Kent County Council produced this guide on behalf of the Portable Antiquities Scheme.

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The Portable Antiquities Scheme sees hundreds of objects added to the database each week. These records are used locally and nationally for research and publications.

The public now has access to the database and finders can contribute their own objects to this important national resource. As a result, the database will become an even more valuable research and reference tool.

This guide introduces finders of objects to the Portable Antiquities Scheme (PAS) website and explains how to record suitable finds directly onto the database. It provides information on how to describe objects using the correct terminology, and basic information on materials, manufacturing methods and types of objects. Consistency and accuracy are essential for users to have confidence in the data.

Thank you for taking the time to learn how to use the database.

How we would like you to record on the database

Some people will be happy to just create basic records, uploading measurements, a findspot and a photo, and let the Finds Liaison Officer (FLO) fill in the details. This is perfectly acceptable.

Others who have an expert knowledge may be able to fully identify and record their objects.

How the process will work will be decided on an individual basis by the PAS team including your Finds Liaison Officers (FLO). The scheme staff will have ultimate control over the records and reserve the right to edit or delete records. Each county, finder and FLO are different, as such you will have to work closely with the PAS team to get the best results.
Flow of objects

What happens when you find something?

Finder has an object

- Chooses to record the object themselves
- Chooses not to record the object as it is possibly Treasure. Brings the object to the FLO
- Chooses not to record the object themselves because they are unable or don’t want to e.g. no internet access, can’t ID. Brings the object to the FLO

Records will appear in the FLO’s list for the county. The record will be in ‘Review’ status (red flag) and will only be able to be viewed by the record creator and the FLO

FLO checks the record

- FLO follows the Treasure process. Please ask for more details
- FLO records the object

FLO asks to see the object. Maybe because it is very interesting, from an area of interest, or it could be Treasure

- FLO edits the record, including image, if necessary. If there are a number of changes to be made the FLO will contact the finder
- FLO deletes or quarantines the record. (Very rarely.) This may be because the information or object is not suitable for the database, e.g. it could be incorrect or sensitive. The finder will be contacted beforehand

FLO 'Validates' the record. It will now have a yellow flag and be able to be seen by the public

At a later date the record may be validated by a Finds Advisor, and will be ‘Published’ (green flag)

Public/Researchers/FLOs can search the data and use it for research, projects or publications
Objects to record and not to record

Please only record items that are over 300 years old on the database, that are considered portable antiquities and that are not from an archaeological excavation on a site.

These lists clearly do not cover all the object types, but just give an idea of what you should, or shouldn't record. If you are in doubt about whether to record something, it is best to ask your FLO.

Examples of the types of objects suitable for volunteers to record:

- Bells
- Buckles
- Buttons
- Medieval and Post Medieval brooches
- Coins if you have permission from the PAS team
- Medieval and Post Medieval finger rings, not gold or silver
- Furniture fittings
- Flint tools you can identify
- Medieval and Post Medieval harness fittings
- Fragments of Medieval and Post Medieval metal vessels
- Mounts
- Pins
- Fragments of pottery
- Medieval and Post Medieval strap ends
- Thimbles
- Tokens and Jettons
- Weights

Examples of the types of objects we would like you to show to your Finds Liaison Officer:

- Treasure - this is a must
- Anything of precious metal or with gemstones
- All prehistoric metal work
- Swords and knives
- Bronze axes
- Complete vessels
- Iron Age, Roman and Early Medieval brooches
- Coins, unless you have an agreement with the PAS team
- Anything that comes from an area of interest
- Any rare objects
- Any item you can’t identify

For a summary of the Treasure Act, see page 72.
PART 1
USING THE DATABASE TO ADD INFORMATION
This is the first page you will see

- **Overview of the home page**
  - www.finds.org.uk
- Brings you back here
- Takes you to the database, where you can sign in to your account, to add objects and search
- Advice on treasure
- List of contacts, including FLOs
- The other black tabs at the top of this screen are self explanatory. Have a look around and see what you find
- Information about the scheme and the database. Updates in the Central Unit blog can be useful. If you are looking for some information, it is likely to be in here. Have a scroll through
- General information. It will be here if you can’t find it anywhere else
How to create an account and log in

Getting started

From the home page click on the Database tab

Click on Register

Before you can add an object you need to create a user account

www.finds.org.uk/database
Once you have activated your account you will be able to log in. To do this, click on the **Database** tab at the top of the screen and click on **Log in** in the blue box.
This screen will appear. Enter in the username and password you have chosen. Click on Log In.

If at any point you forget your username or password, use these links. An email will then be sent to you with the forgotten information.

You must log in to be able to add an object.

Once you have registered, please contact your Finds Liaison Officer, telling them your username. This way we can activate your account and you can be linked to existing recorded objects... or if you are a new finder your details can be added to the list!
Overview of the user account page

This screen appears immediately after you log in

Click this to search the database
Click this to add a new object to the database (see page 13)
Click this to edit your personal details (see page 10)
Click to apply to upgrade your account to Researcher. (For list of access levels see page 11)
Click this to change your current password. Use if you have been sent a new one after forgetting it

Lists all users
Lists when and where you logged in
Provides a list of your top searches, your entire search history and saved searches
Provides a list of images you have added
These will display screens that allow you to add (optional) personal information
Displays a list for each in date order

View all users
Login history
My finds recorded by FLOs
Finds I recorded
My institution's finds
Search
My images
My social web
My interests
My educational background
Comments

Click your name at any time to get back to this page
Allows you to view comments you have added to records, or comments people have made on your records.
The comment box is at the bottom of all record pages
Editing personal data

By clicking **Edit Account** you reach this page. You can change your first name, last name, preferred name and email.

After the changes are made, click **Save Details**.

One last thing we ask you to do before you start:
Please select your default copyright as the **Portable Antiquities Scheme**. This means, as with your finds added by the FLO, the images and data can be used by all.

Please note, the database works best in the following browsers: Google Chrome, Mozilla Firefox, Internet Explorer 7 (and later), Opera or Safari.
If opened in other browsers it can be unorganised, text boxes appear too small or the screen can jump around.
Levels of access

Public user – not logged in
See validated and published objects (yellow and green flags), findspot to 1km grid square level, no access to personal data

Registered user - this is your level
Can see other people’s objects; validated and published finds (yellow and green flags). Findspot to 1km. You can create/edit your own records and get full mapping capabilities for these objects (but not objects attributed to other finders). You have no access to personal data. You can add comments and save searches

Historic Environment Officers
Can see validated and published objects (yellow and green flags). Can create/edit their own records of their objects. High level mapping with full precision for findspot, access to Scheduled Ancient Monument proximity search and full zoom capabilities. No access to personal data

Researchers
Can see validated and published objects (yellow and green flags). Can create/edit their own records of their objects. High level mapping with full precision for findspot, access to Scheduled Ancient Monument proximity search and full zoom capabilities. No access to personal data

Treasure & Finds Liaison Officers
Can see finds on review, validated and published objects (red, yellow and green flags). Can create/edit their own records of their objects. High level mapping with full precision for findspot, access to Scheduled Ancient Monument proximity search and full zoom capabilities. Full access to personal data. Can edit records made by member, Historic Environment Record and research users. Can edit any records they made when working in other counties. Can edit records made by anyone in their institution

Find Advisers
Can see finds on review, validated and published objects (red, yellow and green flags). Can create/edit their own records of their objects. High level mapping with full precision for findspot, access to Scheduled Ancient Monument proximity search and full zoom capabilities. Full access to personal data. Can edit any records created by any user and can publish finds
Overview of the database page

Once logged in click on the **Database** tab and it will bring you to this screen

[www.finds.org.uk/database](http://www.finds.org.uk/database)

This is used for a ‘Quick Search’. See Part 3

From **My Finds** you can add objects and coins. At the top of the screen is the button **Add new artefact**. If you click this it will take you to a blank record page for objects and coins (see page 13)

These links will take you to the relevant information

- **My finds** - a list of finds you have created
- **My institution’s records** - a list of PUBLIC records
- **Images** - a list of images you have created, or all images
- **All artefacts** - a list of all objects, starting with the most recently added
- **Search database** - advanced searches (see Part 3)
- **Reference works cited** - a list of the acceptable reference books
- **Numismatics** - identification guides for Iron Age to Post Medieval coins
- **Hoard** - a list of published hoards
- **Controlled vocabulary** - a list of appropriate terms to be used
- **Rallies** - a list of rallies by year
- **Commentary** - a list of comments in date order
- **Statistics** - lists of various statistics for country/county/person
How to add an object

Now you are ready to start adding objects to the database...

