

The Portable
Antiquities Scheme
Annual Report 2021

The British
Museum





Foreword



Hartwig Fischer
Director of the
British Museum

This has been another successful year for the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS). A further 45,581 archaeological finds made by the public were logged on to the Scheme’s database in 2021. Amongst these are items linked to every part of human history and from across England and Wales, all adding to our knowledge of Britain’s past.

Crucial to the success of the Scheme are the many finders who have volunteered finds for recording this year. It is therefore very much welcome that the National Council for Metal Detecting and the Association for Metal Detecting Sport have now endorsed the *Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting in England and Wales*, which it is hoped will encourage even more detectorists to follow best practice. Furthermore, the British Museum has worked with several television companies this year, of which ‘Great British History Hunters’ (Channel 4) and ‘Digging for Treasure’ (Channel 5) were screened in 2022. These programmes not only highlighted the passion of people who search for archaeology, but shared stories about finds and the important work of the PAS recording them to advance archaeological knowledge.

I would like to pay tribute to all PAS staff across England and Wales, not least the locally based Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs), supported by assistants, interns and volunteers. My colleagues at the British Museum (which manages the Scheme in England), work closely with those at *Amgueddfa Cymru* - Museum Wales (who coordinate the Scheme in Wales) to ensure we work together as seamlessly as possible for finders. To this end, we have a common ‘Vision’ for the PAS looking to 2025, agreed by the Portable Antiquities Advisory Group, which includes archaeological, metal-detecting and landowner representatives. Especially in terms of delivering the PAS locally, I am grateful to our local partners who manage and employ FLOs and other locally based staff. The partnership nature of the PAS is one of its key strengths, which allows the PAS to benefit from local connections and knowledge. Indeed, there is such enormous goodwill for the Scheme that it allows the PAS to reach beyond its means.

There might be as many as 40,000 active metal-detectorists in the United Kingdom, with just over 40 FLOs to record their discoveries in England. In the context of Treasure reform, the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport (DCMS) is making more funds available for PAS staff, the processing of Treasure and redeveloping the PAS database. The latter is crucial as it is hoped it can make the recording of finds easier (especially in terms of finders logging initial information about their discoveries) and increase efficiency in the administration of Treasure. The Government has announced that it will reform Treasure law by introducing a new (updated) Code of Practice and a new significance-based definition for Treasure. This will be the first major reform of the Treasure Act 1996 since its introduction and provides a landmark on how finds are considered - for the first time recognising that archaeological finds are relevant beyond their material composition. The British Museum has been enthusiastically supporting our colleagues in DCMS as they take this process forward with the legislation coming before parliament shortly.

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all those who have supported the PAS in 2021. We are very grateful to the Headley Trust who are funding archaeological interns with a focus on providing opportunities for people from disadvantaged backgrounds. The first posts were in Cardiff and Worcestershire, with the next being in Cornwall and North Yorkshire. Graham and Joanna Barker have continued to generously support the Scheme. This funding has benefitted many parts of the country, not least in Berkshire, the North West and the North East and has been crucial in maintaining a nation FLO network since 2015. I would also like to thank Treasure Hunting magazine which has supported the publication of this report.

Excavation of the New Forest
Hoard findspot (photograph
Jenny Durrant).

The Portable Antiquities Scheme records archaeological finds made by the public to advance knowledge, tell the stories of past communities and further public interest in the past.

Key points

PAS and Treasure in 2021

45,581

finds recorded on the PAS database

872

research projects (to date) using PAS data

1,085

treasure cases reported

381,021

unique visitors to the PAS websites and database

96%

finds made by metal-detectorists

54,500

registered PAS database account users

96%

finds made on cultivated land

16,004

individuals attended 760 outreach events

98%

finds recorded to the nearest 100m

131

metal-detecting clubs liaised with

Introduction

The Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) records archaeological finds made by the public to advance knowledge, tell the stories of past communities and further public interest in the past. It is a partnership project, managed by the British Museum (in England) and through Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales (in Wales), working with at least 98 partners across both countries.

In England, this work forms part of the British Museum’s National Strategy and is managed by the Learning and National Partnerships Department and coordinated by the Portable Antiquities and Treasure team.

There are 40 locally based Finds Liaison Officers (FLOs) across England whose role it is to record archaeological finds made by the public; they are supported by five period specialists (National Finds Advisers). In 2021, 167 volunteers (including 79 detectorists who, following training, recorded their own finds directly onto the PAS database) also contributed to the work of the Scheme.

In England, the Scheme is funded through the Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport’s (DCMS) grant in aid to the British Museum, with local partner contributions. Its work is guided by the Portable Antiquities Advisory Group (PAAG), whose membership includes leading archaeological, landowner and metal-detecting organisations.

The objectives of the Scheme are to:

- Transform archaeological knowledge through the recording and research of public finds, to enable the stories of past peoples and their landscapes to be told;
- Share new knowledge about archaeological finds made within communities, so that people might learn more about their past, their archaeology and their history;
- Promote best archaeological practice amongst finder communities, so that the past is preserved and protected for the future;
- Support museum acquisition of finds made by the public, so that these can be saved for future generations and enjoyed by local people;
- Provide long-term sustainability for the recording of new finds, so that these discoveries can contribute to the rewriting of our histories.

These objectives are taken forward by ‘working groups’, which include PAS staff in England and Wales and local managers, national and local partners, as well as other stakeholders.

Treasure Act 1996

Under the Treasure Act 1996 (finds.org.uk/treasure) finders have a legal obligation to report finds of potential Treasure to the local coroner in the district in which they were found, but in practice most finders in England report Treasure finds via their local FLO. The success of the Act is only possible through the work of the PAS: its staff advise finders of their legal obligations, provide advice on the process and write Treasure reports for coroners.

The Act allows a national or local museum to acquire Treasure for public benefit. If this happens a reward is paid, which is normally shared equally between the finder and landowner. Parties may waive their right to a reward, enabling museums to acquire finds at reduced or no cost. Rewards are fixed at the full market value, determined by the Secretary of State upon the advice of an independent panel of experts, the Treasure Valuation Committee (TVC). In England, the administration of the Treasure process takes place at the British Museum and involves the preparation of Treasure cases for coroners’ inquests, providing the secretariat for the TVC, and handling disclaimed cases and the payment of rewards. Treasure cases from Wales and Northern Ireland have similar processes.

Under the Treasure Act 1996, interested parties may waive their right to a reward so that finds might be acquired by museums at no (or reduced) cost. Examples include an Iron Age linch-pin and miniature terret ring (SWYOR-479326) donated to Craven Museum, Skipton, by the finder and landowner, and a small hoard of Roman *denarii* (GLO-CE8651) donated to the Museum in the Park, Stroud, by the finder and landowner.

PAS is a partnership project working with at least 98 organisations across England and Wales.

LEIC-C615C9

Reported Treasure in 2021. Gold Early Medieval pommel cap from Billesdon, Leicestershire.



¹ The membership of PAAG is the Arts Council England, Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers, British Museum, Council for British Archaeology, Chartered Institute for Archaeologists, Country Land and Business Association, Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport, Federation of Independent Detectorists, Historic England, Institute of Archaeology (University College London), National Council of Metal Detecting, National Farmers Union, Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales, Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Wales, and the Society for Museum Archaeology.

Outreach and research

The PAS reaches out to all those who might find archaeology, and highlights the value of responsible metal detecting.



Tom Redmayne recording finds at home on the PAS database.

Outreach is a key part of the work of the PAS and its FLOs, connecting the Scheme with local people to highlight the archaeological value of finds and encourage finds recording. FLOs are employed and based locally, supported by their host partners and other colleagues in their local area, including academics, curators and a wider range of heritage professionals. This provides them with an ideal platform to undertake outreach.

Advancing knowledge

Metal-detecting finds can make a positive contribution to archaeological knowledge. Featured in this report are many finds discovered by metal-detectorists, but this is only a selection of the thousands of items recorded in 2021 - the rest are on the PAS database (finds.org.uk/database). This is a wealth of information about our past and is used by archaeologists, detectorists and others to learn about what has been found and help paint a picture of the past, in some cases even challenging what we previously knew. The following case studies highlight how, through archaeologists and detectorists working together, we are changing the archaeological map of Britain.

Detectorist self-recorders

Metal-detectorists who have been trained to record finds directly onto the PAS database have made a big difference to our recording output in recent years. In 2021, 1,681 records were made by self-recorders: these records have the prefix 'PUBLIC'. Many self-recorders were trained as part of the National Lottery Heritage Fund funded PAS project 'PAsT Explorers: finds recording in the local community' (2014-21), but FLOs still support self-recorders and other volunteers. Several self-recorders have logged many hundreds of finds. Included amongst them is Lincolnshire-based Tom Redmayne who has recorded over 1000 finds onto the database, all found by himself. Furthermore, Tom has published a Finds Research Group datasheet (No. 47) on a Medieval buckle type formerly thought to be a type of brooch, now known as 'disc-on-pin' buckles. This work has not only shown how detectorists can help record the finds they make, but also help archaeologists better understand the material culture found through detecting and archaeology.

