Worthing Archaeological Society

Newsletter August & September 2025

WAS Field Unit

Highdown Big Dig—see news articles on following pages



Malthouse/Whitehouse

Next Friday sessions, August 8th, 15th, 22nd. 9.30. at the gate.

We found a well.....

Contact Connie if you want to join in **connieshirley1@aol.com**

Climping

Will be visited when the tide is right...Parking is very difficult.

Finds Processing

Our next Finds meetings will be held at the Slindon Shed on Thursdays 7th and 21st August and Thursdays 4th and 18th September, from 9.30 a.m. to about 12.30 p.m. Please remember to bring your own refreshments and come prepared to work outside by bringing extra clothing.

Contact Gill if you would like to be there, as numbers still have to be limited: ggmturner@aol.com

Field Unit Forum

Our next meeting will be on Tuesday 16th September, 7.30 – 9pm in St Botolph's Church rooms, in Heene. BN11 4LY. On the North side of the Church, entrance from Manor Road.

Culver Visit

A group of WAS Members had a very interesting morning at the Culver dig on July 11th.

WAS Autumn Social

Come and enjoy an evening of quizzing and skittling in Skittle Alley

The Black Horse, High Street, Findon, BN14 0SX

Friday 7th November, from 6.30 pm - 10.00 pm

If you are interested, please contact Donna. **donna.wiltshire@sky.com**



BBC NEWS

Finds made at an archaeological summer dig have made the site one of "national importance", according to an expert who led the project.



Up to 60 volunteers from the Worthing Archaeological Society have taken part in the dig each day



A hair pin made of bronze was among the items found in the dig

The dig, at Highdown near Ferring, West Sussex, began on 20 July, in a joint project by Worthing Museum, the Worthing Archaeological Society and the National Trust.

During its history it was a Bronze Age enclosure, a fort during the Iron Age, a Roman outpost and a Saxon cemetery.

James Sainsbury, curator of archaeology at Worthing Museum and project director, said the discovery of new graves makes returning for more excavations in 2026 critical.

He said: "It's one of the earliest Saxon cemeteries in Britain. Highdown has the most beautiful and rare glassware from any Saxon cemetery in Britain.

"As of Tuesday, when we found the undisturbed grave, probably of a 16 year-old, we have to come back, because we found the beginnings of another three.

"There may be another significant part of the cemetery which was, until Tuesday, undiscovered.

"We are hoping for next year. The first thing we have to do this autumn is a geophysical survey, putting probes into the ground to find grave cuts, see how many grave cuts there are. It's also dependent on funding.

"It would be remiss of us not to return and find out the extent and the age and period of this extra burial area."
Among the artefacts discovered are swords, rock crystal beads, a bronze hair pin and many late Roman coins.

The site had previously been excavated by Victorian archaeologists, who had left their own mark.

"We found a bottle of port at the bottom of a grave cut," said Mr Sainsbury, "next to an old pelvic bone that they weren't interested in."



Many late Roman coins were also discovered

Highdown Big Dig's most important find revealed for the first time as Worthing Museum works to uncover history





The interest in Worthing Museum's Highdown Big Dig has been astounding, giving the team of archaeologists huge encouragement as they work to uncover stories from the past.

A number of trenches have been dug on Highdown Hill, an archaeological site of national importance on the South Downs in Ferring, just across the Worthing boundary.

Project lead James Sainsbury, curator of archaeology at Worthing Museum, has been impressed with the finds, some of which back up what he already knew and some which reveal a whole new history.

The most important find of the two-week dig came on Friday, July 25, but was revealed publicly for the first time only on Thursday, July 31, after osteoarchaeologist Hayley Forsyth Magee had shared her expertise.

James had expected to find a ditch in Trench H, now known as the turf barrow trench, but that has eluded the team. However, what has been uncovered here is a complete skeleton, believed to be a female aged 14 to 18.

No treasures have been found in this trench but James believes it could be an additional cemetery, previously unknown. He surmises the skeleton could be a Romano-Briton from the 2nd Century. Detailed investigations will reveal the truth over the next few months.