By clicking on Add a new object on the account page (see page 9) or My Finds (see page 12) you will get to this screen where you can enter your object or coin details.

The addition of the findspot, a photo and references will come later, and do not appear on this form.

Start typing the object type. This could be Brooch or Buckle or Coin or Unidentified etc. A list will automatically appear. Choose one from the list.

Click this if your item is exactly the same as the last, it will copy the information.

These boxes do not have to be filled in, but can be used to provide extra information about objects such as ceramic vessels e.g. Type = vessel Classification = jug Sub classification = rim

Only certain terms can be entered into the object type field. If you enter an invalid term it will not let you save the record. You will see the error message: You can only use terms in the database.

If you are in doubt what term to use, you can consult the Controlled vocabulary.

You access it through the black tab on the left hand side of the screen.
If you are about to embark on a long description, it is advisable to save the record periodically. It can be frustrating to lose a well constructed description because the internet connection is lost. Do this by clicking **Save record** at the bottom of the screen.
It is essential you fill in these boxes, even if it is only with the start and finish dates of that particular period. The more specific the better.

If you can date the object to the exact year, only fill in the Date from box and choose Exactly from the options above.

For any date that is AD, just enter the number. For any date that is BC please put a minus sign before the number e.g. –70.
Please enter in the Measurements and Weight here.

Each object requires a different set of measurements. Just fill in the boxes that are relevant for your object. For how to weigh and measure your object, see object types in Part 2

The measurements are automatically set to millimetres, and the weight is automatically set to grams. So please just enter the correct values e.g. 22.9 millimetres just enter 22.9 or 3.24 grams just enter 3.24

Choose the main material the object is made from. See Part 2 for details

If there is another major component made from a different material, enter it here

If you can identify the method of manufacture, enter it here. For details see Part 2

It is important you note the level of preservation of the object, and if it is complete or not. Level of preservation is a judgement call, but have a look at other records if you are not sure

If there are any surface treatment or decoration enter the details here. See Part 2 for details

Decoration Method is no longer in use. However please add these details to the description

These drop down boxes provide basic information. It is expected that you will enter the manufacture/decoration information into the description box, and elaborate where necessary
Once you have clicked Save record you will be taken to the record page (see page 18) where you will be able to add further details and images.

Please fill in as many of the details as you can.

The drop down menu for Discovery method is pre-set to 'Metal Detector'. Please remember to change this if the object was found by another means e.g. field walking.

Please fill in the First discovery date with the date you found the object. You need not fill in the second discovery date.

The Sites and Monuments Record Number and Museum Accession number are for the Scheme’s staff to fill in.

Feel free to add the Current location of the object.

The Subsequent action is pre-set to 'Returned to Finder'. This should be left for most situations, unless the object is elsewhere e.g. given to the landowner or museum.

You can go in and out of this record to edit information as many times as you like, so don’t worry if you enter something incorrectly or want to come back to it later. Just click Edit which appears above the Find ID Number (see page 29).

Once you have clicked Save record you will be taken to the record page (see page 18) where you will be able to add further details and images.
Overview of a record page

Once you have saved the record this is the page you will see

The record will be given a Find ID number. They are randomly generated.

Find ID numbers will have a prefix denoting an institute e.g. KENT or PUBLIC.

If you click on Scope Notes it will display the definition of that term, e.g. Copper alloy.

Click on this button to add a reference (see page 28).

Click on this button to add an image (see page 19).

Please note down your Find ID number, or highlight it and copy. You will need it to add an image.

Click on this button to add a findspot (see page 22).

This is the same comment box that appears at the bottom of everyone's records. You will need to enter your name and email (if not already filled in automatically) so we can contact you if required. You can comment on anyone's records including your own. Also use this to reply to any comments left on your records. All comments are vetted before they are published.
How to add an image

Once you have taken a photo of your object, edited it and saved the file on your computer you will be ready to upload it. See pages 20 and 21 for hints on photography and editing.

This is the page you will see when you click Add an image (previous page).

Click on Browse

This will bring up a list of files on your computer, but remember each system is different. You need to find the photo and click open. The file name for the image should appear in the grey box.

Type in an Image label. This should be the Find ID number and object type (e.g. PUBLIC-7D7B22: Medieval Pendant)

If you have highlighted and copied the Find ID number from the previous screen, you can paste it into this box.

Choose the county in which the object was found, from the drop down list.

Select the period of the object from the drop down list.

All of your images will be digital as they are photos or scanned.

Finally click Submit a new image to save the photo.

You will be taken back to the record page. This time it will display the photo alongside the object description (see page 29).

The image copyright should be pre-set (see page 10), but make sure ‘The Portable Antiquities Scheme’ is selected.

Maximum image size is 6mb, and can be in the form of a jpeg or tiff. If you upload a scanned image of your object, make sure it is at least 600 dpi.
How to take a photograph

The photograph is an important element of the record. Much like the description, the image should be able to stand alone, and support the rest of the record at the same time. It needs to provide enough information for future researchers if the written element was lost.

The equipment and settings of the camera are dealt with in Part 4. Below describes the use of a digital camera

There are 2 possible ways to produce an image of the object:

**Preferred method**: Take a photo of the different sides of the object on the scale provided at the back of this guide, and cut and paste them into one image on the computer

**Second Choice**: Photograph each side of the object on the scale provided, and upload 3 photos as per page 19. The FLO will then download them and edit into one

Generally the object will need a photograph of its front, side and back. For a coin that is the obverse and reverse. For flat objects with no decoration on the reverse one side is fine. If in doubt search for similar objects on the database and see how they have been photographed

You need to place the object on a white background with a scale (at the back of this guide). Use plasticine or cut up erasers to support the object in place. Make sure all surfaces are an equal distance from the camera

Make sure the object is suitably lit. We need the maximum detail, so position the light above and slightly to the side of the object

The camera should be placed on a tripod or mount, so as to prevent any shaking while the photo is taken

The object should almost fill the view of the camera. Physically move the camera up or down to do this. DO NOT ZOOM IN, this will reduce the depth of field and blur the edges of the object. Remember there is a zoom function on the website if you want to get close to the object!

Repeat for each view

Be careful that the camera is properly focused. Click the capture button!
How to edit an image

The FLOs use Adobe Photoshop packages to edit their images. This is the best software to use, but somewhat pricey. You can download photo editing software from the internet for free, or your camera may have come with a package.

Free downloads (that operate similar to Photoshop): Gimp, Paint.Net and Pixen

You will first need to download the photos from the camera as per the manufacturer’s instructions.

We recommend saving them into a folder entitled ‘Object Images’ so you know where they are for uploading onto the database later.

Open the photo editing software. Open up all the photos of one object.

Use the rectangular select tool and the move tool to highlight, cut, paste and move the images into one.

The complete image needs to have the object front (coin head) first, then the side and then the back from left to right. If there is a shot of the top or bottom this goes above or below as required.

Try and keep all views as tight to the scale as possible.

You may want to clean up the background of the image. The image should have no shadows or bits of plasticine showing. You can do this by using the magic wand tool and the rubber.

Crop it so there is not too much background visible around the object.

Save the image as a ‘Jpeg’ file type, high quality. We recommend that you make the file name the object record number, so when you come to upload the image it is easy to find.

If you want to know anything further about image editing software please ask your FLO.
How to add a findspot

The findspot is very important, and must be added in order for your record to be promoted. This is the screen you will see when you click Add a findspot (page 18)

You can click this to copy the information from your last record. Useful if you have more than one find from the same spot!

Choose the county

Choose the region

Choose the district

Choose the parish

Type in the parish name, or a local name for the spot

Be very careful about entering the correct parish, it can be difficult to be sure where the boundaries lie. If in doubt check on a map

Choose from the list where you got the NGR from, e.g. GPS or map

Please specify the land use and depth discovery

Type in a national grid reference (NGR), minimum 6 figures is good practice e.g. TQ732 843 (see pages 23—26), but 10 figures would be ideal

Not compulsory

Not compulsory

When you are done, click Add findspot

It is vital that you enter in as much accurate information as possible. We understand that you may want to keep your findspots a secret, which is why no one will be able to view the full grid reference other than you and the PAS staff. We require such a detailed location for research purposes, and so that you can get the most out of the database (see Part 3)
How to find a National Grid Reference

In an ideal world, all finders would have a handheld GPS device, and would log a 10 figure grid reference at the time of finding an object. Obviously we know this is not possible for everyone, as such below are some tips on how to get a National Grid Reference (NGR)

When you find an object, place it in a bag and write on the location of the findspot. This can something as simple as which corner of the field you are in or if it is next to a footpath. All this information will help pinpoint the grid reference later.