Understanding the 'Middling Sort'

'Middling Culture' is an Arts & Humanities Research Council (AHRC) funded project that aims to transform our understanding of how reading, writing and material culture fitted into the everyday lives of England's 'middling sort' - neither the very rich nor the very poor - in the 16th and 17th centuries: it is led by Catherine Richardson (University of Kent), with Tara Hamling (University of Birmingham) and Graeme Earl (King's College London).

PAS data has been a very important element in the project's work, being an essential resource for culture below the level of the elite, for which there is very little evidence available in museum collections. It has given especially important insight in two areas. First, the question of regional distribution of items, their distinctive production processes and aesthetics in different areas. Second, the nature of small personal items, which are rarely described in detail in probate materials and other documentary sources, but which nevertheless formed a key part of contemporary material cultures.



WILT-2ED78D
Silver Tudor gilt dress hook
from Tisbury, Wiltshire.
Objects like this were likely
imitated by the 'middling sort'
in base metals.



NMS-178AE0
Copper-alloy Iron Age
socketed terminal mount in
the form of a bull's head
from Scarning, Norfolk.
A decorated object studied
in Reb Ellis' PhD.

Middling Culture has used PAS evidence in their underpinning analysis, for public talks and academic papers, and also in their suite of digital outputs for the project, including a virtual exhibition and reconstructed virtual early modern room. These are central parts of the school resource which is being developed from the project.

'The PAS database has been vital to our aim to understand middling culture holistically, as a lived experience that goes beyond documentary sources. It is a resource that has huge implications for scholars working on early modern culture more broadly, and with increasing amounts of work in historical material culture studies I have no doubt that it will become more central to a wider range of historians' understanding of social practice'.
(Prof Catherine Richardson, Principal Investigator on Middling Culture, University of Kent)

Animals in Iron Age art

Reb Ellis recently completed a PhD at the University Hull (funded by the Heritage Consortium) on 'Animals in the La Tène period art of England and Wales'. Her thesis attempted to define the use of animals and any associated symbolism during the Late Iron Age (c. 400 BC – c. AD 100). Unexpectedly, fifty percent of the thesis data was derived from finds recorded with the PAS. This information specifically contributed to the development of over ten new artefact typologies, the improvement in the understanding of changes in figurative art use and production in the first centuries BC and AD, and the recognition of the importance of regional development during this period. Without metal-detectorists recording their finds with the PAS this work would not have been possible.

Sharing knowledge

Although the main aim of the PAS is to record archaeological finds to advance knowledge, it is also important that we share that knowledge as widely as possible. The main ways this is done are through media (such as printed press and social media), exhibitions and displays, and public talks and other outreach events. Below are some examples of this work in 2021.

Great British History Hunters

In 2021, the British Museum worked with Tuesday's Child on a television series for More4 (Channel 4) about the work of the PAS. The series focused on the finds made by detectorists and their passion for their hobby, but also profiled the FLOs, who help identify and record public finds, and the scientists, conservators and curators at the British Museum who help us learn more about them. The series did not shy away from some more controversial aspects of the hobby, such as nighthawking (illegal detecting) and the sale of finds not protected by law. All four episodes were screened in April and May 2022 and the series seems to have been received well by the public and detecting community alike.

What was particularly wonderful to see in this programme was the powerful effects that finding objects and revealing their history and stories for the nation has on those involved, giving a wide range of health and wellbeing benefits from feelings of pride and excitement to developing strong friendships and supporting mental health wellbeing and recovery from illness or trauma.



George Ridgeway and David,
his father, outside the British
Museum for Great British
History Hunters (photograph
Tuesday's Child).

Films for school teachers

Prehistory is taught as part of the National Curriculum, mostly to children in Key Stage 2 (aged 7-11), but it is not a particularly easy period to teach. Therefore, Claire Marston (Learning Officer) and Amal Khreisheh (Curator of Archaeology) at South West Heritage Trust, together with Lucy Shipley and Maria Kneafsey (local FLOs for Devon and Somerset) and Richard Tomlinson (Filmmaker), created a series of short films for primary school teachers. These aimed to supplement teachers' existing knowledge with specific information about the prehistoric material culture of Somerset. The films were made in December 2021, and featured Lucy and Maria, talking about finds within the care of Somerset Museums Service, as well as those recorded through PAS. It is hoped that these will help teachers to inspire children in this fascinating period of our past.

'Both Lucy and Maria work within the South West Heritage Trust so it was great to be able to involve them, as finds experts working on prehistoric material as part of the PAS, within our learning programme at The Museum of Somerset'.
(Claire Marston, Learning Officer, South West Heritage Trust)

This project was part of the Museums and Schools programme, funded by the Department for Education and managed by Arts Council England.



Some of the 50 Finds books published by Amberley.

50 finds

Every year PAS staff produce a range of publications, from academic papers and reports aimed at specialists to those for a general audience such as magazine articles and popular books. The latter includes the ‘50 Finds’ series from Amberley Publishing which has been running since 2015 and now includes 23 books. Most of these showcase PAS-recorded finds from individual counties alongside others that are thematically based. Five were published in 2021. *50 Finds from Buckinghamshire* (Arwen Wood) and *50 Finds from Kent* (Jo Ahmet) explore local archaeology and history from the Palaeolithic to Post-Medieval period, while *50 Finds of Roman Coinage* (Andrew Brown), *50 Finds of Early Medieval Coinage* (John Naylor) and *50 Bronze Age Finds* (Dot Boughton) delve into their topics in more depth, using PAS-recorded finds from across England and Wales.

‘A valuable introductory guide to early medieval English numismatics and monetary history’.

(review of *50 Finds of Early Medieval Coinage in British Numismatic Journal*)

Promoting best practice

Many of the most remarkable archaeological finds made in recent years have been discovered by metal-detectorists. It is a key aim of the PAS to promote best practice so that detecting makes the most positive contribution to archaeology possible. It is important that detectorists provide good findspot information (ideally at least an 8-figure NGR, so within a 10-metre square) for the finds they make and if items are found ‘in situ’ (so, for example, a hoard that has not been disturbed by the plough) they need to be excavated archaeologically. It is great news that the National Council for Metal Detecting (NCMD) and Association for Metal Detecting Sport (AMDS) have endorsed the *Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting in England and Wales*, which will help ensure that metal-detecting plays an important role in adding to archaeological knowledge.

NCMD major finds excavation fund

The National Council for Metal Detecting (NCMD), in collaboration with the PAS, has launched a fund to support the excavation of major finds - mostly hoards. The aim of the fund is to encourage finders of ‘in-situ’ (undisturbed) finds to stop digging and call for archaeological assistance so they can be excavated properly. Members simply call a special number - 07983 897442 - and are connected to a PAS team who give initial advice and help arrange an excavation, if appropriate. It is important to note that these can take some days to organise, so finders will usually be asked to ‘make safe’ the findspot until an excavation can happen. Also, it does not cover hoards found on metal-detecting rallies, where the organisers are expected to facilitate archaeological excavation, as in the cases of a Bronze Age hoard from Buckinghamshire (BUC-DFFFB3) and a Roman coin hoard from Oxfordshire (OXON-86B997); the former excavation was covered by Oxford Archaeology (South) as part of their charitable enterprise, and the latter was funded by the Metal Detectives Group.

‘The NCMD endorses the Code of Practice for Responsible Metal Detecting and supports detectorists taking care when digging up archaeological material. This is why we have established this fund to help support the archaeological excavation of finds made by our members. It is fantastic it has already led to several finds being excavated properly’
(Alan Tambllyn, General Secretary of the NCMD)



Excavation of the Wickwar coin hoard.

Roman coin hoard excavation

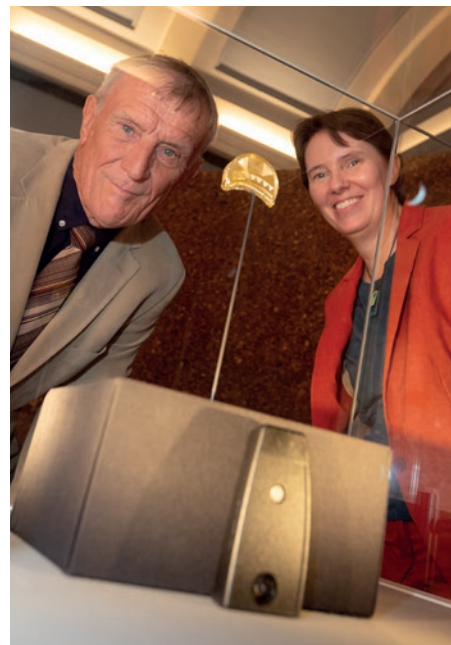
In May 2021, Mark Lovell and Mark Wilcox were metal-detecting a familiar field at Wickwar, South Gloucestershire (GLO-CCC7BC), when they discovered a Roman coin hoard contained within its original pot. Realising it was still ‘in-situ’ (i.e. in its original archaeological context), and the importance of preserving this information, they immediately called their local FLO, Kurt Adams (Gloucestershire & Avon FLO), who was able to organise a small excavation of the site. Aided by Lucy Shipley (Devon FLO), a 1.5m by 1.5m trench was opened at the hoard site, where not one, but three pots, containing coins were discovered. All three were buried together in a line and nestled within building rubble from a probable previously unknown Roman structure and site. With the detectorists’ help, further archaeological fieldwork is now being undertaken to find out more about the site.

