



# NASNEWS

Newsletter of the Northamptonshire Archaeological Society

Website: [www.northants-archaeology.org.uk](http://www.northants-archaeology.org.uk)



## March 2025

### NAS AGM

At the NAS AGM at Chester House Estate, 17 October 2024, 22 members and other guests attended. The members were invited, and agreed, to re-appoint members of the committee: Andy Chapman: Secretary, Editor and Treasurer; Rob Atkins: Meetings Secretary; Pat Chapman: Membership Secretary; and other elected and co-opted members of council: Mike Curtis (Chair), Graham Cadman, Brian Giggins and Sarah Scott.

### A walking tour of medieval Northampton: the Middle Anglo-Saxon Halls and Northampton Castle

led by Andy Chapman

**Saturday, 17 May 2025, 11.00am**

A walking tour to view the origins of medieval Northampton will meet outside St Peter's Church and then move eastwards, to view the site of the Middle Anglo-Saxon timber and stone halls, and then on to the site of the second, now lost church, of St Gregory.

We will then walk to and down Castle Street, to follow the original access to the north gate of the castle, and then on to view the little that still remains of the castle, although the exact course will depend on progress with the works due to start on creating a 'Heritage Park' on the former Chalk Lane car park.

The walk should take around an hour and a half, and we will probably finish outside

Northampton Station, where anyone wishing to continue talking about medieval Northampton could gather for tea/coffee and something to eat.

Please email [NAS196674@gmail.com](mailto:NAS196674@gmail.com) to book a place, maximum of 20 places available

### NAS membership form

For the first time in many a year we have a printed membership application form, shown here on display at Northampton Museum & Art Gallery.

If anyone knows a local venue that could display some and is willing to approach them, let us know and we will post some to you (contact [NAS196674@gmail.com](mailto:NAS196674@gmail.com)).



### NAS website

Our website has served us well, but its basic structure hasn't changed since it was first set up over 20 years ago. A new website is currently under construction, with the old site no longer functioning. When available, the new site will make it possible for us to upload much more than we can at present, providing both up to date news and a reference archive.

## Northamptonshire Archaeology 43, 2025

Some of the material for the next journal is already prepared, but there is still much to do. While it will be dated 2025, it is likely that it will be late this year or early next year before it is printed and distributed.

It is also a new journey for us, as our old typesetter has now retired, having prepared the past five journals for us, and we hope our next one will do as good a job.

## Northamptonshire Heritage Fair Sunday, 27 April 2025 10am to 4pm

The Heritage Fair is being organised by Northamptonshire Heritage Forum in conjunction with **Chester House Estate** and with support from Discover Northamptonshire and Northamptonshire Family History Society.

As well as exhibitor stalls, there will be a number of heritage related talks, a film show by Northamptonshire Film Archive Trust, tours of the Archaeological Resource Centre, site tours, and children's activities.

Keep an eye on Heritage Forum social media feed and other publicity for further updates.

In addition to a NAS table, there will be something for everyone with an interest in the county's history and heritage - whatever form that takes!

And a great chance to stroll around and chat to people with a wide range of interests.

Entrance and parking is free.



## CBA South Midlands Spring conference Revisiting the Romans Saturday, 29 March, 2025

The CBA Spring conference will be at the **Chester House Estate**, looking (mainly) at Roman archaeology in (mainly) Northamptonshire. **Full programme and booking form are attached to NASNEWS**

The Irchester Field School: collaborative approaches to archaeological research at the Chester House Estate. Sarah Scott: Prof of Archaeology, University of Leicester

The Roman Villa at Warkton: new evidence for settlement in the hinterland of Kettering Roman town. Chris Chinnock: Team Leader: Reporting, MOLA

Excavations at Nassington and Barnwell Roman Farmsteads 2016-2024. Derek Roberts: Excavation Director, Middle Nene Archaeological Group

A LiDAR appraisal of the Roman Roads of Northamptonshire. Wayne Kirk

Stanton Cross, Wellingborough. Excavations of 2024, Carol Simmonds: Project Officer, MOLA

The Villa at Ketton, Rutland: the story so far Jennifer Browning: Project Officer, ULAS

## Chester House Estate Roman Fest

Saturday & Sunday, 21-22 June  
2025

Put this date in your diary, and check for further details on the Chester House Estate website.