There are two ways to find the grid reference for a findspot:

- The low tech way: Look at a 1:25000 scale OS map
  There are a number of OS maps for each county, so you need to locate the one for the area in which your object was found. If you do not have copies of the OS maps, your local library will have them.

- The high tech way: Mapping websites
  (see page 24)

Locate the findspot on the map, and then read the National Grid Reference:

The first part will be the prefix (2 letters). The country has been divided into 100kmx100km squares, each with its own code e.g. Kent is TR or TQ.

Each 100km square is then divided into 10km, each 10km square is divided into 1km and so on down to 10cm (this would be a 12 figure grid reference). We ask that you provide a 6 figure grid reference as a minimum, this means the location is pinned down to a 100m square.

The numbered grid on an OS map will give you a 4 figure NGR, so you will have to measure from the grid lines to the findspot to get 6 figures. Read the easting (across) first, and northing (up) second. If the findspot is on the grid lines, the third number of the easting or northing will be 0. The quickest way is to use the corner of a compass, as long as the scale is the same as the map used. See the picture below:

For more information look at the guides on the PAS website:

http://finds.org.uk/getinvolved/guides/ngr

http://finds.org.uk/getinvolved/guides/gps

Remember to check the parish as well.
There are websites that can provide the same information as an OS map. It just depends how you like to work, but the websites can be more accurate and clearly require less desk space.

http://www.magic.gov.uk/
Magic Map is an interactive map service, that provides information on things like boundaries, historic sites and environment.

From the Magic Map home page, click on the Interactive Map button.

From the drop down menu choose Administrative Areas.

Choose Place and type in the name of the place, or nearest place, where you found your object.

Make sure you read and agree to the terms of use. Click Open Map.

A new window will open.

The first thing you need to do is zoom in on the map. We recommend you change the scale to 1:10000. You will be able to see buildings and fields at this scale. Click Go.

This will reload the map.
This will open a new window. Type '10' for the search radius meters. You can type anything, but this is a sensible value. Click Next.

Another window will open, asking you to click on your search point on the map. You need to click on the map where you found your object, or as close as possible.

If you cannot see your findspot, you can move the map around using this tool. Click on the hand, then click on the map. Holding down the left mouse button you can scroll around the map until you find the correct location.

Once you have clicked on your findspot a final window will open (there may be a short delay), which provides the information needed. At the top in red is the 6 figure grid reference, with prefix letters. This can be used to check the parish as well. If you scroll down the newly opened window you will find the district and parish.

From the top tool bar you need to choose the Site Check Point tool.
http://www.streetmap.co.uk/
Street Map is an online mapping service, that provides information on street, building and environment locations

From the Street Map home page click on Place and type in the name of the place, or nearest place, where you found the object.

Click Go

You can move the map around to locate the findspot using the arrows at the side and top

You can zoom in and out using the controls at the side

Then click on Click here to convert coordinates at the bottom of the map

When you can see your findspot, click on Move Arrow on the right side, and click on the map where the object was found

This will open a new window which will display the required information. The NGR with letter prefix is next to the heading 'LR'
How to add coin data

Coins require further detailed information, and this can be added via a coin data form. Please only add coin data if you feel confident about your identification. You will have to provide detailed and accurate descriptions of the obverse and reverse, and recognise the legends. If you have a coin and just want to add a good photo and dimensions, that is fine!

To access the coin data forms, click on the button on the record page.

Shown here is the Roman coin form, but there are forms for coins of all periods.

There are numismatic guides available on the website. Look for the ‘Numismatics’ tab on the left hand side, and choose the period. These will help you to fill in the form.

A lot of the information is entered by a drop down box, although all the options may not be there, so be prepared to leave a box blank.

Under each box you can choose ‘certain, probably or possibly’. This is how sure you are of the information you are providing.

The inscriptions should be written as on the coin e.g. VIRTVS EXERCIT. It is essential you know the correct format for presenting this data. This is the same for description and mintmark.

If you do not recognise, or understand what information is being asked, it is best to leave this part to the FLO. Numismatics is a specialised subject, so don’t worry.
How to add a reference

If you have used a publication to aid in the identification of your object you should reference the work. The reference should also be typed at the end of the description, so at a glance a researcher can see what has been used.

When you click **Add a reference** (see page 18) it displays a form for entering in the publication details.

The first thing you need to enter is the title. You need to start typing the name of the author or the title and a list of choices will appear.

You need to add in the page number, and a reference number for the object that is similar to yours.

When you are done click **Submit**.

On the website is a bibliography of accepted publications. (**Reference Work Cited**, see page 12). Unfortunately some of the metal detecting identification books will not be present. Your FLO can add books to the list if needed.

Please note, that when you enter a coin on the database another button **Add a coin reference** appears on the record page. This is for specific coin reference books such as RIC.

Make sure you also add the reference into the description box.
When you have entered and saved all the information, you should have a complete record that looks like this:

- **Cite record** creates a Harvard style reference for the record that you can copy and paste into a bibliography.
- **Embed record** creates a URL for the record that you can copy and paste into a website.
- **Delete** completely removes the whole record.
- **Print** will print the record.
- **Add record** will take you to a new blank add record page.
- **Report** will create a PDF of the record that you can save onto your computer.

You will be able to view the image and zoom in.
You will be able to see the findspot on the map.

For the findspot, the information in red is what will be shown to the public, the other details will be hidden.
PART 2
OBJECT IDENTIFICATION & DESCRIPTION
## What is the object made of?

These are the main materials objects are made from. A full list can be found in **Controlled Vocabulary** (black tab on the left hand side of the screen).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Material</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>How to Identify</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stone</td>
<td>All stone other than flint</td>
<td>Very hard, depending on type but usually can't be scratched by nails</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ceramic</td>
<td>Use this term for all pottery, brick, tile and pipe clay. More precise terms, such as the ware type, can be used in the description field</td>
<td>May have inclusions, some are larger than others</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Copper alloy</td>
<td>Any alloy which appears to include copper. If you know from analysis that the item is a particular alloy (e.g. bronze or brass) then you can put this in the Description field</td>
<td>Generally will be a greenish colour (corrosion of the copper). Bronze or brass can be more brown or more yellow. Can be various weights, depending on the alloy content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iron</td>
<td>This should be used for wrought iron, cast iron or steel. Cast iron only appeared in Britain in the 15th century and was for some time used only for a restricted range of objects e.g. cannons</td>
<td>Iron is generally heavy and orange/yellow in colour. It also corrodes very easily so the object may not be distinguishable. Corroded wrought iron can often be recognised by its laminated or fibrous appearance. Cast iron can often be better preserved than wrought iron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead</td>
<td>This term should be used if you are fairly certain that the object is pure lead</td>
<td>Lead is often heavy, and whitish or grey in colour, or sometimes with a red patina. Thinner lead objects are sometimes malleable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flint</td>
<td>Natural material</td>
<td>Flint tools are often opaque; however flint can be a range of colours. Look for worked edges as proof it has been modified by humans</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wood</td>
<td>Only wood which is clearly worked has archaeological significance, i.e. stakes, bowls. Wood will deteriorate very quickly, and should be kept wet until seen by a specialist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Material</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>Corrosion and Weight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glass</td>
<td>Glass vessels, beads or other items. May be transparent, translucent or opaque. Most Medieval glass tends to be laminated, and has an iridescent quality to it. Later glass is more robust, and comes in various colours.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silver</td>
<td>This material should be used for items where you suspect that the metal is primarily silver. If you have a compositional analysis, add this in the Description field. Usually a dull grey, is not very reactive so usually no corrosion. Corrosion is purple or black if it occurs. Can vary in weight depending on the content of silver. Earlier items contain more silver, and so are generally heavier.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gold</td>
<td>Use for items where the colour is yellow and lustrous and the object feels heavy. Usually a bright gold colour, it is very unreactive so you will never see corrosion.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lead alloy</td>
<td>This material should be used if the object looks leady, but is too light. The most common example is pewter. Light grey in colour and sometimes covered with a loose white powder.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jet / Shale</td>
<td>Mineral, minor gemstone. Black in colour, lightweight and often shiny surface.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin Alloy</td>
<td>Use for tin, or for alloys where you suspect that the major ingredient is tin. Tin can be quite light in weight and may split into layers when it has been in the ground for any time.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Animal Bone</td>
<td>Skeletal remains. May just be fragments. Generally creamy colour.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enamel</td>
<td>Coloured glass-like substance. Usually in inlays or as coatings on objects. Can be a range of colours.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gem</td>
<td>Gemstones. Usually found mounted on an object.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please remember all finders of gold and silver objects, and groups of coins from the same finds, over 300 years old, have a legal obligation to report such items under the Treasure Act 1996. Prehistoric base-metal assemblages found after 1st January 2003 also qualify as Treasure. If you find human remains please call the police, local coroner, FLO or local archaeologist. It is illegal to remove human remains without a license.
# How was the object made?