Community excavation in the New Forest

In October 2021 a collaboration between Jenny Durrant (Hampshire FLO) and Gareth Owen (Archaeologist, New Forest National Park Authority) enabled a community excavation on the site of the New Forest Hoard (HAMP-EC901C). This was undertaken by Prof Tony King and the New Forest History and Archaeology Group, supervised by Hilde van der Heul (Community Archaeologist, New Forest National Park Authority), with metal-detecting assistance by John Whittaker, and the generous support of the landowners. This hoard of Post-Medieval gold and silver coins was found in a garden during ‘lockdown’ in 2020. The reason for its deposition was a mystery with no known archaeological sites or historic buildings in the area, so the excavation aimed to explore the findspot for archaeological context and to retrieve any remaining coins. Within hours of opening the trench, underneath a dense spread of 20th-century scrap debris, the volunteer team located six gold coins and a sub-square burial pit. The close position of two coins suggested they had been stacked when buried. The hoard of 68 gold and one silver coins date from c.1536–40. Their burial in a rural location likely represents the intentional hiding of good quality precious metal.

Community team that excavated the New Forest Hoard findspot (photograph Jenny Durrant).





Bob Greenaway (finder) and Emma-Kate Lanyon (curator) with the Shropshire sun pendant on display at Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery.

Supporting museums and the heritage sector

The PAS is managed by the British Museum (in England), with all the FLOs being managed and hosted locally, normally within museums or other heritage organisations. Although this partnership structure is complex, it is a key strength of the Scheme since it binds together people and organisations across England in delivering the work of the PAS. FLOs will benefit from the local networks they and their host organisations have and continue to create, but will also be supported by the British Museum, its conservators, curators, scientists and other staff in the Portable Antiquities & Treasure team. The examples below highlight how the FLO network also supports museums and the wider heritage sector, but also the fact that these collaborations are inspiring others abroad.

Shropshire sun pendant

The Shropshire ‘sun pendant’ (HESH-43148A) was found in 2018 by detectorist Bob Greenaway. It is one of many items of Later Prehistoric date found over many years in what is now being understood as an important wetland landscape. Close to where the pendant was found, an oval sheet of lead was also recovered which had been used to weigh down a pair of gold lock rings of a similar date and style. This find shows that goldwork, like the sun pendant, was being deliberately deposited here alongside axeheads and other bronze objects. Fieldwork funded by the British Museum and undertaken by Trent & Peak Archaeology revealed evidence of slow-flowing water and damp shallow mires populated by wetland plants with some stands of alder trees nearby. By the Iron Age there was clear evidence of periodic clearing of brush and cattle grazing on the wetland edge.

The sun pendant itself is made of gold and dates to the Late Bronze Age. It has been exceptionally well crafted, highlighting the skill of people almost 3000 years ago. The find was acquired by the British Museum, but in 2021 was first displayed at Shrewsbury Museum & Art Gallery, close to where it was found. This was part of a British Museum touring exhibition ‘Gathering Light, in advance of it being part of the British Museum’s ‘World of Stonehenge’ exhibition (in 2022) and following that will continue its tour to Lincoln, Salisbury, Sunderland and Truro over the next few years.

‘The sun pendant is not only a remarkable find for the county but is a find of international importance. It tells a story of a community with connections to Ireland, the rest of Britain, and beyond. We are thankful to help host the local FLO and grateful to the British Museum for working with us to share the Sun Pendant with the people of Shropshire first’.

(Emma-Kate Lanyon, Curator at Shropshire Museums)

Highlighting the PAS in Cornwall

The Museum of Cornish Life began employing and hosting the Cornwall FLO in 2020: previously the post was based at the Royal Cornwall Museum. Between 17 May and 14 September 2021, the Museum hosted an exhibition, curated by Tasha Fullbrook (Cornwall FLO), on local archaeology and the work of the PAS. This highlighted local archaeological finds, how these were made and used, and how archaeologists identify finds. The display used examples from the Museum of Cornish Life’s own collections to explain the work of the PAS in recording finds and the process of the Treasure Act 1996. The exhibition was very well received by local people, with 5,561 visitors coming to see the exhibition, with the digital tour being viewed 130 times.

‘The museum began its hosting of a FLO for the first time during the Covid-19 pandemic. On reopening, we thought an exhibition would be a wonderful way to share with people the news about the Scheme. It was a way to welcome people back, share the exciting news about our partnership with the British Museum and let more people know about the PAS’.

(Annette MacTavish, Director, Museum of Cornish Life)

New Czech finds recording portal

In 2021 the Archaeological Institutes of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague and Brno launched a new system for liaising with the metal-detecting community in the Czech Republic and recording their finds - AMCR-PAS (Archaeological Map of the Czech Republic - Portal of Amateur Collaborators and Register of Individual Finds). The system is intended to further cooperation between professional archaeologists and public finders within the legal framework of the Czech Republic whereby metal-detecting and other public searches are only permitted if part of an official research project of State institutions, like the Czech Academy of Sciences or museums. The system registers archaeological finds, which are available online for both the professional and general public. Several regional museums and other organisations conducting archaeological research are also involved in the project.

David Cibulka (Archaeological Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Brno) excavating a find made by metal-detectorists (also pictured). After processing, finds will be uploaded to the online database: digiarchiv.aiscr.cz (the database also has an English version).



Recording finds

Every year many thousands of archaeological finds are made by the public, most of these are discovered by metal detectorists. It is the role of the PAS, through its team of locally based FLOs, to record these finds to add to knowledge about the archaeology and history of England and Wales. This report highlights a sample of these finds and explains why they are important. Many more can be found on the PAS database (finds.org.uk/database).

Flint and stone 800,000 BC– Present



DOR-57AD64
Bout coupé handaxe from Swanage, Dorset. With their various angles and cutting edges these handaxes were probably used as multi-purpose tools.



DOR-A0A5FF
Bout coupé handaxe from Manston, Dorset. A recent chip reveals the original black lustrous colour of the flint from which this handaxe was made. Over the millennia this has been covered by a thick crust of cortex.

FAKL-2AF0D1

The important feature of this natural quartz pebble from Broughton, North Lincolnshire, is the way in which it has become worn to produce a flat polished surface covered in fine parallel striations. 'Plough pebbles' are an interesting phenomenon, with finds from Denmark showing them to have been used to protect the soles of wooden ploughs from excessive wear: holes were drilled in the wood and hard stone pebbles hammered into them. The passage of the plough through the earth gave the pebbles the distinctive pattern of wear seen here. In Scotland these distinctive stones have been found in Early Medieval contexts on archaeological sites and, usefully, the Broughton pebble comes from a site that has yielded Late Anglo-Saxon pottery.



Stone and flint finds are not unusual. Most recorded with the PAS are prehistoric in date, but a small number of later finds are also recovered: these include Roman quern stones and Post-Medieval gun flints. As the examples below illustrate, lithics can be useful for further understanding the lives of our ancestors and the places they inhabited.

Flint handaxes from Dorset

Amongst the flint handaxes from Dorset are two distinctive examples of a form known as the '*bout coupé*' or 'Coygan type' (DOR-57AD64 & DOR-A0A5FF). Both date from the Late Middle Palaeolithic, a period seen as starting at c. 60,000 BC, when rising temperatures ended the 'Wolstonian Ice Age' bringing the temperate climate of the Ipswichian Interglacial. *Bout coupé* handaxes belong to the 'Mousterian' flint working tradition which takes its name from a rock-shelter at Le Moustier, in the Dordogne, France. Here handaxes and other implements were found associated with the remains of Neanderthal people (*Homo neanderthalensis*), suggesting that the Dorset handaxes were also made by them. Mousterian flint implements have been found elsewhere in Britain, for example at Kent's Cavern, near Torquay, Devon, and Creswell Crags, on the Derbyshire/Nottinghamshire border, but without Neanderthal skeletal remains being present. The Late Middle Palaeolithic ended c. 42,000 BC with the arrival in Europe of anatomically modern humans (*Homo sapiens*) who replaced the Neanderthals, although the DNA of modern Europeans remains about 2% Neanderthal. *Homo sapiens* brought with them a new flint working technology based on the knapping of long narrow blades which replaced the Mousterian tradition. Interestingly, a recent find in the south of France suggests that *Homo sapiens* may have arrived in Europe earlier than was thought, around 54,000 BC. The Dorset handaxes have the characteristic shape of a *bout coupé* - roughly square, thin in section, with a rounded tip and a straight base - so it is probably safe to place them in the Middle Palaeolithic Mousterian tradition.