## A History of Northamptonshire in 100 objects

Exhibition, September 2025

In October 2024 Northampton Museum & Art Gallery asked individuals, groups and community organisations from across the county to join as Guest Curators for an exhibition *A History of Northamptonshire in 100 Objects*, as part of an Arts Council England funded project to explore and share histories from Northamptonshire's past.

With a diverse range of 99 objects selected by guest curators and the museum, the exhibition will take visitors through Northamptonshire's rich and diverse past. The 100th object, to represent Northamptonshire today, will be decided by public vote on a short list.

Over the winter the chosen guest curators have been working to research and create their stories, for not only the exhibition but also the planned website, exhibition book, app and podcast series.

The interactive website and app will support the exhibition and encourage visitors to explore objects and places at the museum and other venues in the county; and support their exploration of history and heritage in their local area.

Other venues around the county are also being encouraged to join an extended exhibition of further objects, some of which may not have made it to the select group of 99.

As the organisers have pointed out, this is not **The History of Northamptonshire**, as that would be impossible to fully cover in 100 objects, it is **A History of Northamptonshire**, which hopefully will engage the public and encourage them to explore our local geology, archaeology and history further.

Being one of the guest curators, I do know what the 99 objects are (that is to be a surprise for the rest of you when the exhibition opens), but they do span everything from the distant prehistoric, in a geological sense, prehistory in an archaeological sense, and then onwards through the Romans, the medieval and post-medieval periods through to the 20th century - something for just about everyone.

## Milton Keynes Museum

New for 2025, *Ancient Gallery*: 'Journey back in time and uncover what life was like in the MK area during the prehistoric era.'

This modern display looks well worth a visit to see both the content and how it is being displayed.

I am certainly looking forward to see how they have handled my Gayhurst Barrow cemetery, with the main barrow ditch full of cattle bone.

Just slightly puzzled as to why they have adopted the term Bell Beaker People, when everyone in archaeology, as far as I'm aware, just refers to the Beaker People.





**Milton Keynes Museum is temporarily closed, reopening for Easter**

**Opening times**

Wednesdays - Fridays and Easter

Monday 10.30am to 4.30pm

Purchase your tickets online or at the Museum on the day of your visit.