These are the main manufacturing methods for objects. Please use in the description field. A full list can be found in **Controlled Vocabulary** (black tab on the left hand side of the screen).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Manufacture Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>How to Identify</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blown</td>
<td>Glass shaped by blowing air into it, either freely or into a mould</td>
<td>The glass tends to be curved and smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cast</td>
<td>Molten metal poured into a mould</td>
<td>Casting sprues (from where the metal was poured in the mould) may be visible. Cast items can be complex shapes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hand made</td>
<td>Made by hand, no tools</td>
<td>Usually see thumb/finger prints. Surface is often uneven</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knapped</td>
<td>Usually stone tools, object has been repeatedly struck to create a desired shape</td>
<td>Look for rippling, a bulb of percussion, or retouch at the edges</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moulded</td>
<td>Shaping pliable raw materials using a pattern</td>
<td>Usually tiles, seals, figurines or pipes are moulded. Can see the join where the moulded pieces have been fitted together</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Milled</td>
<td>Coins produced by machine</td>
<td>Presence of a reeded edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Struck or hammered</td>
<td>Object has been made using a die and a hammer</td>
<td>Coins are usually struck/hammered</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wheel made</td>
<td>Object made on a wheel. Usually vessels of a Roman, Medieval or Post Medieval date</td>
<td>Vessel is often smooth and has fairly uniform walls. Can often see throwing rings on the inside</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
How was the object finished?

These are the main decoration methods and surface treatments for objects. Please use in the description field. A full list can be found in **Controlled Vocabulary** (black tab on the left hand side of the screen)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decoration Method</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>How to Identify</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incised</td>
<td>Cut made into surface using any tool</td>
<td>Irregular pattern, rough on edges, at different depths</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stamped</td>
<td>Design imprinted onto an object using a die</td>
<td>Depending on the die it can be quite a regular pattern. Negative image of design on the reverse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engraved</td>
<td>Removal of material from a hard surface to form a design</td>
<td>Pattern can be irregular, ornate and is not necessarily cut deep into the object surface</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Impressed</td>
<td>Design pressed into a soft material</td>
<td>Often material is dispersed out to the side of the design e.g. wax seals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Drilled</td>
<td>Round shaped holes on the surface made by a rotating tool into a solid material</td>
<td>Rough edges round the hole. If modern machine drilled will be fairly regular depth, spacing etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Embossed</td>
<td>Die rolled or pressed against soft surface</td>
<td>Regular pattern. Can be marks from the edge of the die if it does not cover the entire object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repoussé</td>
<td>Hammering the reverse of a sheet metal object to create a raised design on the front</td>
<td>Visible tool marks on the reverse where it has been hammered. Thickness of the object remains the same throughout</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Filigree</td>
<td>Using thin metal wire to form ornate designs and securing them in place by solder</td>
<td>See solder joins. Often very ornate designs. Wire is in relief from the object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Polished / smoothed</td>
<td>Where an item has been smoothed to form a shape</td>
<td>Usually stone tools. Item is very smooth and rounded</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surface Treatment</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td>How to Identify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burnished</td>
<td>The surface of a pot is polished using a hard flat tool (such as a wooden spatula) before firing</td>
<td>Surface of the pot is shiny and smooth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enamelled</td>
<td>Glass fired to form a solid and fused onto a metal surface. Usually placed inside shapes made by thin wire on an object, or laid into incised areas on the surface</td>
<td>Various colours and shapes on a metal object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gilded</td>
<td>Applying a gold coat to a solid object of another metal</td>
<td>Underlying material often shows through. Gilding appears as shiny golden patches</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Glazed</td>
<td>Vitreous material applied to the outside of an object, usually pottery</td>
<td>Shiny in appearance, and can be coloured</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inlaid</td>
<td>Stones, gems, glass or other materials are placed into voids on the object to form a pattern</td>
<td>If the inlay is present it is easy to spot, more often will be missing though and so a bonding material may be the only evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Painted</td>
<td>Design created using a liquid which dries. Usually applied with a brush or sponge</td>
<td>Brush marks, drips, uneven colour</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Silvered</td>
<td>A silver coat is applied to the outside of an object</td>
<td>The base metal can show through, the object may not be as heavy as you would expect for a silver item</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Slipped</td>
<td>Usually applied to pots, the vessel is dipped into molten clay, which coats the outside. Used to make the vessel less porous</td>
<td>The outside of the vessel has a different colour to the fabric, but is not shiny like a glaze</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tin Coated</td>
<td>Thinly coating an object with tin, usually to prevent rusting</td>
<td>Shiny silver colour. It can be difficult to tell the difference between this and silvered, so just use the term silvered if unsure</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What decorative style?

These are the main decorative styles that we see on objects. Please use in the description field. A full list can be found in **Controlled Vocabulary** (black tab on the left hand side of the screen)

**Openwork**
Designs that are not solid, often look like lace

**Anthropomorphic**
Depicts human forms

**Zoomorphic**
Literal, or stylised animals

**Heraldic**
Coats of arms

**Geometric**
Horizontal and vertical lines dividing patterned zones

**Floral**
Flower designs

**Curvilinear**
Curving lines used to form an abstract pattern

**Linear**
Horizontal and/or vertical lines

**Interlace**
Bands and sections are knotted in a complex pattern, much like a Celtic knot
Object types

Now you are aware of what the object is made from, and how, you can move onto what it is and how to describe it. The next few pages take you through the most common types of objects. The idea is not to make you an expert in identification, it is to help you to describe the object. Again, while on the PAS website, you can click on the Controlled Vocabulary tab at any point to get more information on an object type.

Each page contains key details for each object:

- The correct term for the object type (top of each page)
- The correct terminology for the different parts
- The correct measurements to take
- What needs to be included in the description

On the following pages are good examples of each object. You may only have a small bit, or your item may be very corroded.

A general pattern can be followed to create a good description:

**The first sentence could follow this format:**

“A [completeness] [time period] [manufacture method] [material] [identification]”

**Then, depending on the object, it could include:**

“The object is [shape]. It has [components]. It has [decorative style] [decoration method] [surface treatment]. (There may be more than one decoration style/method). This is [location of decoration]. The [reverse, side] has [decoration, inscription]. The object is [completeness]. The breaks are [worn, new...]. The whole object is [in good condition, worn...]. There is [corrosion]. This is likely to date to [date]. Similar items can be seen in [reference, comparison on database].”

**And finally:**

“The object is [length] [width] [height] [diameter] [weight].”

All of this information should be included in the description so it is available at a glance and can easily be added to the PAS annual report. You may write it in a style that suits you.

The database is a good resource to learn about how to write a description, and identify the object. By using the search function (see Part 3) you can type in key words that describe your object. This will display similar records, which you can use as a basis for your own.

If you do want to learn more about any type of object and its identification, consult the list of books and websites at the back for sources of information, or ask your FLO.
**Bells**

**Additional information:**

The earliest bells have a separate striker and were produced from the Bronze Age.

**Clapper** bells have the clapper attached inside. **Crotal bells** have the pea loose inside a chamber.

Rumbler or crotal bells in copper alloy and tin became common from the late 13th century.

Brass and gunmetal crotal bells generally date to the 13th—15th centuries, although can be later. They tend to be made of 4 components; a suspension loop, 2 halves of the body and a pea. They can have a join around the middle.