Kevin Leahy



LEIC-4821A1

The strange shape of this Early Bronze Age battleaxe from Peckleton, Leicestershire, represents one-half of the object. Its hole was being made (by chipping at the two sides of the battleaxe to give an 'hourglass' perforation) when the axe broke. A second perforation was then made closer to the blade edge, destroying the symmetry of the object. That work continued even though the battleaxe was miss-shaped suggests that the stone being used was in some way special.

Bronze Age 2350–800 BC



SWYOR-AE0947

Cast copper-alloy side looped and socketed spearhead found at Kirkburn High and Low, North Yorkshire.

Because the socket does not extend far into the blade it has been identified as 'Davis Group 2'. It dates to the Early Bronze Age, 'Arreton phase' (c. 1700–1550 BC).



LANCUM-DAFC3C

Gold lock-ring from Great Urswick, Cumbria

SF-6FD899

Gold spiral finger-ring dating to c. 1400–1100 BC and found at Eye, Suffolk. It is made of a circular sectioned gold sheet rolled into three coils, which is an uncommon form of personal ornament in the Middle to Late Bronze Age.



The British Museum's 2022 *World of Stonehenge* exhibition highlighted the wealth of material culture in the Bronze Age. However, finds of this period are relatively uncommon detector finds: 779 Bronze Age items were recorded with the PAS in 2021, representing less than 2% of the dataset. Highlighted below, is the fact that while Bronze Age items are found across England and Wales, certain object-types cluster in particular areas, showing not only where people lived and the objects they used, but also providing insights into contacts and trade between people over large geographic areas.

'Southwest' daggers

Found at Harting, West Sussex (HAMP-C13678), was a copper-alloy Early Bronze Age dagger blade (c. 1600–1400 BC). Its 129 mm long blade has two holes through which rivets once connected it to the hilt; this was probably wooden and has not survived. Along the blade are parallel grooves which meet at its tapering point, a form that enables the dagger to be classified as an example of the 'Camerton-Snowhill type'. Such daggers were often deposited within rich 'Wessex culture' burials, including those in Somerset and Gloucestershire from which the type takes its name. Some examples documented by the PAS fall within the core area of the distribution, for instance, a very well-preserved blade from near Devizes, Wiltshire (WILT-4B3B1C). Others have been found on the margins of this area, for example from the Isle of Wight (IOW-BD52F2) and the Vale of Glamorgan (NMGW-623A54 & NMGW-6216A4) as well as from further afield, including Cumbria (LANCUM-93130B), Flintshire (LVPL-F76934) and Kent (KENT-AEA581).

Distribution of lock-rings

A complete Late Bronze Age lock-ring found at Great Urswick, Cumbria (LANCUM-DAFC3C), decorated with fine parallel incisions, illustrates the quality of contemporary gold working. Used as earrings and denoting high status, lock-rings date to the 'Ewart Park phase' of the Late Bronze Age (c. 1150–800 BC). In Britain, their findspots mainly concentrate in two areas: a northern zone (north and west Wales, northern England and southern Scotland) and an eastern one (East Anglia and south-east England). The 33 examples reported Treasure through the PAS are widely distributed within and beyond these areas, including examples from Woolaston, Gloucestershire (GLO-E9EC16) and St Loyes, Devon (SOM-50218D). The smaller and plainer gold or gold-on-base-metal penannular rings were also used for personal adornment in the Late Bronze Age. These are more common, with 183 examples being recorded by the PAS since (the Treasure Act became law in) 1997. Of these, many (118 examples) are found in the southeast, especially in the central south, with 36 from Hampshire alone.

Sally Worrell

HAMP-C13678

Copper-alloy dagger from Harting, West Sussex.

LVPL-2D3369

Complete copper-alloy dirk or rapier, dating from the Middle Bronze Age (c. 1500–1300 BC) and found at Knockin, Shropshire. Of note is the preservation of its rivets which once connected it to the hilt.



Iron Age 800 BC–AD 43



HAMP-38C769
Copper-alloy 'socketed terminal' from Buriton, Hampshire.

DENO-2BAD49
Enamelled copper-alloy 'horse brooch' from Buckinghamshire.

Finds of Iron Age are by no means common, with only 1,351 items (representing 3% of the 2021 dataset) being recorded this year. A good percentage (over 37% in 2021) are coins. In several cases, quality makes up for quantity, with many objects and coins being well-crafted, also impressing with their abstract designs and decorative techniques.

Elaborate equestrian equipment

Horse trappings of Iron Age date are uncommon finds, but examples recorded in 2021 hint at the splendour of equestrian culture at this time. The most impressive was an enamelled 'horse brooch' found in Buckinghamshire (DENO-2BAD49), cast in two pieces. Its likely function is to keep a horse blanket or similar in place on the animal's back, one part pinning the brooch to the blanket, with the other connecting the fitting to harness straps. The front is decorated with well-preserved symmetrical curvilinear decoration, including settings for red glass (of which traces remain), with parallels in the famous Polden Hill, Somerset, deposit of first century AD metalwork. Similar finds of this rare artefact made in 2021 include examples from Rotherfield Peppard, Oxfordshire (OXON-E5D1A1) and Bullington, Hampshire (SUR-738A17). A fitting from Corsenside, Northumberland (DUR-7BDE31), with a spike for attachment to a harness strap, carries scrolling open-work decoration in the same tradition as the Buckinghamshire brooch.

Roman religious objects

A copper-alloy object from Buriton, Hampshire (HAMP-38C769), has a likely link to religious practice during the Iron Age and Roman period. This socketed terminal takes the form of a male head with striking portrait features, triangular face, bulbous eyes and hair swept back from the forehead in parallel incised lines - a stylisation typical of late Iron Age anthropomorphic art. A very similar object was excavated from a settlement at neighbouring Chalton in the 1950s. Likely to represent divinities, they may have formed the tips of staffs carried in religious rituals: many such staffs or sceptres were deposited at the temple site in Wanborough, Surrey. A crested god (possibly Mars) from Nettleham, Lincolnshire (LIN-71ECB3), and a bearded male from Bix, Oxfordshire (BERK-BF8EC4), are among other examples recorded by the PAS. For the Buriton and Chalton terminals, the loop behind the head - perhaps for holding a ribbon or streamer - makes it difficult to identify the exact function of the object.



CORN-132899
Silver *tetradrachm* of Alexander III from St Minver Lowlands, Cornwall.



NMGW-C2A858
Blue-glass bead, with its bosses accentuated by spirals of white glass, of likely late Iron Age date, from Haselor, Warwickshire. It is an example of a bead type mainly documented in south-eastern Britain but with outliers in Wales and northern Britain.

Unusual coin from Cornwall
Reported in the *PAS Annual Report 2020* were rare finds of Greek coins in Britain and the difficulties of separating modern from ancient losses. The discovery on the beach near St Minver Lowlands, Cornwall (CORN-132899), of a silver posthumous *tetradrachm* of Alexander (III) ‘the Great’, struck at Babylon (in modern Iraq) in c. 311–305 BC, was both unexpected and quite extraordinary given the distance it must have travelled to reach Cornwall. It appears to be the first Alexander ‘the Great’ *tetradrachm* found in Britain which has a good provenance. Scientific analysis suggests the coin is genuinely ancient and has been on the beach for some time. Therefore, it is a rare and potentially significant British find. Given its findspot, it will now pass to the Receiver of Wreck (who deals with marine finds believed to be from shipwrecks), with the hope of local museum acquisition in due course.

Sally Worrell, Andrew Brown and Sam Moorhead



NMS-888EA0
Pierced gold *stater* of Cunobelin (c. AD 10–40), found in Acle, Norfolk. The piercing indicates a secondary function for the coin and as such, it qualifies as potential Treasure under the Treasure Act 1996.



HESH-48C119
Gold *stater* of the Dobunni found in Craven Arms, Shropshire. It has the legend [C]OMVX on the reverse for the Dobunnic ruler, Comux (c. AD 1–15), and is one of two examples reported to the PAS in 2021.

SUSS-6586BF
Copper-alloy brooch of middle Iron Age date (c. 250–100 BC) from Codford, Wiltshire. It has settings for coral inlay (once red, now decayed to white) along its bow, making it one of the most elaborate brooch types of this date.



Roman AD 43–410

The largest proportion of finds recorded by the PAS each year are Roman in date, with 20,375 items being recorded this year (so over 45% of the dataset), of which almost half were coins: over 9,000 coins as single finds and within hoards. As a group, though mostly metal, these items represent all aspects of Roman life. Highlighted here are just a small number of the many interesting finds, mostly found through metal-detecting.

Cerberus: God of the Underworld

A copper-alloy figurine of the three-headed canine guardian of the Greco-Roman Underworld, Cerberus, worn and broken at its extremities but otherwise well-preserved, was found at Sutton St Edmunds, Lincolnshire (NMS-3F75DA). The first statuette of this kind found in Britain, it might once have accompanied a figure of Pluto or other god associated with the Underworld like the Greco-Egyptian fertility deity Serapis, with whom images of Cerberus are sometimes found elsewhere in the Roman Empire. It joins other PAS figurine discoveries, for example of Cautopates from Newton Kyme, North Yorkshire (SWYOR-9FCBB3), and of Attis from Somerton, Oxfordshire (BERK-817A95), which expand the pantheon of divinities beings attested in the portable material culture of Roman Britain.