**Museum Admissions**

Adult: £17.50

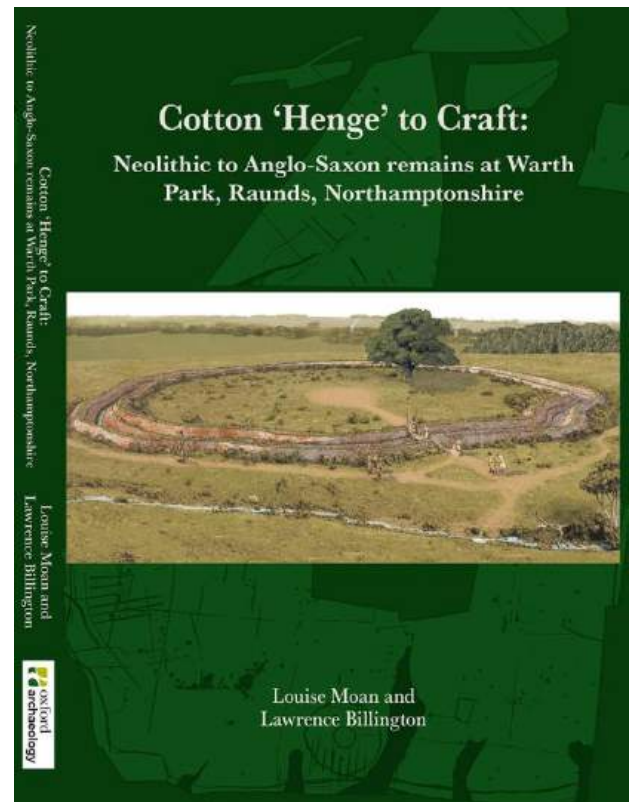
Over 65s, student & disabled) £13.50

Child (5-16): £12; Family: £45

Under 5s & Carers **FREE**

**Pay once and visit for free all year!**

**Recent Publications**



**Cotton 'Henge' to Craft: Neolithic to Anglo-Saxon Remains at Warth Park, Raunds, Northamptonshire**

by Louise Moan & Lawrence Billington

Oxford Archaeology, **36**, 2024

Paperback: 288 pages: £20.00

ISBN-13: 978-1907588167

This volume supplements the work of the Raunds Area Project in the 1980s as it covers excavations between 2013 and 2018 across an extensive area, 19ha, of warehouse development on the rising ground to the immediate east and north-east of the West Cotton deserted medieval hamlet (Chapman 2010) and the underlying Neolithic and Bronze Age monument complex (Healy & Harding 2007).

Most significantly, it includes the so-called Cotton 'Henge', which formed an eastern outlier to the West Cotton complex, with the West Cotton Neolithic long mound aligned on the Cotton 'Henge' (see this volume Fig 5.1). A radiocarbon date from the trial trenching

(Chapman 2017) had already shown that the outer ditch was dated to the early Neolithic, and therefore was not a henge. The recent excavation included the total excavation of the monument, and also nearby pits, dated to the middle and late Neolithic, which contained pottery and struck flint. It was also demonstrated that the internal ditch was a later addition, an early Bronze Age ring ditch, which was subsequently incorporated into a Middle Bronze Age field system.

There were also dense settlement remains dating to the early to middle Iron Age transition including a pit alignment, structures, storage pits, cobbled trackways. Romano-British activity was also significant, with craft and agrarian-related remains extending across the area. Features included a pottery kiln and corn dryer, various burials and six stone-lined wells. The most impressive item recovered from the waterlogged fills was a near life-sized carved wooden arm, believed to be a votive offering. These finds provide another extensive area of Iron Age and Roman activity, complementing the excavation of the Stanwick Iron Age settlement and the Roman villa, that occupied the area to the south of West Cotton, now within the Stanwick Country Park. Anglo-Saxon settlement took the form of numerous sunken-featured buildings, further illustrating the dispersed nature of settlement in the early to middle Anglo-Saxon period, before the nucleation of settlement in the 10th century, as represented by the establishment of West Cotton following the re-conquest of the Danelaw.

Chapman, A, 2010 *West Cotton, Raunds: a study of medieval settlement dynamics, AD 450-1450: Excavation of a deserted medieval hamlet in Northamptonshire, 1985-89*, Oxbow Books

Chapman, A, 2017 An Early Neolithic enclosure near West Cotton, Raunds, *Northamptonshire Archaeology*, **39**, 3-10

Harding, J, and Healy, F, 2007 *The Raunds Area Project: A Neolithic and Bronze Age Landscape in Northamptonshire*, English Heritage

## **UNAS Spring Conference 2025** **The Craft and Manufacture of Goods in Ancient Britain**

Sunday, 11 May 2025

Hackleton Village Hall, Chapel Lane,  
Hackleton, Northampton, NN7 2AH

The day will have four longer presentations and a buffet lunch:

Jill Evers, Chiltern Archaeology: Sticks and stones .... a geologist's view of tool-making

Adam Sutton, Aurelius Archaeology: Pottery for the masses: the Romano-British potters of the Upper Nene Valley

Caroline Jackson, Sheffield University: Roman glass

Paddy Lambert, Oxford Archaeology East: Moneta: the coinage of Roman Britain

The full programme and booking form is attached to this NASNEWS.