Tin bells were made in a variety of forms. In the 13th century they were cast as an open bell, and the quarters were enclosed around the pea. In the later 13th century only the bottom half was open, and then the 2 halves were closed around the pea. From the 14th century onwards they were cast in 2 pieces, with an integral loop, and then soldered together around the pea.

**Example description:**

A complete Post Medieval cast copper alloy crotal bell. The bell is circular, has been cast in one piece and has a two holes at the top. There is an integral suspension loop, which has been drilled to create a circular hole. There is cast curvilinear decoration across the entire body of the bell. The bell is 45mm high, 32mm wide and weighs 40g. This dates 1500 AD to 1600 AD. Similar bells can be seen on the database.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example record for a teardrop bell</th>
<th>Example record for a post medieval crotal bell</th>
<th>Example record for an early clapper bell</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SUSS-3EDC42</td>
<td>SOM-A78481</td>
<td>SF-349CD7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Brooches

Brooch is the object type, and put the further identification in class and sub class. There are many sub classes of brooches, so unless you know leave this blank.

Iron Age brooches are usually made in one piece and have sprung pins
Roman brooches are often bow brooches or plate brooches. They can have either sprung or hinged pins
Early Medieval brooches are generally either bow, plate or annular, but they can take a variety of shapes e.g. cruciform. Can often use iron pins.
Medieval brooches are generally annular brooches, but they can be many shapes including animals
Post Medieval brooches generally tend to be more ornate, and again have many variants

Example Description:

A complete Medieval cast copper alloy annular brooch. The brooch has a wide, flat, circular frame, with a thick pin set in a narrowed area. The pin is not complete, the point is missing. There is a small recess opposite where the pin is attached to the frame, where the pin would have rested. There is decoration on the front, in an interlace style. The break on the pin is not new, and generally the brooch is in good condition. The brooch is 35.4mm diameter, 2mm thick and weighs 11.44 grams. A similar brooch can be seen on the database LVPL-B44685

To see examples, search the database for your type of brooch
Buckles

A complete Post Medieval cast copper alloy buckle. This is an oval double looped buckle with pin. The frame is scalloped on the outer edge and has points at either end. The bar is central. There is a slight recess at the centre of the frame for the pin to rest. The pin is a cast pointed strip of copper alloy, folded over the bar. The buckle is in good condition. The buckle is 42mm L x 35mm W, and weighs 9.6g. 15th century. A similar buckle can be seen on the database, SUR-F5C9F6.

Additional information:

Buckle shapes are generally **circular, D-shaped, oval, rectangular, trapezoidal or asymmetrical**. They can be single or double looped. They can have integral plates or forks (cast as one piece with the frame) or separate sheet plates that are usually folded over the bar. They can have a roller for the pin rest.

There are Roman and Early Medieval buckles, although in the mid 13th century they came into more general use. 13th - 14th century buckles are often simple single looped circular or D-shaped.

Copper alloy and iron are the main materials, however pewter was used from the 15th century for shoe buckles. Silver buckles are known. Iron was used on horse buckles. Gilding and silvering were present on buckles in 17th - 18th centuries.

Example Description:

Example record for an asymmetrical buckle
WAW-AD2DC4

Example record for a single loop buckle
SWYOR-E49F47

Example record for a composite
NMS-521BC3
**Buttons**

Additional information:

Generally buttons did not appear until the 14th century. There are some objects that could be buttons dating to the Iron Age and Roman periods, these look like toggles.

There are 2 types of metal buttons: **Cast buttons** are solid with an integral loop. 1300 - 1600 AD. Cast can also have a separate wire loop, slightly later up to 1800 AD.

**Composite** are two or more pieces of sheet metal soldered together with a loop that passes through. 1500 - 1800 AD.

Large and flat buttons are generally 17th century or later

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Example Description:

A complete Post Medieval cast copper alloy button. The button has been cast in one piece. The front and the back are both domed. It has an integral loop with circular hole. The button is complete, and is in good condition. The button is 13.2mm long, 9.5mm in diameter and weighs 2.44 grams. Read (2005) page 52, no.182 illustrates a similar button which he suggests dates from the mid 17th to mid-18th centuries.

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**Example record for a composite button**
SUSS-08C046

**Example record for a post medieval button**
YORYM-C959D6

**Example record for a medieval button**
LANCUM-07B6A5
Coins

Additional information:

Numismatics is a complex subject which cannot be dealt with here in detail. There are guides on the PAS website for each period, which are listed on the next page. The above images provide examples of some of the many coins that can be found.

When you identify a coin you need to consider the following for both your description and the coin data form:

**How was it made and what material?** Coins are normally struck or hammered. Iron Age potins are cast, as are forgeries from different periods.

**How was it finished?** Some Roman coins, such as radiates and nummi have traces of silver wash.

**What is the obverse type?** What is on the ‘head’ of the coin.

**What is the reverse type?** What is on the ‘tail’ of the coin.

The ruler, mint and reverse type are important information to be taken from a coin.

**Where has the die been struck on the flan?** The flan is the disc of metal; is the design placed centrally on it.

**What does the legend say?** The inscription can tell you the ruler and/or mint. Sometimes we know what the legend will say, even if it has been worn away or the flan was struck off centre. If this is the case then we enclose the inscription in square brackets [ ].

If any of the details are illegible, please say
Coins continued...

**Iron Age** [http://www.finds.org.uk/ironagecoins](http://www.finds.org.uk/ironagecoins)

They are generally struck or hammered gold, silver or copper alloy. There are also potins which are cast copper alloy. They depict mythological scenes or have a ‘Celtic’ style. Please bring all of these to your FLO.

**Roman** [http://www.finds.org.uk/romancoins](http://www.finds.org.uk/romancoins)

The earliest Roman coins found in Britain are silver Republican denarii. From around 43 - 250 AD the main types are copper alloy as, sestertius and dupondius, silver denarius and gold aureus. A large amount are copper alloy. It is important that all Roman coins are reported, including the groats.

**Early Medieval** [http://www.finds.org.uk/earlymedievalcoins](http://www.finds.org.uk/earlymedievalcoins)

The earliest issues were the gold tremisses and thrymsas of the 7th century. Silver was reintroduced in about 675 AD initially as small sceattas, and later the broader penny from about 760 AD. From this point gold coinage becomes extremely rare. Copper alloy styca were issued in Northumbria in the 9th century.

**Medieval** [http://www.finds.org.uk/medievalcoins](http://www.finds.org.uk/medievalcoins)

Norman coins continue in the same style as the Late Anglo Saxon coins. After 1180 AD coinage became increasing standardised, firstly with the short cross penny from 1180 - 1247 AD, followed by the voided long cross penny from 1237 - 1279 AD and the long cross series from 1279 AD. The latter period saw greater diversity in denominations in silver, from the groat to the farthing, and a range of gold coins. Medieval coinage runs from William I to Henry VII.

**Post Medieval** [http://www.finds.org.uk/postmedievalcoins](http://www.finds.org.uk/postmedievalcoins)

The large diversity in denominations continued, and from James I small copper denominations were produced. The reign of Charles I is especially complex with varied mints. Although we only record objects up to 1710 AD, we will record anything of interest of a later date.

And remember, if nothing else provide a good image of both sides with a scale, and the diameter and weight.

Any coins that are modified can be classed as treasure and as such must be shown to your FLO.

A silver, long cross penny of Edward I. Obverse has a crowned bust forward, EDWR R ANG [L] D[NS HYB]. Reverse has a long cross dividing the legend, with 3 pellets in each quarter. CIVITAS CANT[OR], Canterbury mint, 1301 - 1310 AD. Class 10 North 1991 Vol II, p 31.

A gold quarter stater of Tincomarus (c. 20 BC—c. 10 AD) of the Atrebates tribe. Obverse COM F in a rectangular panel. Reverse TIN, horse right. Van Arsdell 390.


Training sessions can be held for Iron Age and Roman coins, and Medieval and Post Medieval coins. If you wish to learn more just ask your FLO for details.
Finger rings

Example Description:
An incomplete Post Medieval cast copper alloy finger ring. It has a flat, oval bezel, which is decorated with a geometric pattern of one diagonal line and 2 dots. The bezel and the shoulders are quite thin, with a shallow taper into the hoop. Part of the hoop is missing, and the ring is quite worn. The ring is 23mm in diameter and 2.5mm thick. The bezel is 15mm long and 8mm wide. This is likely to date to the 15th or 16th century.

Additional information:
Finger rings can be made of a number of metals. They can be plain hoops or have a bezel. They may have had settings containing gems, intaglios or glass. These can still be present, but often you will find only remains of the adhesive, or nothing at all.