Waterbirds of Roman Britain

A cast copper-alloy lock component in the form of a highly stylised duck, with details of head, wings and body rendered with incisions and large eyes inlaid with red enamel, was found at Winslade, Basingstoke, Hampshire (HAMP-47B5C). This is the first occurrence of an object of this kind from Britain, but the discovery at Augst, Switzerland, of a comparable example still (in-situ) within a lock plate helps to determine its function. Its stylisation echoes other representations of water birds documented by the PAS, for example, mounts from Fen Ditton, Cambridgeshire (SF-2492B7), Ashwell, Hertfordshire (BH-5D2737), and Burton upon Stather, North Lincolnshire (SWYOR-329326). The translation of animals and birds into near-geometric forms (as found in some of these cases) draws on Celtic artistic traditions.

Fakes and forgeries

Contemporary copies of Roman coins are not uncommon as British finds but the evidence for their manufacture and the people behind their production is generally rare. The discovery near Sleaford, Lincolnshire (LIN-8217C4), of an incomplete obverse die for a coin of Faustina I (AD 138–61) is an important find. It complements a previously recorded die of a similar date for Marcus Aurelius (LVPL-AA6A55), and both highlight the local production of forged Roman *denarii*. This die was used to produce copies of *denarii* of Faustina issued after her death during the reign of her husband Antoninus Pius (c. AD 141–61). It appears to have been broken in half, either because of usage or perhaps intentionally to render it useless. It has been acquired by the Ashmolean Museum.

Sally Worrell, Andrew Brown and Sam Moorhead



NMS-3F75DA
Copper-alloy figurine of Cerberus from Sutton St Edmunds, Lincolnshire.



BERK-3D408B
Copper-alloy figurine of a naked boy from Cox Green, Berkshire. Seated with arms outstretched, holding a ball, it is a playful genre image, likely copying a Greco-Roman prototype.

LIN-8217C4
Copper-alloy die for a coin found near Sleaford, Lincolnshire.



BERK-AE0EAD
Gold mount from Mortimer West End, Hampshire, likely created from a coin impression. It carries a profile image of a Julio-Claudian emperor, probably Augustus, wearing a triumphal wreath.



DOR-B0D14D
Gold *aureus* of Claudius I (r. AD 41–54) dating to c. AD 41–2, from Portbury, North Somerset. Claudian gold is generally rare, with only five aurei recorded on the PAS database, this being just the second example of this type (depicting the praetorian camp in Rome) found in Britain.



HAMP-47B5C
Copper-alloy lock component in the form of a duck from Winslade, Basingstoke.

FASAM-1AC087
Silver *denarius* of Pertinax (r. AD 193) found near Kingston Deverill, Wiltshire. This is only the second example of this type for this short-lived emperor recorded on the PAS database.





Early Medieval AD 410–1066

Finds of Early Medieval date are important to record since they are relatively uncommon and can shed new light on the past: in 2021, less than 5% of all recorded finds (1,735 items) date from the end of Roman Britain (in about AD 410) to the Norman Conquest (1066). This period saw significant changes through the arrival of new peoples, war and invasion, and increased trade, resulting in diverse material culture. It is mostly through metal detecting that new evidence is coming to light and changing our understanding of this period.

Enigmatic dress accessories

Anglo-Saxon hooked tags are relatively common finds, with at least 59 being recorded in 2021. They were used as dress accessories, presumably to join or close garments (much like Tudor and later dress hooks), but their exact function is unknown. They come in a variety of shapes, with most having circular or triangular plates, from which their (usually) integral hook protrudes. Some are silver, but most are copper-alloy, and they can be decorated in various ways, if at all. The simplest designs consist of punched marks. For example, one from near Woodbridge, Suffolk (SF-5A4DA4), has a triangular plate decorated with punched ring-and-dots. Others have more intricate designs. From Penton Mewsey, Hampshire (SUR-F0AEB1), was found an example with an incised foliate design, whereas one from Preston Candover, Hampshire (SUSS-90E85B), is silver and decorated with an interlace motif embellished with niello. Both have circular plates and can be dated, based on their decoration, to 800 and 950.

Tumultuous times in Mercia

2021 marked 1200 years since the death of King Coenwulf of Mercia (r. 796–821) whose rule extended into eastern and south-eastern England. The period after his death saw several short-lived kings and the decline in the kingdom's power, eclipsed by the kingdom of Wessex under Ecgberht (r. 802–39) and loss of control over East Anglia. Coins from this period are rare. Only two pennies of Coenwulf himself were recorded in 2021, both struck at Canterbury. One was found nearby at Adisham, Kent (KENT-662F7B), while the other, jointly issued with Archbishop Æthelheard of Canterbury (r. 793–805), was from Burwell, Lincolnshire (NLM-792841). A penny of Coenwulf's successor, Ceolwulf I (r. 821–3), from Wickhambrook, Suffolk (SF-5998BC), gives the name of the moneyer, Hereberht, in three lines on the reverse; some of the letters in the inscription are back-to-front or upside-down, though not in itself unusual for this period. The influence of its design can be seen on a unique coin of King Wiglaf of Mercia (r. 827–40) found at Shalfleet, Isle of Wight (IOW-C803F7), which gives the mint name LVNDONIA (London). Previously, for the Early Medieval period, this is only known on single coins of Ludica of Mercia (r. 827–9) and Ecgberht of Wessex (r. 802–39). This is, therefore, a significant find, highlighting the expansion of London and its growing importance to both kingdoms.



NLM-792841
Silver penny jointly issued by Archbishop Æthelheard of Canterbury and King Coenwulf of Mercia, found at Burwell, Lincolnshire.

SF-5A4DA4
Copper-alloy hooked tag from near Woodbridge, Suffolk.

SUSS-90E85B
Silver hooked tag from Preston Candover, Hampshire.



IOW-C803F7
Silver penny of King Wiglaf of Mercia, found at Shalfleet, Isle of Wight.

Odd blobs

Each year several mysterious-looking precious metal 'blobs' are reported Treasure via the PAS: finders of gold or silver items over 300 years old are legally required to report them under the Treasure Act 1996. Those of (probable) Early Medieval date can come in a variety of sizes and forms, most being cigar-shaped, some cut, others not, but they tend to have a sub-cylindrical or sub-rectangular section with rounded ends. They are a reminder that, particularly in the Viking Age, bullion was used for trade besides, even instead of, coins. Fairly typical is a sub-rectangular example from Shenstone, Staffordshire (LVPL-E032D7), which appears to have been hammered and has one of its ends partially cut or broken. It also seems to have some nick-marks, providing evidence that the object has been tested by those using it as currency - a common Viking practice. Similar is an example from near Scarborough, East Yorkshire (YORYM-74BC82), which is stubbier, but has also been cut and appears to have marks from testing the silver.

Michael Lewis and John Naylor



LIN-1F3D6D
Gilded copper-alloy disc dating to the 6th century, attached to the remnants of an iron shield boss-apex. The disc, from Lenton Keisby and Osgodby, Lincolnshire, is decorated with a pair of stylised quadrupeds without direct parallel.



HESH-425F5F
Copper-alloy openwork 'staff-terminal' of the Late Anglo-Saxon or Anglo-Norman period (c. 1050-1150) found at Knockin, Shropshire. Once thought to be pommels, it is now thought they were terminals for ecclesiastical staffs.



BERK-0929C9
Copper-alloy figurine from Kintbury, Berkshire. It fits within a small but growing repertoire of three-dimensional figurines of 7th-century date from the eastern and southern parts of the country. The figure is noted for his (seemingly unique) backward thumbs and (more typical) flaccid penis - the latter is common for Anglo-Saxon figures in contrast with those from Scandinavia!



LVPL-E032D7
Silver ingot from Shenstone, Staffordshire.

HAMP-B8741C
Silver penny of King Æthelred II (r. 978-1016) found at Fyfield, Hampshire. This 'Helmet' type coin was struck by the moneyer Cniht at Cambridge, the first example of its type recorded by the PAS from this mint.



Medieval AD 1066–1540



WMID-F728D8
'Tubular' copper-alloy padlock
from Chesterton and Kingston,
Warwickshire.



SF-FE54A7
'Zoomorphic' copper-alloy
padlock from Parham, Suffolk.



SUR-E356C7
Lead *ampulla* from Peterston-
super-Ely, the Vale of
Glamorgan.

SUR-4329F6
Gold pendant with a carved
dark red cabochon garnet
gemstone found at Great Tey,
Essex. Its inscription - AGLA
- and such semi-precious
stones were prized by
Medieval people for their
magical properties.