Trench B, thought to be an undisturbed Anglo-Saxon grave, has also been intriguing. Dozens of fragments of human bone have been found there, suggesting Victorian archaeologists Edwin Henty and Charles Hercules Read cut a pit between 1893 and 1901 for unwanted skeletal remains during their own dig.

James said Trench B had 'really impressed' and Sue Harrington had discovered another grave cut. The Victorians took a lot but they missed at least part of a burial, as well as finds including a lovely bronze pin in a shallow grave, a 6th century buckle and a small fragment of Roman glass.

James added: "We excavated a number of well-defined pit features. These were empty but could have once contained urned cremations, removed by Henty and Read in the 1890s."

The metal detectorists on site have found dozens of 4th century Roman coins, including one with wording meaning 'the restoration of happy times' dating to around 350 AD.

James said: "You can clearly see the emperor's face and on the reverse, the emperor spearing an enemy of Rome into the ground!"

A Roman ditch, full of oyster shells and big chunks of pottery, was found in Trench F and satellite imagery suggests there is a ditch more than 12 metres outside of the barrow.

The Newcastle University research team will be using new technology, Optically Stimulated Luminescence dating, to determine the age of sediments and other materials from Trenches G and H.

Prehistoric pottery and half of a loom weight were among more than 750 finds from Trench G, though most of the others were Roman date.



An Anglo-Saxon bead



A bottle of 19th century port



A bronze pin, which will clean up nicely



Half of a loom weight



Walking into History Alex Vincent

We have a social get together on the first Monday in September.

This will be Sept 1 at the Hare & Hounds pub, Worthing, at 8pm.

Any enquires my mobile number is 07753282714 or Email me **alexeclipsing@gmail.com** via Worthing Library.

Reimagining Worthing Museum - a new home for old treasures

At Worthing Museum we're proud to be custodians of an incredibly important archaeological collection containing artefacts of national significance from Worthing and wider Sussex.

We are now incredibly excited to share news of the launch of our fundraising campaign to support the redisplay of our collection, with the ambition of raising £35,000 towards new display cases, ambient lighting, interactive technology and refreshed interpretation. As you may know this work is long overdue!

At the heart of the campaign is recognition of the role local antiquarians and archaeologists have played in the discovery, research and conservation of artefacts, and pays tribute to this by inviting donors to sponsor one of their favourite objects at graduated levels of support.

The fundraising campaign integrates with the very exciting Highdown Big Dig, taking place between Saturday 19th July and Friday 1st August, where the museum will work in partnership with Worthing Archaeological Society and the National Trust in excavating this popular local landmark. This project will be the first of its kind at Highdown in nearly forty years and will employ over one hundred volunteers, alongside specialists utilising new technologies to illuminate Highdown's history like never before. We would be thrilled to see you on site, where trenches and test pits, along with the finds therein, will be viewable to visitors.

In the meantime, any support you can give to help us achieve our fundraising target, by spreading the world or even donating yourself, would be greatly appreciated. Any enquires my mobile number is 07753282714 or Email me **alexeclipsing@gmail.com via** Worthing Library.



2025 Lectures & Day Schools

- **Tuesday October 14th from 19:30 to 21:00**
  - Worthing Library Auditorium
  - David Rudling presents “Threats to our Archaeological Heritage”
- **Tuesday November 11th from 19:30 to 21:00**
  - Worthing Library Auditorium
  - Simon Stevens presents “Excavation at the site of a WW1 Training Camp: Cooden”
- **Tuesday December 9th from 19:30 to 21:00**
  - Worthing Library Auditorium
  - Connie Shirley and John Mills present “Sompting Malthouse Fields: the White House”
- **Saturday 15th November 20 from 10:00 to 16:00**
  - Worthing College
  - Sarah Green - Director of the Sussex School of Archaeology presents “Understanding & Identifying Animal Bones”

Bursary *– WAS has a Bursary which is set up to help Members attend events which they might find difficult to pay for. Please ask a Committee Member about this if it would help you.*

Theresa has produced our Lecture Programme in full – look for it at Lectures and on our website.