Roman rings can be gem set rings, clasped hands (fede rings) or spiral rings with a snake head.

Early Medieval rings were also spiral rings, but they tended not to have the snake head. Also twisted wire rings, plain bands, gem set and decorated bezels were also produced during this period.

Medieval and Post Medieval rings have a greater variety of forms. Medieval Stirrup rings have a distinctively shaped setting. By the 16th century the settings and the inset material became better made. There are also plain band rings and decorated bezel rings with geometric patterns. Clasped hands (fede) rings appear again in the 12th century. In the 14th and 15th centuries there were a number of iconographic rings, depicting saints on their bezels. Posy rings, signet rings and mourning rings date from the Late Medieval period. Describe with as much detail as possible.

Example record for a Medieval ring
IOW-C55272

Example record for a Post Medieval ring
SWYOR-3FA4C7

Example record for a stirrup ring
SUSS-F25354
Flint implements

Example Description:

A complete Mesolithic flint blade. The blade is trapezoidal in shape and has a curved, thin profile. The ventral face has a bulb of percussion with concentric ripples. The dorsal face has a pointed rise just to the right of the centre. There is retouching along the left hand side only on one face. The flint is a blue grey colour, and is not very opaque. It is 23mm long, 12mm wide and 8mm thick. It weighs 6g.

Additional information:

Flint implements come in various forms, and can be difficult to identify. The main recognisable types are **arrowheads, scrapers, axes, blades and flakes**. Please use these in the object type field.

Stone tools were in use from the Palaeolithic through to the Bronze Age. Flint occurs naturally, and pieces that have been struck by machinery or other stones can look like worked tools, so be careful. If the flint does not look like one of the tools above, but you think it has been worked by man there are some key characteristics to look for:

- **A bulb of percussion** - this is a smooth rounded knob at one end where the flint has been struck away from the main piece. You may also see concentric ripples from this point.
- **Retouching on the edges** - this is where the tool has been sharpened or blunted for use. It looks like the flint has been nibbled on the edge.
- **Ventral surface** - the face that has broken away from the core, as is usually smooth with ripple marks.
- **Dorsal surface** - the outer face that can show the exterior of the rock or the previous flake removal.

Describe the shape of the flint tool including the cross-section, whether it has been worked on both sides or just one, the colour and opaqueness of the flint, and whether you think it is complete. If you are going to have a go at describing flint, it is best to have a look at other records to get used to the terminology.

Example record for an arrowhead
IOW-1BB345

Example record for an axe
SWYOR-24BF85

Example record for a blade
SUSS-9AC3C4
**Furniture fitting**

Additional information:

Furniture fittings come in an endless number of forms, for example **handles, back plates, mounts, nails, tacks, studs and hinges**. It is essential you describe them in as much detail as possible, identifying how they would have been attached.

They are commonly made of copper alloy, lead or iron, but other metals do exist.

Usually distinguished from clothing or harness mounts by their size, weight and possibly the presence of an iron fitting on the reverse.

Example Description:

A complete Post Medieval cast copper alloy furniture fitting. This is possibly a decorative mount, or backing for a handle. It is lozenge shaped, with a circular protrusion at each corner. It has floral decoration on the front, with a four petal flower around a central circular hole. The object is complete and in good condition. There are no remains of its attachment, although likely a stud would have been placed through the central perforation to the furniture. It measures 52.6mm by 56.2mm. It weighs 46g. This is likely to be from the 17th century. Further examples can be seen in Read, Metal Artefacts of Antiquity.

There are too many example records on the database, you will have to search under the characteristics of your object to find similar items.
Harness pendants (horse)

Example Description:

A complete Medieval cast copper alloy harness pendant. The pendant is shield shaped, with a circular integral suspension loop. The front is decorated in a heraldic pattern. There are three diagonal lines dividing the pendant in two. In the lower half are three lions. The upper part is worn, and cannot be made out. The pendant is complete, and is in a fair condition. The pendant is 43mm high, 27.6mm in width and weighs 8.44 grams. It dates to the 13th or 14th century.

Additional information:

The main shapes are shield, lozenge, square/rectangular, circular, quatrefoil, trefoils, (and other foils) crosses, fleur de lis, openwork and irregular outline.

Most are 13th or 14th century, although they can date from the Early Medieval period. They are generally made from cast copper alloy with an integral loop. They range from 20mm to 120mm in height.

They can be decorated. Some display heraldry that can be recognised, but others are poor quality and were probably not connected with nobility. Pendants are usually suspended on mounts, by passing an iron pin through their loops.

Example record for a shield shape
DUR-1276F2

Example record for a square shape
ESS-042D46

Example record for an irregular shape
SUSS-7E38E2
Metal vessels

Example Description:

An incomplete Medieval cast copper alloy vessel rim. It has a simple rim, sides that flare slightly outwards. There are two circular integral handle lugs just below the rim. There is no decoration. The rim is in a good condition, with little corrosion. The rim is 12mm high, and 24.5mm long. The thickness of the walls is 6mm. It weighs 100g. This type of vessel has been dated to the 13th century.

Additional information:

If you have a complete vessel, please show your FLO. Only record fragments.

Parts include: Rim, body, base, handle mounts and handle lugs (an integral part of the vessel to hold the handle). If you only have one piece, still choose the object type as ‘Vessel’ then indicate which part in sub classification. Each part has its own vocabulary, so check records on the database for specifics. If in doubt, hand it to your FLO.

Iron Age vessel handle mounts are occasionally found. They can be in the form of a bovine head. These can come from metal or wooden vessels. Your FLO would like to see these.

Roman vessels were made by hammering and so can be very thin, or are cast. Wall fragments generally do not survive in good condition, so you usually only find mounts, handles (flat, cylindrical, drop, arched and jug), turned bases and feet.

Early Medieval vessel remains usually consist of copper fittings from wooden buckets e.g. strips used to hold the bucket together, handle mounts, and arched handles. Entirely metal vessels are for the FLO, including hanging bowls.

Medieval and Early Post Medieval vessels can be cast. They come in the form of: Cooking vessels (cauldrons, skillets, pipkins), 1200 - 1600 AD. Look out for signs of soot; chafing dishes (used to contain charcoal to keep other vessels warm) are 1400 to 1700 AD; ewers (jugs for pouring water or washing hands); and vessel fragments with repair patches or rivets.

Example record for a repair
HAMP-9BFFA8

Example record for a foot
WAW-89AF03

Example record for a handle
ESS-343747
Mounts

Example Description:
A complete Post Medieval cast copper alloy bar mount. It is rectangular, with 6 equally spaced circular knops each of the longer outer edges. It has a D-shaped cross-section. The front has decoration, in a floral pattern. On the back are two integral prongs, that are pointed and bent. The mount is complete, and in good condition. It is 34.1mm high, 15.3mm wide and 12mm thick. It weighs 2.5g. This is likely to date to the 16th or 17th century. Similar examples can be seen in Read, Metal Artefacts of Antiquity.

Additional information:
There are a number of different types of mounts; box, book, furniture, stirrup, harness. Most are dress mounts though. The general term ‘mount’ is fine if you are unsure of where it would have been used, or use one of the above. Make sure you describe the shape, and how it would have been attached.

Roman mounts tend to be quite bulky, with thick integral rivets. They can be in many forms.

Early Medieval mounts tend to be defined by their style such as openwork or interlace designs. They tend to have small integral rivets on the back, or holes for rivets. The iron rivet may still be in place.

Medieval mounts come in various shapes, however most common are shield shape mounts and bar shape mounts. Also common are suspension mounts. They can have rivet holes, or integral rivets.

Post Medieval mounts tend to be more floral, and some have more complicated designs. Along with the fittings mentioned above they can have bent integral prongs on the back.
**Additional information:**

Pins covers all types, such as hair or dress pin. Head shapes are **globular**, **globular with a flattened top**, **polyhedral**, and **biconical**. These are not definitive, but generally describe most. Shafts generally have rounded or lozenge shaped cross-sections. Metal pins are common on the database, but you also find pins of other material, such as bone.

**Roman** pins can be short and chunky and have no collar. They have globular, faceted or miscellaneous heads.

**Early Medieval** pins are generally more ornate and usually have a collar. Shafts are circular and can have thicker sections. There are also pins with flat, plate-like heads. Early Medieval pins can be engraved with linear spirals or ring and dot decoration. Could also be decorated with filigree.