Many Medieval finds are recorded with the PAS each year, representing all parts of life in the Middle Ages. In 2021, the PAS made records of 9,688 finds, representing over 21% of the dataset. An interesting aspect of this Medieval data is that the finds are associated with people of varying status, from the very wealthy to those owning much less, though maybe not the very poorest in society who probably owned very little. Given metal-detecting accounts for most of these finds, metal finds dominate, whereas many items used by people in the Middle Ages would have been made of organic materials, like bone, leather and wood.

Keeping things safe

Copper-alloy padlocks (or parts thereof) are relatively common finds, with at least 20 being recorded in 2021. These consist of several parts, of which the hollow 'case' (open at one end, with a keyhole at the other) is readily identifiable. Into the case would have been slotted the 'bolt', consisting of a spine and spring, and usually made of iron. These two parts would have been connected by a copper-alloy 'hasp', often L-shaped. A key was used to unlock the bolt from the case by passing over its springs. All parts of these locks might be found, either apart or seized together, but it is the cases that are most regularly recovered. Most common are so-called 'tubular' padlocks, of which an example found this year from Chesterton and Kingston, Warwickshire (WMID-F728D8), consists of all three parts (case, bolt and hasp) of the lock, and is also finely decorated. Rarer are zoomorphic padlocks, of which those in the form of a horse seem most common; this includes one from Parham, Suffolk (SF-FE54A7). It seems that zoomorphic padlocks were used from about 1100 until about 1400, with tubular examples being a bit later in date, perhaps 1150 until 1500.

Holy heraldry

Ampullae were used by pilgrims as receptacles for holy water or oils. The liquids could be used for a multitude of purposes, including treating the sick and/or in ritual practices. The containers, both broken and complete, have found their way into the ground, and as such are common metal-detecting finds. A small number found in 2021 have upon them 'heraldic' designs, usually in the form of a decorated shield. In general, these motifs are simple, but can be hard to make out. More complex than most, is the armoury on an *ampulla* from Peterston-super-Ely, the Vale of Glamorgan (SUR-E356C7), which has a heater-shaped shield with reverse bend (i.e. diagonal bar) and stars in the field. Another from near Burnley, Lancashire (LANCUM-1295B7), has a similarly shaped shield, but is decorated with overlapping diagonals (or hatching). Without tincture (colours) it is hard to know whether these designs represent personal arms or not. In contrast, other designs are clearly quasi-heraldic. Good examples include those within shields on two *ampullae* from Shropshire: one, from Whitchurch Rural (PUBLIC-34AA3D), appears to show a stylised hammer (or similar); the other, from Welshampton and Lyneal (WREX-3538CA), has a small cross. Also known are ampullae presumed to show the arms of St George, including finds from Hilton, Dorset (SUR-ADE21D), and North Crawley, Milton Keynes (BH-C39F4E).





HAMP-120BDA
Silver strap-end from Worldham, Hampshire, with finely worked designs on both sides. One shows (cover image) a draped hybrid-beast (with a human head, animal's body and feathered tail) within a gothic arched frame. The other shows something similar, but more dog-like (shown here).



HAMP-73C2F4
Copper-alloy seal matrix depicting a castle found at Chilcomb, Hampshire. Its inscription records that it is the seal of Gifford Daniel of Somerset and is of special note because it 'voices' the county name in the regional accent.

Irish coinage

The English conquest of Ireland began under King Henry II (r. 1154–89), and one outcome was the striking of coinage on the island by English kings. Much of this silver left Ireland, so finds in England are not uncommon, with around 50–100 recorded by the PAS each year. Their widespread distribution suggests that they enjoyed general circulation alongside English coinage, especially the earlier types issued intermittently up to around 1302. These are distinctive, their designs showing the king's head within a triangle. The triangle is also used on the reverse of King John's (r. 1199–1216) Irish pennies, as seen on one found near Gainsborough, Lincolnshire (NLM-80AE93). Subsequent issues followed the English reverse type, as on a penny of King Henry III (r. 1216–72) found at Wickhambrook, Suffolk (SF-59092C), with its voided long cross. Most finds are pennies (rather than other denominations) so the discovery of a Waterford-minted halfpenny of King Edward I (r. 1272–1307) at Arlingham, Gloucestershire (GLO-12CCFC), is unusual but illustrates well the Bristol Channel-River Severn route that coinage travelled into midland England. Later coins mostly comprise heavily clipped coins of King Edward IV (r. 1471–83), using the same design as English issues. A highly clipped penny from Rushock, Worcestershire (WMID-8FD5D7), illustrates the poor state of these coins at this time.

Michael Lewis and John Naylor



NLM-80AE93
Silver penny of King John of England minted in Ireland, found near Gainsborough, Lincolnshire, with designs on both sides of the coin within a triangle.



DEV-C34DA6
Exceptionally rare gold penny of King Henry III (r. 1216–72) found near Hemyock, Devon. Introduced in 1257 to rival foreign-minted gold coinage, it proved unsuccessful and was withdrawn after a short time.



LIN-6D2321
12th-century silver *petit denier* struck at Ypres (modern-day Belgium), was found at Temple Bruer with Temple Grange, Lincolnshire. These small coins are rare finds, this being the first recorded by the PAS from Ypres: most British finds come from Ghent.

Post-medieval AD 1540 onwards



SWYOR-78FEDB
Gold and copper-alloy
mourning ring from Darrington,
West Yorkshire.



WILT-AB6A04
Gold and enamel mourning
ring from near Devizes,
Wiltshire.

Most of the objects found by metal-detectorists are Post-Medieval and Modern in date. The PAS is necessarily selective in recording these finds, especially if they are very common or mass-produced, concentrating on items that help provide new information. Even so, the PAS recorded 9,737 items in 2021, which is over one-fifth of all finds recorded this year. The case studies below highlighted some of the finds of note highlighted by FLOs.

Remembering the dead

Memento mori (remember you must die) rings are a feature of the Post-Medieval period, with people using their jewellery more and more to remember the dead. Items can include hair from the deceased, but more commonly loved ones are remembered in inscriptions. An interesting example from Darrington, West Yorkshire (SWYOR-78FEDB), is made of gold and copper-alloy, the latter metal being added later, perhaps to give the ring a tighter fit. Its inscription records the death of Benjamin Ellis Coates, who died on 9 February 1829, aged 48. Historical records show that he was a watchmaker and then (aptly) a jeweller. Others recorded in 2021 commemorate the deaths of William Webb, who died on 23 June 1679 (GLO-A1525D), perhaps aged 50, and G. J. Gray, who expired on 31 July 1706, aged 59 (SF-B5B82F). Intriguing is a finger-ring from near Devizes, Wiltshire (WILT-AB6A04), which does not name an individual, but instead has the inscription '*Animae Vita Mors*' (the life of the spirit is death). This ring is made of gold, covered in black-blue enamel (with only a gold strip of the metal showing through) and bearing a white 'death head'.

Coins of Henry VIII

Every year the PAS records thousands of coins issued by Medieval and Post-Medieval monarchs. Among these are also some very rare and interesting coins, of which the issues of King Henry VIII (r. 1509–47) are a good example. Unlike most of Henry's coins, a silver groat found at Burgh Le Marsh, Lincolnshire (LIN-6668DC), was not struck in England but at Tournai (modern-day Belgium) during a period when the city was under English control following its capture from the French: it is only the second example recorded by the PAS. Denominations in gold comprise less than 1% of all PAS-recorded Post-Medieval coin finds, illustrating that their circulation was limited compared to silver: coins of Henry VIII were gold or silver. A halfcrown found at Langley, Kent (KENT-2A950D), is one of just three gold coins from Henry's reign recorded in 2021. Even low-denomination issues can be surprising and therefore of interest. During this period very few farthings were struck meaning they are rare finds. An example from Badsworth, Wakefield (SWYOR-AFC29E), is therefore important to record. Interestingly, and perhaps significantly, most of the farthings of Henry VIII recorded by the PAS have been found in northern England.

Michael Lewis and John Naylor

KENT-2A950D
Gold halfcrown of King Henry
VIII from Langley, Kent.



HAMP-B20682
Fittings from sword belts are not rare finds, but to have a complete part (in this case of a horizontal plate and three plates still suspended from it) is more unusual. This example was found at Mattingley, Hampshire.



NMS-E248A4
Silver verel (hawking ring) in the form of a shield-shaped plate attached to a ring, found at Swannington Norfolk. The arms (three annulets) shown on the shield and the inscription to 'Iohn Riches' identify this with the Riches family. A certain John Riches left £20 to the poor of Stalham parish, 20 miles from the findspot.



WREX-ABD0CC
King George III's (r. 1760–1820) large 'cartwheel' pennies of 1797 were sometimes re-used decades later as advertising tokens by re-stamping the surface with pictures or text. This find from Leeswood, Flintshire, has been countermarked on both sides with stamps in the shape of clay pipes, probably to advertise a local company.



SWYOR-B7A2F4
Part of a mechanical 'toy', representing a man and a woman, was found at Thornton and Allerton, West Yorkshire. Since the couple embrace, the function of this object could be for bawdy entertainment, or perhaps something more innocent. Without a close parallel, it is hard to know.

