on this work with a programme of fieldwork, training and events led by professional archaeologists from SCAU and supported by volunteers of all ages and backgrounds.

Volunteers will participate in archaeological excavations each summer, starting in 2025, alongside geophysical and metal-detecting surveys. These hands-on opportunities will be open to local residents, schools and community groups, offering training in archaeological techniques, finds processing and site interpretation. A dynamic programme of family-friendly activities (including flintknapping workshops, Roman and Stone Age reenactors, gladiator training sessions and open days) will bring the past to life for all generations. Schools will also benefit from free visits and themed loan boxes.

For further information please contact Hannah Potter, Community Archaeologist at SCAU (education.scau@surreycc.gov.uk).

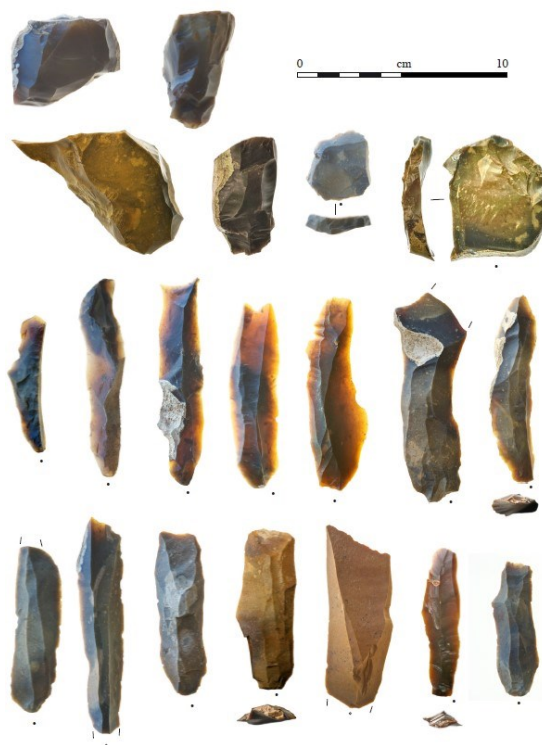


Archaeologists cleaning the walls of a Roman structure at Fetcham Springs during 2009



A previous community excavation by SCAU

Flint tools from around 15,000 years ago, uncovered during the 2009 excavations at Fetcham





Banstead community test pitting

Members of Plateau, the Society's local group dedicated to the North Downs plateau in the area bounded by Headley, Box Hill, Mogador, Chipstead, Woodmansterne, Banstead, Nork and Tadworth, are running a multi-year test pitting programme to investigate the development of the village of Banstead and identify sites for further investigation. The 2025 season will take place on 8-10 Saturdays up until October. The project is open to all, so if you live in – or have an interest in – this area and would like to take part, please contact Plateau at plateau.surrey@gmail.com.

Albury Park community test pitting

We are currently in our third year of test pitting at Albury Park, investigating its deserted medieval settlement. Though little now remains of the former cottages, with the help of survey and a large-scale series of test pits, we are working to uncover and learn more about the original settlement! Currently for 2025, one final week of test pitting is planned from **Monday 8 to Thursday 11 September**. Volunteers are welcome for both finds and digging; no prior experience needed. If interested in taking part and wanting to be added to the project mailing list, please contact our community archaeologist Anne at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



Library volunteers

The Society's Abinger Research Centre library is open on Mondays and Tuesdays, 10:00-16:00. The librarian, Helen Lynott, helps members with loans of books and pamphlets and membership enquiries, and assists members and non-members with research enquiries ranging from village histories to copyright permissions and book sales.

Helen runs a small team of volunteers who meet at the library on **Tuesdays, 11:00-14:30**. They are working their way through a very long list of jobs, which includes cataloguing maps, re-organising pamphlet files, checking newsletters, sorting out stocks of books for sale and even the graphic design on signage and other Society materials.



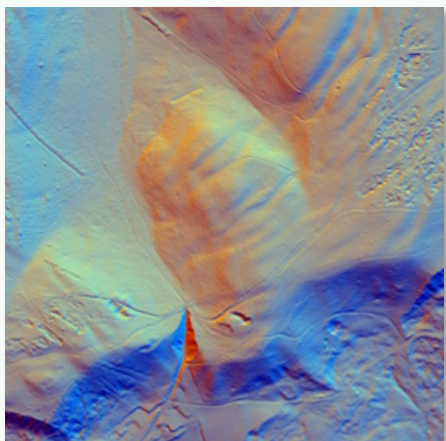
Helen is looking for two more volunteers to join our friendly team. No experience is required – training is given, and volunteers work together on projects. Attendance isn't strictly necessary every Tuesday.

Members who might be interested in helping us should email librarian@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



LiDAR Portal

The [Surrey LiDAR Portal](#) is an on-going online interactive citizen science map which includes various LiDAR datasets for all of Surrey, including the historic county, as well as historic maps and HER data to help in analysing the imagery.



LiDAR has enormous potential to uncover previously unknown archaeological features, and by helping map and interpret these sites online, volunteers can work to build a more complete story of the local landscape. Anyone is welcome to register for a free account, which will allow access to the interactive map. Volunteers who would like to be involved and help in digitising features should read the available tutorials and are encouraged to attend online training sessions (please contact us at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk if you are interested, as we can discuss arranging a bespoke session).