From the Chronicle and Echo

### **"Works have started on a new multi-million-pound Heritage Park project ... in Northampton town centre"**

*"Construction workers moved onto the former Chalk Lane and Doddridge car parks on Wednesday March 5 to begin converting them into a new £2.3 million heritage park.*

*West Northants Council (WNC) describes its project as 'ambitious' which will provide a 'vibrant' new green space designed to link the town centre with the train station while 'driving footfall to the heart of the town'*

*The park will feature a range of amenities, including recreational green spaces, a castle-themed play area, a community garden, and a heritage timeline, according to WNC.*



The park lies in the shadow of **Castle Mound** [see note below], the former location of the historically significant Northampton Castle. Dating back to **1084** [see note below], the castle served as the backdrop for numerous parliamentary gatherings in the Middle Ages.

'WNC initially planned to complete the park by Spring 2025. However, with construction only just beginning, the completion date has been revised to Autumn 2025, according to WNC's website. The council has not explained the reason for the delay.

A walking trail will follow part of the original location of Northampton Castle, while cherry trees in the play area 'will reflect the historic orchard that once stood within the castle walls'. Improved lighting will also enhance connections to nearby landmarks.

The project is funded by £1.6 million from the Towns Fund, £427,000 from section 106 contributions, and £242,000 from WNC."

### Notes and comments from Andy Chapman:

Castle Mound is a modern name that seems to be used for the mound at the top end of the Chalk Lane car park, most of which is actually a spoil heap from the 1960s excavations. Repeated attempts to point out that the end of this heap abuts the truncated inner half of the bailey bank, which continues behind the houses fronting onto Chalk, the only surviving earthwork remains of the castle, seem to fall on deaf ears, with the meaningless name Castle Mound just turned out repeatedly.

Also, the construction date of 1084 is entirely fictitious as we have no documented date for its construction. For the large castle in its recorded form, a construction period from the early 1100s to a little after 1130, when we do have a direct documentary reference, is most likely. But this large castle is of a size fit for the king, Henry I. If Simon de Senlis had started to build a castle, it would appear that this was subsumed into the royal castle.

This and much more will appear in Part 2 of the story of the castle in the next issue of Northamptonshire Archaeology, and go back to volume 41 for Part 1 of the story.

Also, while the idea of the Heritage Park as a green space resource for local families is a good idea, how a Heritage Park that is not on the direct pedestrian route from the station to the town centre will drive 'footfall to the heart of the town' is not explained, unless they do intend to signpost the route to direct people in that direction.

Earlier this week I provided some final comments on the revised draft text which will inform the consultants creating a series of information panels to be attached to the curving line of posts that are visible in the artist's impression of what the park will look like (see below). I am happy that the text where it relates to the archaeology is OK, but who knows what might happen when the display designers get their hands on it. The posts follow the inner edge of the bailey ditch.



Artist's impression  
of the Heritage Park  
on the footprint of  
the Chalk Lane car park,  
with St Andrew's Road  
to the right

Below, I also include the aerial view from the Chronicle and Echo, with my added labelling.

The Doddridge Street car park, in the foreground, lies outside the castle, with Chalk Lane closely following the outer edge of the castle ditch.

I have no idea how the Doddridge Street car

park fits into the site's development scheme, as the artist's impression only shows the Chalk Lane car park, but perhaps its main role will be for the site logistics: site offices and storage space for tools and equipment? In the Chalk Lane car park the area beneath the former bailey bank was excavated in the 1970s by the NDC Archaeology Unit (see NA vol 16, 1981).



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### **BBC History Magazine, March 2025 The Triumph of the Anglo-Saxons**

A plug for this month's magazine as it includes a lengthy article, five pages by Max Adams, on the Kingdom of Mercia and its contribution to the rise of England in the 10th century. The list of 'five must-see sites' includes two churches: All Saints' Church, Brixworth, as 'England's finest surviving Anglo-Saxon' church', and St Wystan's Church crypt, Repton.