2025 Other Societies Events

Saturday 30th August 2025 – Sunday 31st August 2025 (10.00-16.00)
Butser Ancient Farm – Ancient Music Weekend

You can explore a wide arrange of musical instruments from the Neolithic to the Middle Ages.

Venue: Butser Ancient Farm, Chalton Lane

Fee: Normal entrance fees apply

Details and booking from: **https://www.butserancientfarm.co.uk/whats-on/ancient-music instruments-weekend**

Thursday 4th September 2025 (10.00-16.00)
Weald & Downland Museum – Introduction to Flint Tool Knapping

A day with Dr James Dilley introducing you to the skill of flint knapping.

Venue: Weald & Downland Museum, Singleton

Fee: £110 Details and booking: https://wealddownland.digitickets.co.uk/event-tickets/13062

Wealden Buildings Study Group **www.wealdenbuildings.org.uk**

Sussex Archaeological Society
https://sussexpast.co.uk
Save the date: The 2025 CBA SE conference is currently planning to be held on Saturday 22nd November in the East Horsley Village Hall, Surrey. The proposed theme is Moated Sites

Wealden Geological Assembly
6th biennial Wealden Geological Assembly, WGA25, to be held on Saturday 29 November 2025 in Kings Church, Lewes, County Town of East Sussex. I have arranged an excellent series of Speakers in the Conference Programme, including 4 Professors; and there will also be the customary array of Tables and Exhibitors around the perimeter of the Hall - see flyer at back of newsletter

Chichester & District Archaeological Society – Walking Tour of Roman (and Medieval) Chichester

Saturday 6th September 2025 (10.00)

This tour will be led by James Kenny, Archaeology Officer, Chichester District Council

Meet: Council Chamber, North Street, Chichester

Cost: £7,50 Members; £12.50 non- members

Booking from: **activities@cdas.info.**



Other Societies / Groups

Friends of the South Downs — Based in Pulborough, the Society has a variety of walks and talks which might well be interesting.
Email: **enquiries@southdownssociety.org.uk**

Chichester District Archaeology Society (CDAS) have made their talks available free on their YouTube channel see: **www.CDAS.info**

Liss Archaeology, East Hampshire Community Archaeology

www.lissarchaeology.uk

Or email **lissarchaeology@gmail.com**

Worthing Heritage Alliance of which WAS is part of this group which has a very useful Calendar of all events in the area of an Historic nature.
www.worthingheritagealliance.org.uk

Hampshire Field Club and Archaeological Society has a variety of events
see landscape-events@hantsfieldclub.org.uk

young archaeologists' club

Brighton Young Archaeologists' Club (YAC) is open to everyone aged 8-16 years. We get involved in all sorts of activities, including visiting and investigating archaeological sites and historic places, trying out traditional crafts, taking part in excavations, experimental archaeology and lots more. Brighton YAC is based at Brighton Museum , where we have access to the wonderful Elaine Evans Archaeology Gallery. Occasionally our sessions may be held at other venues depending on planned activities. The club usually meets once, a month on the last Saturday, from 10.30 am-12.30 pm.

If you'd like to get involved please get in touch with the team: contact: Odile Rouard

email: **brightonyac@gmail.com**

Butser Ancient Farm has launched ButserPlus: a way to enter the world of ButserAncient Farm online with professional video content. Details here:
www.butserancientfarm.co.uk/butser-plus

Horsham and District Archaeology Group
horshamarch@hotmail.co.uk or 01903 872309

Sussex Past

Sussex Archaeological Society
https://sussexpast.co.uk

Wealden Buildings Study Group

Wealden Buildings Study Group
www.wealdenbuildings.org.uk

BHAS Founded 1906

Brighton and Hove Archaeological Society **http:/www.brightonarch.org.uk**

Back in the Unitarian Church New Road, Brighton- Start time 7-30 pm. The BHAS lectures will be **live** and not on Zoom.