**Medieval** pins can be difficult to tell apart from others as they tend to be a bit plainer. Wire wound head pins appear in the Medieval period and continue to the 19th century.

**Post Medieval** pins can be ornate and can be made in silver or gold. Filigree of this date can be confused with Early Medieval work. They can be spherical or have a coned shaped lower half.

---

**Example Description:**

An incomplete Early Medieval cast copper alloy pin. The pin has a biconical head, with wide collar just under the head. There is no decoration on the pin. The shaft is circular in cross-section. Only part of the shaft is present, with the break having occurred some time ago. The pin is in a good condition, with little corrosion. The pin is 20mm in length, the head has a width of 6.6mm and the shaft has a thickness of 2.4mm. Similar pins can be found on the database SF-D53334.
Pottery

Example Description:

A rim sherd of courseware Medieval pottery. The fabric is soft, and reddish orange in colour. The fabric contains frequent quartz inclusions, various sizes large to small, mainly angular and not well sorted. The fabric has a slightly reduced core where the carbon in the centre has not burnt out. This was part of a wheel thrown vessel, that had a diameter of 20cm. This is an everted rim, thickened on the outside. This would have come from a large jar. The sherd has remnants of green glaze on the outside. It is likely that this is a piece of Mill Green ware, dating to the 13th or 14th century.

Additional information:

Very rarely will you find a whole pot, if you do very carefully transport it to your FLO. Pottery still goes under ‘Vessel’ as the type, even if it is only a fragment. Just state what type of sherd you have.

The 3 types of sherds you will see are rim, base and body. You may also find other parts, like handles, feet, spouts or applied decorative pieces. Pieces of tile can also look like pieces of pottery vessels but generally these are coarser. Put these under ‘Tile’ as the object type.

There are too many types of ceramics to go into here. In order for the FLO to identify the type/form, your description is key. Below is how you should describe a sherd and what to look for:

What colour is it; how hard is it (can you scratch it with your nail); is it coarse ware or fine ware (is the fabric made of lots of big bits, or fine sand-like particles); what inclusions are in the fabric (the bits in the ceramic, you don't have to know what they are just describe their colour, whether they are large/small, whether they are round or angular, and whether they occur frequently or are rare); was it made by hand or wheel thrown; are there any bits added onto the sherd; and any surface treatments or decoration.

If you want to have a go at dating the pot or naming the type of vessel it came from you can, but don't worry as it is very difficult unless you know what you are looking at. The same goes for describing the form of the rim or base.

Example Description:

A rim sherd of courseware Medieval pottery. The fabric is soft, and reddish orange in colour. The fabric contains frequent quartz inclusions, various sizes large to small, mainly angular and not well sorted. The fabric has a slightly reduced core where the carbon in the centre has not burnt out. This was part of a wheel thrown vessel, that had a diameter of 20cm. This is an everted rim, thickened on the outside. This would have come from a large jar. The sherd has remnants of green glaze on the outside. It is likely that this is a piece of Mill Green ware, dating to the 13th or 14th century.

There are too many example records on the database, you will have to search under the characteristics of your object to find similar items.
Seals

Additional information:

If the seal is for documents and deeds, it will have the object type as ‘Seal Matrix’. The seal matrix can be made of lead, copper alloy, or incorporate glass or gemstones.

You need to describe the shape of the seal matrix, usually either circular or pointed oval. They were mainly used from the 12th century onwards, and generally are Medieval in date although they can be later. There are many central motifs and legends, so just describe what you see. The matrix may be flat, or have a conical handle, a hexagonal handle, or a pierced/not pierced lug on the reverse.

There are also finger rings which have a seal matrix. These should be placed under the object type ‘Finger ring’ but describe the seal matrix as stated here.

Example Description:

An incomplete pointed oval Medieval copper alloy seal matrix. The seal matrix has a hexagonal handle, which has a trefoil openwork terminal on top. The seal matrix has a legend around the edge that reads S’HENR[] (seal of Henry). In the centre is a depiction of a bird. The seal is in poor condition. It is likely to be from the 13th or 14th century.

Example record for a Medieval seal
SF-C2CF06

Example record for a Medieval oval seal
DENO-80A3D3

Example record for a finger ring seal
BERK-977777
**Strap ends**

**Additional information:**

Strap ends are anything designed to finish a flat strip of fabric or leather. They are made of copper alloy, one or both sides may be decorated. Generally there are 2 ends, terminal and attachment, and both need describing in detail. Also if there is a spacer, or any remains of attachments these need describing.

**Roman** strap ends are generally lancet shaped, amphora shaped or tubular.

**Early Medieval** strap ends have their own typology, which is too detailed to go into here. Describe the design and decoration well and your FLO can assign it a type.

**Medieval** strap ends take many different forms, again describe the components and method of construction as well as you can.

---

**Example Description:**

A complete Medieval copper alloy strap end. It is formed of one strip of folded copper alloy. The terminal end has a trefoil shaped protrusion at the end of a small rectangular shaft, and the attachment end is rectangular. There is a separate copper alloy rivet at the attachment end. On the front of the strap end is engraved linear decoration, 3 sets of 3 diagonal lines equally spaced. It is 30mm in length, 10mm wide and 6.8mm thick. It weighs 2g. It is in good condition. Similar strap ends can be seen in Egan and Pritchard 1991.
**Thimbles**

A complete Medieval cast copper alloy thimble. This is a closed thimble with tapering sides, and a domed top. There are irregular hand drilled holes around the outside, forming a spiral which starts on the crown. There is a plain band around the base. It measures 17.8mm high, 15mm diameter at the base and 1.49mm thick. It weighs 1.70g. Margeson 1993 shows a similar example (p188) and dates it to before 1500 AD.

**Example Description:**

There are 2 kinds of thimbles: open and closed. Closed type thimbles date from 1350 AD and the open type date from 1450 AD. Thimbles are cast or hammered. Cast ones are more regular in shape and have thicker walls. They can be made of silver, iron or more common is copper alloy.

Indentations are either hand made or machine drilled. Earlier thimbles have less ordered holes as they are made by hand, and usually they are in vertical lines or concentric circles. By the 16th century spirals of indentations are found. Thimbles with no indentations on the crown are rarely found after 1620 AD. Size of indentations can show the use of the thimble, i.e. smaller indentations for finer work. Decoration is not common before 15th century, apart from an incised line running around the base.

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Tokens and Jettons

Example Description:
A complete Medieval copper alloy French jetton. The reverse depicts a shield with three Fleur de Lis inside. The legend reads AVE MARIA GRACIA (Hail Mary Full of Grace). The reverse depicts a long cross with a quatrefoil in the centre. There is no reverse inscription. The jetton is in good condition.

Additional information:
Tokens and Jetton are both alternatives to currency, although in slightly different ways. Jettons were produced in copper alloy and used to perform calculations for accountancy. Jettons were in common use from the 13th to 16th centuries. The early types include those based on Edwardian long cross pennies. French Jetton, many carrying a fleur de lis design, are increasingly common finds from the 15th century and an enormous array of types produced in Nuremberg became the most common types in the 16th century, of which a design based around a rose and orb are amongst the most frequently found.

Tokens were produced mainly in copper alloy, lead and pewter. They were used by traders at time of a coin shortage, namely between 1600 AD and 1800 AD. They sometimes displayed the name or initials of the issuer, and some have the denomination of half penny or penny.

Machine made tokens appeared in the 18th century, and continued to be produced as slot machine tokens until very recently (so watch out for modern ones).

Diameter

(Also measure the thickness)

Example record for a French Jetton
YORYM-F0E793

Example record for a Halfpenny Token
DENO-5192A3

Example record for a Lead Token
BERK-06D9A2

Example record for a Nuremberg Jetton
WILT-FB49A1

Example record for an English Jetton
GLO-53C992
Weights

Additional information:

All types of weights go under ‘weight’ unless it is definitely a spindle whorl or coin weight. All weights need to be carefully weighed.

Spindle whorls are generally made of lead, and can be biconical, flat circular or domed circular in shape. The shape of the perforation needs to be described as well. They can be decorated with various patterns. They are very difficult to date, most are probably Medieval.

Fishing weights are generally lead, and date to the Medieval or Post Medieval period. They can be long and flattish, with a perforation at one end. Again describe the shape, the perforation and any decoration.