Medieval pottery group



The Medieval pottery group meets on alternate Sundays at Abinger Research Centre. We would love more people to join our friendly group. Why not come for a taster session? We start at 9:30 and finish by 15:00. Currently, we are examining pottery found on antiquarian excavations, which is briefly mentioned in the short reports that were produced, but with no full assessment of the finds. No experience is necessary, only a fascination with the past. Please contact Emma via info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk if interested.

Collections Review Group

The aim of the group is to reassess all the collections held by the Society, using up-to-date methods and codes, to produce a digital record that will ultimately be placed on the website. The group is co-operating with the Medieval and Roman Pottery groups to achieve this end.

They meets on **Thursdays** at Abinger (**10:00-15:00**) (sometimes at other times or places by arrangement) and looks at every kind of find: some people will be identifying building material, others pottery, bone, glass, metal – some days it is tiny sherds, others complete vessels! The Group welcomes new members and students on work experience. Previous experience is an advantage but training is given, so do give it a try. Contact info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk with any queries and to get involved.



Heritage For All fund

Surrey Cultural Partnership and Community Foundation for Surrey, with funding from National Lottery Heritage Fund, have launched Surrey Heritage For All. This Fund will provide grants to not-for-profit community organisations who are harnessing the power of Surrey's amazing heritage to change the lives of those most in need in our county. Organisations can apply for grants of up to £10,000 to increase

opportunities for diverse communities to engage with Surrey's rich heritage and natural environment. Round 2 is open for EOI on 7 July 2025 for award in January 2026. For more information, see the [website](#).

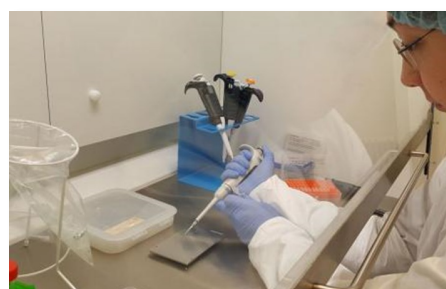
CBA South East grants



The CBA-SE distribute a limited number of small grants to go towards research, outreach or publication, as well as a Young Archaeologists Grant which allows YAC groups, museum clubs and other youth organisations to apply for funding towards sessions, materials or other costs. For more on this scheme, visit the [CBASE grants page](#).

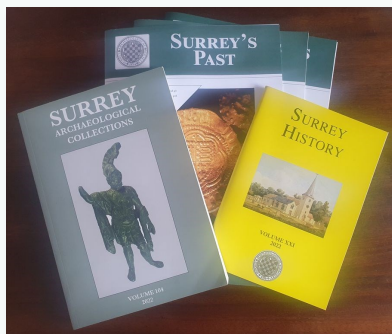
SyAS Research Committee Grants

The Research Committee would like to remind all members that grants are available for Surrey projects and are available to Society groups with no budget and to external groups with limited resources. Society excavations such as Abinger and post-excavation for Ashted, Abinger and Flexford have been funded. Surveys, documentary research, training and scientific analyses are all suitable for consideration and have been supported by Society grants in recent years, such as work on the historic excavation at Lightwater and to enable a report on the more recent Hatch Furlong dig to commence. Scientific analyses are also specifically covered by funds from the Bierton and Slade bequests which have recently funded C14 dating for the Abinger excavation. Applications are considered throughout the year and the Committee's decision is final. Details and an application form are available on the [website](#) or from the office.





Thinking about joining and getting involved?



If you aren't yet a member of SyAS, now is the perfect time to join! In addition to three issues of *Surrey's Past* a year, the annual journal(s) *Surrey Archaeological Collections* and *Surrey History*, members have access to a wide range of fieldwork opportunities, research projects and special interest groups, many with their own programmes. To join (and see the full range of what is offered), please visit our [website](#). Some of the groups you might wish to join include:

Artefacts and Archives Research Group (AARG) – On-site processing of artefacts, with further work carried out at weekly meetings, including lithics and pottery; for more details on sessions and work available, visit the [AARG webpages](#).

Medieval Studies Forum – In-person and online talks with workshops and visits focused on the period from c.400-1600; for more details, visit the [MSF](#) webpage.

Prehistoric Group – In-person meetings, regular newsletter and study of collections in museums; for more details, visit the [PG](#) webpage.

Roman Studies Group – A varied programme which includes fieldwork, monthly lecture meetings, full-day seminars and day trips; for more details, visit the [RSG](#) webpage.

Surrey Industrial History Group – In-person visits, regular meeting programme, bi-monthly newsletter and annual journal; for more details, visit the [SIHG webpage](#).



Surrey Industrial History Group lecture series

SIHG hold regular short talks at Leatherhead and via Zoom throughout the year which are free to SIHG members (annual membership is currently free until the end of 2026; contact membership@sihg.org.uk).

Talks can be found [online](#), including the first of the new season on 'Thomas Sopwith – Aviation Pioneer' in Leatherhead on **Thursday 11 September**. See the website for the full programme.

For more information on opportunities in your local region, be sure to follow SCAU (education.scau@surreycc.gov.uk and [@diggingsurreypast](#)), as well as the Council for British Archaeology South-East (www.cbasouth-east.org and [@CBASouthEast](#)).