



Surrey Archaeological Society

No 64

April 2026

E-newsletter

Welcome to the Society's April 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*)



Lithics group

If you are interested in prehistoric flints and would like to learn more, the Sunday morning Lithics group might be for you. Over the next few months the group will be cataloguing some interesting flint tools from the late Judie English's collection, as well as recording assemblages from local digs. If you are interested in joining, they meet about once a month in the Abinger Research Centre. No previous knowledge is

necessary, but people with more experience are also very welcome. Please contact Sylvia Solarski (via info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk) for more information.

Medieval pottery group

A good day this past Sunday also took place for our Medieval Pottery Group, who identified and recorded sherds from the Lowther Collection at Abinger. The group regularly meets on alternate Sundays at Abinger and would love more people to join. Why not come for a taster session? No experience is necessary, only a fascination with the past. Please contact Emma via info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk if interested.





Fig 1

Roman road investigation

The Society's 'Roman Roads Group', led by Chris Gibson and several volunteers local to Ewhurst, have been continuing their exploration of the area around Rapsley Roman villa, in particular for Margary Roman road 151. Following extensive bramble clearance, investigations include evidence of the terrace that the Romans cut into the hillside so that Stane Street could deviate along a more gentle slope than the straight line across very steep inclines which the Ordnance Survey line suggests (Fig 1). A section of the road can be seen in another trench (Fig 2), 20 feet (just over 6m) wide excluding gullies, though the southern half (in the foreground) has been robbed out. The volunteer team (and their equipment) can also be seen in Fig 3, which includes the landowner, local Society members and experienced dig volunteers.



Fig 2



Fig 3

Surrey Industrial History Group lecture series



SIHG hold regular talks at Leatherhead and via Zoom throughout the year which are free to SIHG members (contact membership@sihg.org.uk). Talks can be found [online](#), including the next one at Leatherhead, 'Energy in the United Kingdom from the Late 1800s to Today' by Tristan Aspray on **Wednesday 13 May**.



Chaldon Court test pitting

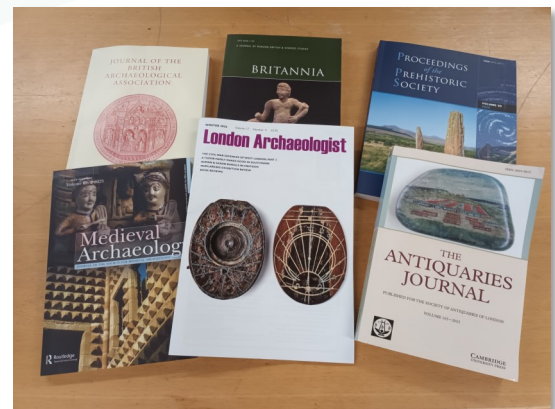


A test pitting programme is planned for two days over the weekend of **2-3 May 2026** at Chaldon Court, a 14th-century Grade II* building. Test pits will be set up on the lawn areas, positioned over the two areas of high resistivity found during a resistivity survey in 2024. This is a community project that will be targeted at members of the public from Chaldon who will be encouraged to visit and take part in the test pitting and finds processing. An open afternoon on **Saturday 2 May** from 14:00-16:00 will be

available to those who wish to visit. The Church of St Peter and St Paul lies next door to Chaldon Court and will also be open for those interested in the internationally renowned 12th-century Doom mural on the west wall.

SyAS Library

The Society's library, which is located in the Abinger Research Centre, subscribes to a number of archaeological journals. Printed copies are held on the shelves until they become freely available online and the librarian, Helen Lynott, also has online access to certain titles. She is happy to assist members and non-members with research, either in person when the library is open, **Mondays** and **Tuesdays** 10:00-16:00, or via email at librarian@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



Surrey Artists

The Surrey Local History Committee will be holding their spring symposium on **Saturday 9 May** (9:30-15:30) at Surrey History Centre, Woking, themed around 'Surrey Artists'. Speakers and talk titles include:

Hilary Underwood, Watts Gallery, '19th-century artists and the Surrey Hills'; Mary Alexander, Researcher, 'The Russell family of Guildford and polite society'; Janet Balchin, Local Historian, 'England's Vermeer: Leonard Campbell Taylor'; Annabel Watts, Munstead Wood/researcher, 'The life and art of Helen Allingham R.W.S.'; Mary Broughton, Sime Gallery Charitable Incorporated Organisation Trust, 'Sidney H Sime – Master of Fantasy'

Tickets £18 (£20 payable in cash only on the day). For a full programme visit the [webpage](#).