Table 1
PAS records
made, finds
recorded
and Treasure
cases reported
(geographical
area).²

Area	PAS records	PAS finds	Treasure cases
Bedfordshire (inc. Bedford)	136	161	8
Berkshire (inc. Bracknell, Reading, Windsor & Maidenhead, Wokingham)	530	559	12
Buckinghamshire (inc. Milton Keynes)	1093	1107	23
Cambridgeshire (inc. Peterborough)	609	850	17
Cheshire (inc. Chester, Halton, Stockport, Warrington, Wirral)	195	210	11
Cornwall (inc. Isles of Scilly)	103	562	13
Cumbria	298	351	9
Derbyshire	69	90	6
Devon (inc. Plymouth, Torbay)	442	609	21
Dorset	281	770	31
Durham, Co. (inc. Darlington, Hartlepool, South Tyneside, Sunderland)	48	56	3
Essex (inc. Southend, Thurrock)	137	137	34
Gloucestershire (inc. Bath & NE Somerset, North Somerset)	826	8113	31
Hampshire (inc. Southampton)	1338	1588	67
Herefordshire	161	188	12
Hertfordshire	756	925	10
Isle of Wight	391	391	12
Kent (inc. Medway)	1177	1546	74
Lancashire (inc. Blackburn, Knowsley, Liverpool, Oldham, Manchester, Rochdale, St Helens & Trafford)	190	452	15
Leicestershire	464	607	24
Lincolnshire (inc. North & North East Lincolnshire)	3249	4247	68
London, Gtr	207	242	4
Norfolk	2589	3038	85
Northamptonshire	538	539	13
Northumberland	123	123	10
Nottinghamshire	321	327	12
Oxfordshire	1329	1409	44
Rutland	243	252	1
Shropshire (inc. Telford)	345	364	41
Somerset	350	490	25
Staffordshire	313	745	19
Suffolk	2996	4676	63
Surrey	569	590	4
Sussex (East & West, inc. Brighton)	565	592	29
Warwickshire (inc. Solihull)	426	449	13
Wiltshire (inc. Swindon)	1058	1472	68
Worcestershire	356	396	7
Yorkshire, East (inc. Hull)	550	594	14
Yorkshire, North (inc. York)	1379	2194	59
Yorkshire, South (inc. Barnsley, Doncaster, Rotherham, Sheffield)	450	458	4
Yorkshire, West (inc. Bradford, Calderdale, Kirklees, Leeds, Wakefield)	208	234	5
Wales (all counties)	746	759	58
Northern Ireland (all counties)	n/a	n/a	6
data not yet available	1268	2119	n/a
TOTAL	29,422	45,581	1,085

The above table gives information of where finds were made, not necessarily where they were recorded: many FLOs record finds from outside their area. The counties with the most finds records in 2021 were Lincolnshire (3249), Suffolk (2996) and Norfolk (2589). These counties also had the most finds recorded, representing over a quarter (26%) of the dataset for the year. Most Treasure cases were reported from Norfolk (85) and Kent (74), followed by Lincolnshire and Wiltshire (both 68).

² Data downloaded 1 January 2022.

Table 2
PAS finds records and number of finders recording finds (by recording institution).

FLO Area	PAS records	Finders	Average
Berkshire (BERK)	900	45	20
Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire (BH)	981	44	22
Buckinghamshire (BUC)	219	5	44
Cambridgeshire (CAM)	73	26	3
Cheshire etc (LVPL)	737	65	11
Cornwall (CORN)	109	27	4
Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire (DENO)	221	39	6
Devon (DEV)	593	76	8
Dorset (DOR)	231	54	4
Durham (DUR)	221	30	7
Essex (ESS)	111	22	5
Gloucestershire (GLO)	827	194	4
Hampshire (HAMP)	952	134	28
Herefordshire & Shropshire (HESH)	253	58	4
Isle of Wight (IOW)	548	41	9
Kent (KENT)	597	124	14
Lancashire & Cumbria (LANCUM)	526	73	7
Leicestershire (LEIC)	776	75	10
Lincolnshire (LIN)	1,208	79	15
London (LON)	210	50	4
Norfolk (NMS)	2,383	171	14
Northamptonshire (NARC)	645	46	14
North Lincolnshire (NLM)	2,219	34	65
Northumberland etc (NCL)	65	16	4
Oxfordshire (OXON)	1,207	77	16
Somerset (SOM)	112	21	5
Staffordshire & West Midlands (WMID)	691	70	10
Suffolk (SF)	2,962	91	32
Surrey (SUR)	2,151	133	16
Sussex (SUSS)	460	80	6
Warwickshire & Worcestershire (WAW)	370	49	8
Wiltshire (WILT)	770	86	9
Yorkshire, North & East (YORYM)	143	36	4
Yorkshire, South & West (SWYOR)	1,870	95	20
Wales (NMGW etc)	1,195	292	4
Finds Advisers etc (BM etc)	205	42	5
Public – self recorders (PUBLIC)	1,681	65	26

Recording institutions logging the most finds records in 2021 where SF (2,962), NMS (2,383) and NLM (2,219). A further 1,681 were made by 65 (PUBLIC) self-recorders - detectorists given training to record their own finds. Finds made by at least 2,665 finders were entered onto the PAS database, though other people would have shown finds to FLOs that were not recordable (e.g. finds of limited archaeological interest). Those institutions making finds records for most finders were GLO (194), NMS (171) and HAMP (134).

Table 3
PAS finds recorded (by government region in England only).³

Government Region	FLOs (FTE)	PAS records	PAS finds
North West	2	666	996
North East	1.6	167	175
Yorkshire	3	3390	4607
West Midlands	2.8	1563	2104
East Midlands	3.8	3957	4782
East	7.5	6193	8408
South West	4.7	2376	11136
South East & London	7.2	6294	7115

The English government regions logging the most finds records in 2021 were the South East and London (6,294) and the East (6,193), followed by the East Midlands (3,957).

Table 4
PAS finds and finds records by period (where known/recorded).

	Stone Age	Bronze Age	Iron Age	Roman	Early-medieval	Medieval	Post-medieval
Finds	1,302	779	1,351	20,375	1,735	9,688	9,737
%	2.90	1.73	3.00	45.31	3.86	21.55	21.65
Records	744	544	679	9,572	1,378	7,859	8,063
%	2.58	1.89	2.35	33.19	4.78	27.25	27.96

Roman finds accounted for the highest number (and proportion) of individual items recorded (45.31%), followed by those of Post-Medieval (21.65%), then Medieval (21.55%), date. However, based on records made, a good number of the Roman finds are found as part hoards (mostly coin hoards), accounting for a just less than a third (33.19%) of the dataset.

Table 5
Method of discovery where known/recorded (based on finds records).

	Metal-detecting	Chance find while metal-detecting	Field-walking/ mudlarking	Other chance find/ gardening	Controlled archaeological investigation	Building/ agricultural work
Records	27,901	493	707	241	42	36
%	94.84	1.68	2.40	0.82	0.14	0.12

Over 96% of all PAS finds were found by metal-detectorists - while metal-detecting, spotted by chance (eyes only) or during archaeological works.

Table 6
Findspot precision (based on finds records).

	4 fig	6 fig	8 fig	10 fig	12 fig
	327	5038	2888	19513	36
%	1.18	18.12	10.39	70.18	0.13

Over 98% of completed PAS finds records in 2021 had at least a 6-figure NGR (National Grid Reference - precise to 100m), with over 80% having at least an 8-figure NGR (precise to 10m). This level of precision is essential for the data to be archaeologically useful.

Table 7
Land use (based on finds records), where known/recorded.

Land use	Finds Records	%
Cultivated land	17,706	96.11
Grassland/heathland	253	1.37
Woodland	27	0.15
Coastland	188	1.02
Open fresh water/wetlands	116	0.63
Other	132	0.72

Over 96% of finds records (where land use was recorded) were discovered on cultivated land, where they are vulnerable to agricultural damage and natural corrosion processes.

Michael Lewis and Ian Richardson

³ This is based on where the finds are made and does not include PUBLIC records.

Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales

Ashmolean Museum (University of Oxford)

Barnsley Museums
(Barnsley Metropolitan Borough Council)

Berkshire Archaeology (Reading Borough Council)

Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery
(Birmingham Museums Trust)

Borough Council of Wellingborough

Bradford Museums & Galleries
(Bradford Metropolitan District Council)

Bristol Museum & Art Gallery (Bristol City Council)

Cadw

Calderdale Museums (Calderdale Metropolitan Borough Council)

Cambridgeshire County Council

Clywd-Powys Archaeological Trust

Colchester & Ipswich Museum Service
(Colchester Borough Council)

Corby Borough Council

Cornwall Archaeological Unit (Cornwall Council)

Cornwall Council

Danum Gallery, Library and Museum (Doncaster Council)

Daventry District Council

Department of Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

Derbyshire County Council

Derby Museums

Devon County Council

Discover Bucks Museum

Dorset Council

Durham County Council

Dyfed Archaeological Trust

East Sussex County Council

Great North Museum (Newcastle)

Glamorgan-Gwent Archaeological Trust

Gloucestershire County Council

Gwynedd Archaeological Trust

Hampshire County Council

Hampshire Cultural Trust

Herefordshire Museum Service (Herefordshire Council)

Hull & East Riding Museum (Hull City Council)

Institute of Archaeology (University College London)

Isle of Wight Council

Kent County Council

Kettering Borough Council

Kirklees Museums & Galleries (Kirklees Council)

Lancashire Museums (Lancashire County Council)

Leeds Museums & Galleries (Leeds City Council)

Leicester City Council

Leicestershire County Council

Lincolnshire County Council

Manchester Museum (University of Manchester)

Market Hall Museum (Warwickshire County Council)

Milton Keynes Council

Museum of Cornish Life

Museum of London

Museums Worcestershire

National Museums Liverpool

New Forest National Park Authority

Norfolk Historic Environment Service
(Norfolk County Council)

Norfolk Museums Service (Norfolk County Council)

North Lincolnshire Museum (North Lincolnshire Council)

Northampton Borough Council

North Northamptonshire Council

Nottingham Museums (Nottingham City Council)

Nottinghamshire County Council

Oxfordshire Museums Service (Oxfordshire County Council)

Peterborough City Museum & Art Gallery
(Peterborough City Council)

Potteries Museum & Art Gallery
(Stoke-on-Trent City Council)

Rotherham Museums & Galleries
(Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council)

Royal Albert Memorial Museum
(Exeter City Council)

Rutland County Museum (Rutland County Council)

Sheffield Museums Trust

Shropshire Museums Service (Shropshire Council)

Southampton Museums (Southampton City Council)

South West Heritage Trust

South Yorkshire Archaeology Service

Suffolk County Council

Surrey County Council

Sussex Archaeological Society

Swindon Museum & Art Gallery
(Swindon Borough Council)

The Box Plymouth (Plymouth City Council)

The British Museum

The Collection Lincoln

The Salisbury Museum

Tullie House Museum & Art Gallery

University of Nottingham Museum

Verulamium Museum (St Albans City & District Council)

Yorkshire Museum (York Museums Trust)

Wakefield Museums & Castles (Wakefield Council)

Welsh Government: Culture Division

West Berkshire Council

West Cheshire Museums

West Midlands Archaeological Collections Research Unit

West Northamptonshire Council

West Sussex County Council

West Yorkshire Archaeology Advisory Service

Winchester City Council

Wiltshire Archaeological & Natural History Society

Wiltshire Council

Wiltshire Museum

Wrexham County Borough Museum

Wycombe Museum

Portable Antiquities Advisory Group

Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales

Arts Council England

Association of Local Government Archaeological Officers

Council for British Archaeology

Chartered Institute for Archaeologists

Country Land & Business Association

Department for Digital, Culture, Media & Sport

Federation of Independent Detectorists

Historic England

Institute of Archaeology (University College London)

National Council of Metal Detecting

National Farmers Union

Royal Commission on the Ancient & Historical Monuments of Wales

Society for Museum Archaeology

The British Museum

PAS Cymru Advisory Board (Wales)

Amgueddfa Cymru – Museum Wales

Cadw

The British Museum

Welsh Government: Culture Division

Berkshire
Philip Smither
+44 (0)1635 519397
philip.smither1@westberks.gov.uk

Bedfordshire & Hertfordshire
Matthew Fittock
+44 (0)1727 819379
matthew.fittock@stalbans.gov.uk

Buckinghamshire
Arwen Wood
+44 (0)1296 325227
+44 (0)7955 430589
finds@buckscountymuseum.org

Cambridgeshire
Helen Fowler
+44 (0)1223 728571
helen.fowler@cambridgeshire.gov.uk

Cheshire, Greater Manchester & Merseyside
Heather Beeton
+44 (0)790 2401 806
heather.beeton@liverpoolmuseums.org.uk

Cornwall
Tasha Fullbrook
+44 (0)1326 564027
finds@museumofcornishlife.co.uk

Derbyshire & Nottinghamshire
Meghan King
+44 (0)1332 641903
meghan@derbymuseums.org

Devon & Somerset
Lucy Shipley & Maria Kneafsey
+44 (0)7398 455972 / +44 (0)1823 347457 /
finds@swheritage.org.uk

Dorset
Ciorstaidh Hayward Trevarthen
+44 (0)1305 228254
finds@dorsetcouncil.gov.uk

Durham
Benjamin Westwood
+44 (0)3000 267011
benjamin.westwood@durham.gov.uk

Essex
vacant
+44 (0)1206 282931 / +44 (0)7717 676518

Gloucestershire & Avon
Kurt Adams
+44 (0)117 922 2613
kurt.adams@bristol.gov.uk

Hampshire
Jenny Durrant / Anne Thorn
+44 (0)7710 093831
flo@hampshireculturaltrust.org.uk

Herefordshire & Shropshire
Ian Bass
+44 (0)1743 254748
ian.bass@shropshire.gov.uk

Isle of Wight
Lewis Ferrero
+44 (0)1983 821000 ext 5866
lewis.ferrero@iow.gov.uk

Kent
vacant
+44 (0)3000 410053
flo@kent.gov.uk

Lancashire & Cumbria
Alex Whitlock
+44 (0)7814 296173
alex.whitlock@lancashire.gov.uk

Leicestershire & Rutland
Megan Gard
+44 (0)1572 758131
mgard@rutland.gov.uk

Lincolnshire
Lisa Brundle
+44 (0)1522 552361
lisa.brundle@lincolnshire.gov.uk

London
Stuart Wyatt
+44 (0)20 7814 5733
swyatt@museumoflondon.org.uk

Norfolk
Helen Geake & Andrew Williams
+44 (0)1362 869294 / 869289
helen.geake@norfolk.gov.uk /
andrew.williams@norfolk.gov.uk

Northamptonshire
Ellie Cox
+44 (0)1604 367249
eleanor.cox@westnorthants.gov.uk

Newcastle & Northumberland
Andrew Agate
+44 (0)191 208 5031
andrew.agate@twmuseums.org.uk

North Lincolnshire
Martin Foreman
+44 (0)1724 297055
martin.foreman@northlincs.gov.uk

Oxfordshire
Edward Caswell
+44 (0)1865 300557
edward.caswell@oxfordshire.gov.uk

Staffordshire & West Midlands
Teresa Gilmore & Victoria Allnatt
+44 (0)121 348 8225 / +44 (0)7766 925351 /
+44 (0)7518 530904
teresa.gilmore@birminghammuseums.org.uk
victoria.allnatt@birminghammuseums.org.uk

Suffolk
Anna Booth & Phil Hughes
+44 (0)1284 741241 / 741312
anna.booth@suffolk.gov.uk /
phil.hughes@suffolk.gov.uk

Surrey
Simon Maslin
+44 (0)1483 404999 / +44 (0)7968 832740
simon.maslin@surreycc.gov.uk

Sussex
Jane Clark
+44 (0)1273 405731
flo@sussexpast.co.uk

Warwickshire & Worcestershire
Susheela Burford
+44 (0)1299 250416
susheela.burford@worcestershire.gov.uk

Wiltshire
Sophie Hawke
+44 (0)1722 332151
pas@salisburymuseum.org.uk

Yorkshire (North & East)
Rebecca Griffiths
+44 (0)1904 687668
rebecca.griffiths@ymt.org.uk

Yorkshire (South & West)
Amy Downes
+44 (0)113 535 0173
amy.downes@wyjs.org.uk

Wales
Adelle Bricking, George Whatley & Mark
Lodwick (Cardiff), Nicola Kelly (Swansea) & Susie
White (Wrexham)
+44 (0)2920 573250 / 573258 / 573226 / +44
(0)2920 573264 / +44 (0)2920 573268
adelle.bricking@museumwales.ac.uk /
george.whatley@museumwales.ac.uk /
mark.lodwick@museumwales.ac.uk /
nicola.kelly@museumwales.ac.uk /
susie.white@museumwales.ac.uk

Jersey
Perry Mesney
+44 (0)1534 833141
perry.mesney@jerseyheritage.org

PAS (British Museum)
+44 (0)20 7323 8611/8618
info@finds.org.uk

Treasure (British Museum)
+44 (0)20 7323 8243/8546
treasure@britishmuseum.org

For further information about the
Portable Antiquities Scheme or the
Treasure Act 1996, visit finds.org.uk

**Learning and National
Partnerships**

British Museum
London WC1B 3DG
info@finds.org.uk
+44 (0)20 7323 8611/8618

Printed with the generous support of
Treasure Hunting magazine

Compiled and edited by Michael Lewis

© 2022 The Trustees of the British Museum



Department for
Digital, Culture,
Media & Sport



Portable
Antiquities
Scheme

www.finds.org.uk



FSC® certified paper.
Please recycle. We send
zero waste to landfill.

10/2022