The University of Sussex Archaeological Society

USAS

The Sussex School of Archaeology and History

admin@sussexarchaeology.co.uk

Photo by DAVID ILIFF. License: CC BY-SA 3.0

Hosting a number of events throughout the year

www.sussexarchaeology.org

Email – admin@sussexarchaeology.co.uk

Directors: Dr David Rudling and Sarah Green



Worthing Archaeological Society



Please can you refresh your memories by reviewing this document, which can be found on the Society's website under Documents / Policy / Privacy Notice.

If any of your contact details have changed since you completed your WAS Membership Application Form, please advise the Membership Secretary, Liz Lane.

Many thanks Donna

If you are already on Facebook and would like to join our closed WAS Facebook group, just ask to join on the Worthing Archaeological Society page

Easy Fundraising

If you shop online, do consider using Easyfundraising to make donations to WAS. Retailers give part of every amount spent to WAS, if you nominate us as your charity
https://new.easyfundraising.org.uk

Photo Archive

WAS is developing an archive of photos, accessible via the website. Past digs are already well covered, but if you have photos you can share, please send them to Theresa and Richard on **theresa_in_brighton@yahoo.co.uk**
If they are not recent ones, could give us names of people and sites included. There are some on our website which we haven't been able to identify – if you know when and where they were taken, please let us know.

WAS Archive

Connie is currently Curator of our Archive. We have a good collection of Sussex Archaeological Collections, starting from

And finally a reminder

Subs for 2025 are due on January 1st - £30 for ordinary members, £10 for full-time students.
Feel free to pay by standing order or BACs (details on request).

Please send to: Liz Lane, Membership Secretary. 5 Smugglers' Walk, Goring-by-Sea, West Sussex. BN12 4DP. Membership forms can also be downloaded from the WAS website:
www.worthingarchaeological.org

Please note that at the 2024 AGM it was agreed to increase subs to £30 from January 1st 2025. Please update your standing orders / direct debits if you pay that way.

The Worthing Archaeological Society is a registered Charity (291431)
Please note: our email address is: **worthingarchaeological@gmail.com**

Items for next News sheet please to
Liz, as above, or
liz.13lane@gmail.com

Wealden Geological Assembly

A personal invitation for you to attend the 6 th biennial Wealden Geological Assembly

Saturday, 29 November 2025

Kings Church Hall, Lewes, BN7 2BY

Timetable

- 9.00 Doors open 9.45 Welcome, etc

Session A Chairman: Tectonics and Orogenesis

- 9.50---10.25 Prof. Craig Storey Onset of Modern Plate Tectonics
- 10.25---11.00 Roger Smith The Formation of the Alps
- 11.00---11.30 Coffee and Biscuits

Session B Chairman: David Shilston Dinosaurs and Extinctions

- 11.30--12.05 Prof. Mike Benton Extinctions: Major Interruptions to

Ecosystems

- 12.05---12.40 Prof. Susie Maidment The Stegosaurian Dinosaurs
- !2.40----1.20 Lunch

Session C Chairman: Martin Munt Isle of Wight

- 1.20---1.55 Jeremy Lockwood The Iguanodontian Fauna
- 1.55---2.30 Eva Horsfall Late/Postglacial Landscape Development
- 2.30---3.05 Phil James Coloured Sand Bottles
- 3.05---3.35 Tea and Biscuits

Session D Chairman: Geoffrey Mead Environmental Changes

- 3.35---4.10 Prof. John Boardman Sunken Lanes of South East England
- 4.10---4.45 Lorna Linch Melting Icesheets & Rising Sea Level
- 4.50 Concluding Comments

To Register for WGA25, please forward your Name, Address, Tel. No. and email to the Conference Organiser (anthony.brook27@btinternet.com); and also remit the Conference Fee of £35 per person, by Direct Bank Transfer, including your name as the reference, to Anthony Brook Sort Code 40-47-25 Account No. 41791532

If it is easier for you, please forward a cheque for the Conference Fee to 15, Cambourne Court, Shelley Road. Worthing, West Sussex, BN11 4BQ

The Conference Fee includes the Conference publication, coffee/tea, and packed lunch. Please indicate any dietary requirements.

Thank you for registering for WGA25 Anthony Brook (Conference Organiser)