Albury Park community archaeology

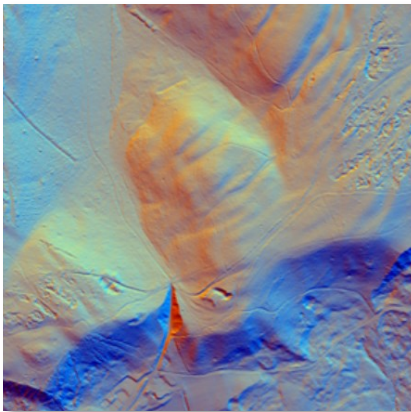
We will be returning for a fourth year of excavation this season at Albury Park to continue to investigate its deserted medieval settlement, displaced in the early 19th century (to the current village of Albury). Though little now remains of the former cottages, with the help of survey and a large-scale series of test pits spread across the site, we are working to uncover and learn more about the original settlement, which has now been revealed to include Roman activity.

Currently for 2026, there will be limited test pitting over the weekend of **24-26 July**, as part of an open day event for the Festival of Archaeology (volunteers will be needed, though space will be more limited than usual). A larger dig will also take place in September, although dates are not yet confirmed. 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, which will be updated with dates soon, please contact our community archaeologist Anne at outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk.



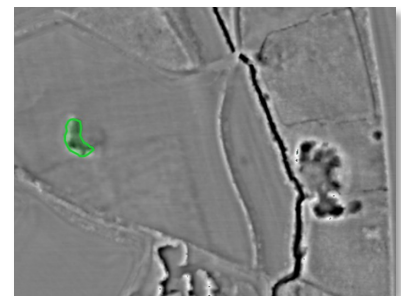
LiDAR Portal

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 in digitising features are encouraged to read the tutorials and attend online training (contact outreach@surreyarchaeology.org.uk if you are interested, as we can discuss arranging a bespoke session).

A recent sub-project has also begun which is focusing specifically on the historic pits and quarries in Surrey. Volunteers are methodically covering areas by parish and revealing interesting insight into local industries, as well as links to the archaeological discoveries which resulted from the quarrying. Please also get in touch if you want to be more involved in this citizen science mini project.





St Nicolas' 150th anniversary history lectures for 2026

St Nicolas' Church, Guildford will be 150 years old in 2026 but there has been a church on the site for nearly 800 years. A celebratory series of lectures is taking place throughout 2026, which seek to explore the long rich history of the parish and its three churches on the site: from PG Wodehouse, to the oldest monument in Guildford and the pre-medieval dragon on St Catherine's Hill. Two of the lectures relate to two articles in the latest *SyAS Collections* (vol 107, 2025) on St Catherine's Hill and the Loseley Correspondence. The lectures start at 19:30, are all free of charge and will be given either in church or in the adjacent modern Parish Centre which encompasses the Loseley Chapel. The next lecture will be on **Thursday 7 May** by Dr Michael Shapland on 'The Hill of the Dragon: a medieval wayside shrine and regional assembly site by St Catherine's Chapel'. See www.saintnics.com for the full programme.



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 meets on **Thursdays** at Abinger (10:00-15:00) (sometimes elsewhere by arrangement) and looks at every kind of find: some building material, 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. Contact info@surreyarchaeology.org.uk to get involved.

CBA South East grants

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



The online annual lecture and AGM will also be held on **Tuesday 6 May** at 19:00 on 'The Highdown Big Dig 2025', presented by James Sainsbury, Curator of Archaeology at Worthing Museum. Register in advance for this Zoom meeting via the [website](#).

Courses at Guildford Institute

Several local/art history and other adult education courses of interest are available throughout the year at the Guildford Institute, including '[Love, Sex, Marriage and the Western Church](#)' in August, which will look at 2000 years of the Church's prevailing views on the topic, run by long-time member Brian Creese. See the [website](#) for course options.

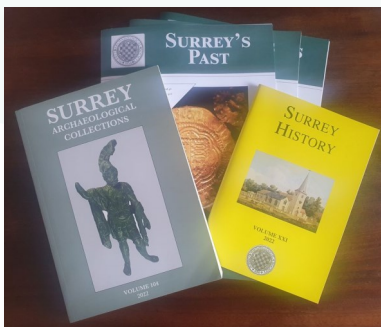


SyAS Research Committee Grants

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, such as C14 dating, are also covered by funds from the Bierton and Slade bequests. Applications are considered throughout the year. Details and application forms 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, plus 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 of which have their own events programmes. To join (and see the full range of what is offered), please visit our [website](#). Some of the groups include:

Artefacts and Archives Research Group – On-site processing of artefacts, and assessment at weekly meetings, including lithics and pottery; for details, 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](#).

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