Coin weights are generally made of copper alloy, and can be a number of shapes. They were made for a specific ruler and coin, which will be identified on the obverse and reverse.

Trade weights can be lead or copper alloy, and again usually have inscriptions on the reverse and obverse for the ruler and what it weighed originally.

Example Description:

An complete cast lead Medieval spindle whorl. It is biconical in shape, with a circular perforation in the centre. There is no decoration. The spindle whorl is quite worn. It is 25mm in diameter, and 8mm thick. The perforation is 7mm in diameter. It weighs 25g.

Similar objects can be seen on the database FKL-C78984

Example record for a loom weight
CORN-1009D8

Example record for a coin weight
SF-31ECE3

Example record for a trade weight
WMID-8CC155

Example record for a fishing weight
LIN—724984
PART 3
USING THE DATABASE TO GET INFORMATION
How to search the database

The records you create on the database can provide a useful resource for yourself and everyone else. The next few pages will explain how to search the database, and find information.

When you click on the Database tab, this screen appears.

Quick search

Advanced search

Numismatic searches

Using the Quick search, you can search for a find number. Just start typing and a list of choices will appear.

You can search for the object type. Start typing and a list of choices will appear.

You can also search for a time period or place using the drop down lists. Or you can search any combination of the four.

Then click on Search! and a list of your results will appear (see page 61).
If you click on **Advanced search** this form will appear

You can search using any number of fields. You can enter a value into all the boxes, or just one

If you enter a value into **Object description contains** make sure the spelling is accurate. Also this field does not work with search characters such as * or AND

If you type two words, it will look for the words in that order in the description e.g. if you type ‘Medieval shield’ it will look for that phrase and not the individual words

If you click back on the browser at any point after you have left this page, the form will not retain your last search criteria

Click **Submit your search** when you have entered what you want to search for
If you click on any of the **Numismatic** searches, a form like this will appear.

Each time period has a slightly different form. This example shows the **Medieval numismatic search**.

You can search any number of things. You can enter a value into all the boxes, or just one.

Some of the fields are drop down choices, others you can enter in text.

Click **Submit your search** when you have entered what you want to search for.
After completing any of the searches, a list of results will appear. You can scroll through all the results. By clicking on the object number you will display the complete record. You can scroll through the images of all the objects in the list by clicking Next. To close the image click Close.

You can Map results a map showing the findspots will appear (see page 62).

You can Save this search for later, or Email this search to yourself or a friend. A saved search will appear in your Saved search list (see page 9). An email will be sent to a specified address with a link to the webpage.
If you click **Map results**, a map showing the findspots will appear.

This shows results for the whole of the UK. You can zoom in and have a closer look at where the objects were found.

Please note, how far you can zoom in depends on whether you are logged in, and whether they are your finds or not.

This map operates the same way as Google maps, so the zoom and pan controls are on the left. At the top you can change the information displayed i.e. whether you see terrain, or road map etc.

This facility is very useful. It could be possible to see:
- What has been found near where you live
- What has been found in a certain field/location
- Where your finds have come from
- Where the most Medieval coins/ Roman brooches/ silver buckles etc have been found
- And much more...
How the data can be used

On the website, there is a page dedicated to research. You can get to this page by clicking on the Research tab at the top of the page.

There is a list of current projects taking place using the PAS data.

There is a list of projects that are waiting for someone to investigate. If you have any interest in any of these or something you have designed yourself, talk to your FLO.

The database information is useful to a lot of people in various ways:

If you are doing a school project e.g. what were the Romans using or wearing in your area?

For research papers and publications e.g. datasets for how many of a certain type of pin have been found nationally/locally.

If you are planning an excavation it could be useful to see what has been found previously on the proposed site.

If you are a finder, you could see what has been located in areas before, or see where there are areas with no objects. It could help you design projects in your community, e.g. was this a site of a deserted medieval village? Was this piece of land part of a Roman field system?
PART 4
USEFUL INFORMATION
Books


Websites

**General Collection**
http://www.britishmuseum.org/research/search_the_collection_database.aspx

**General Collection**
http://www.museumoflondon.org.uk/English/Collections/

**Lithic factsheet**
http://www.scribd.com/doc/2956055/Fascinating-Flint

**Roman Pottery**
http://www.potsherd.uklinux.net/index.php

**Samian Pottery**
http://www.nottingham.ac.uk/museum/samian.php

**Pottery**
http://potweb.ashmolean.org/

**Medieval Coins**
http://www.fitzmuseum.cam.ac.uk/dept/coins
**Recommended equipment**

A pair of digital callipers and a set of digital mini scales for measuring and weighing

A desk lamp, with a natural daylight bulb for illuminating the object when you are taking photographs

A digital camera with a macro function and at least 10megapix, and a tripod to prevent shaking

The camera should be set to either the preset macro mode or:
- Macro function on
- Fine picture quality
- A low shutter speed (e.g. 1/160)
- Large aperture (low f number)
- ISO 200
- A white balance to suit the background light around you

Play around with your settings though, and be sure to make a note of what works
## Timeline

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<th>Dates</th>
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<td>Lower/Mid</td>
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<td>Medieval</td>
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<td>Post Medieval</td>
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<td>C. 1500 - 1800 AD</td>
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<tr>
<td>Modern</td>
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<td>1800 AD— present</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Roman coin size guide

- Sestertius
- Dupondius
- As
- Silver Denarius
- Radiate/Nummus
- Nummus
Medieval coin size guide

- Sceat
- Early Medieval penny
- Short cross penny
- Long cross penny
- Groat
- Half groat
- Half penny
- Farthing
- Noble
- Quarter noble
Legal Advice

Summary of the Treasure Act

The following finds are Treasure under the Act, if found after 24 September 1997 (or, in the case of category 2, if found after 1 January 2003):

- Any metallic object, other than a coin, provided that at least 10 per cent by weight of metal is precious metal (that is, gold or silver) and that it is at least 300 years old when found. If the object is of prehistoric date it will be Treasure provided any part of it is precious metal.
- Any group of two or more metallic objects of any composition of prehistoric date that came from the same find (see below).
- All coins from the same find provided they are at least 300 years old when found (but if the coins contain less than 10 per cent of gold or silver they must be at least ten of them).
- Only the following groups of coins will normally be regarded as coming from the same find:
  - hoards that have been deliberately hidden;
  - smaller groups of coins, such as the contents of purses, that may have been dropped or lost;
  - votive or ritual deposits.
- Any object, whatever it is made of, that is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, another object that is Treasure.

Any object that would previously have been treasure trove, but does not fall within the specific categories given above. Only objects that are less than 300 years old, that are made substantially of gold or silver, that have been deliberately hidden with the intention of recovery and whose owners or heirs are unknown will come into this category.

Note: An object or coin is part of the "same find" as another object or coin if it is found in the same place as, or had previously been together with, the other object. Finds may have become scattered since they were originally deposited in the ground.

What should I do if I find something that may be Treasure?

You must report all finds of Treasure to a coroner for the district in which they are found either within 14 days after the day on which you made the discovery or within 14 days after the day on which you realised the find might be treasure.

Advice for people buying archaeological objects from the UK

Five things to ask:
1. Have you legal title to sell?
2. Where was the object found?
3. When was the object found?
4. Was there a legal obligation to report the find?
5. Has the object been recorded?

Law enforcement

Treasure Act 1996: There is a legal obligation for all finders of Treasure to report these to a coroner within 14 days of making the find, or realising the find was Treasure. Penalty: imprisonment for up to 3 months and/or a fine up to £5,000.

Dealing in Cultural Object (Offences) Act 2003: It is illegal to knowingly sell, buy or deal in tainted cultural objects (objects of historical, architectural or archaeological interest) illegally excavated or removed after 30 December 2003. Penalty: imprisonment for up to 7 years and/or an unlimited fine (in the Crown Court).

The Theft Act 1968 and Trespass may also be applicable.

Contacts


Wales: National Museums & Galleries of Wales, Cathays Park, Cardiff, CF10 3NP. Tel: 02920 573226. http://www.nmgw.ac.uk

Scotland: Treasure Trove Secretariat, National Museums of Scotland, Chambers Street, Edinburgh, EH1 1JF. Tel: 0131 247 4082/4355. http://www.treasuretroverscotland.co.uk


Export Licences: The Acquisition, Export & Loans Unit, MLA, 83 Victoria Street, London, SW1H 0HW. Tel: 0207 078 6280. http://www.mla.gov.uk