The following pages include the full programme and booking form for the CBA and UNAS Spring Conferences and a flyer for the Northamptonshire Heritage Fair.

### **NASNEWS**

Any events or news for the next issue of NASNEWS please forward to either:

Andy Chapman ([NAS196674@gmail.com](mailto:NAS196674@gmail.com))  
or Rob Atkins ([robatkins1968@gmail.com](mailto:robatkins1968@gmail.com))



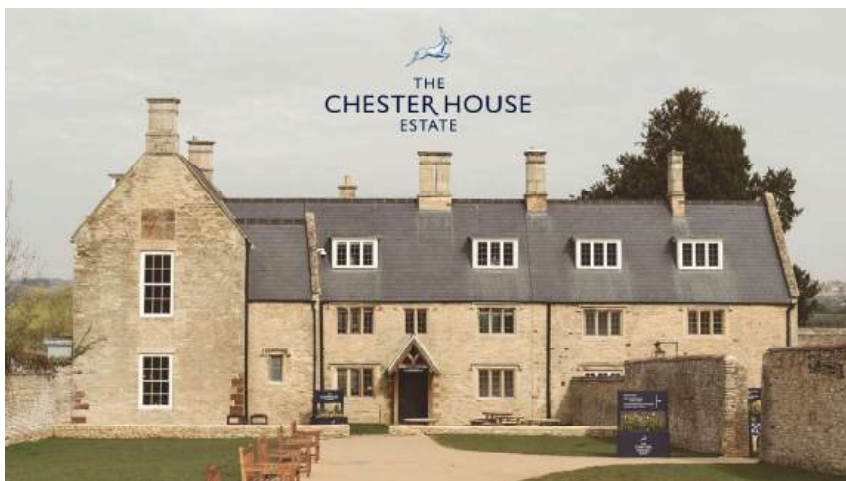
## Revisiting the Romans

**Saturday 29th March 2025**

Northants Archaeological Resource Centre, Chester House Estate, Wellingborough NN8 2DH



Chester House



10:00 Tea, coffee and biscuits

10:30 Welcome

10:35- **The Ircchester Field School: collaborative approaches to archaeological**  
11:20 **research at the Chester House Estate**

Sarah Scott: Professor of Archaeology & Heritage Hub Director, University of Leicester

11:30- **The Roman Villa at Warkton: new evidence for settlement in the hinterland**  
12:15 **of Kettering Roman town.** Chris Chinnock: Team Leader: Reporting, MOLA

12:25 Lunch

13:30- **Excavations at Nassington and Barnwell Roman Farmsteads 2016–2024**

14:15 Derek Roberts: Excavation Director, Middle Nene Archaeological Group

14:25- **A LiDAR appraisal of the Roman Roads of Northamptonshire**

14:55 Wayne Kirk

15:05 Tea and coffee

15:35- **Stanton Cross, Wellingborough. Excavations of 2024**

16:05 Carol Simmonds: Project Officer, MOLA

16:15- **The Villa at Ketton, Rutland: the story so far**

17:00 Jennifer Browning: Project Officer, ULAS

17:10 Close





## Revisiting the Romans

**Saturday 29th March 2025**

Northants Archaeological Resource Centre, Chester House Estate, Wellingborough NN8 2DH

## Booking Form



CBA South Midlands

### Tickets

£20 for members of CBA South Midlands and its affiliated organisations (see the list at <https://cbasm.archaeologyuk.org>), £25 for non-members, £15 for those in higher education.

Lunch is included. **Booking is essential.**

This flyer can be downloaded at <https://cbasm.archaeologyuk.org/cba-sm%20events.htm>

### Payment

**Cheque:** send this form and a cheque to 'CBA South Midlands' by **24th March 2025** to David Ingham, 21 Oak Tree Drive, Bedale, North Yorkshire DL8 1UL. Please note that acknowledgement of your booking will only be supplied by e-mail, text message or SAE.

**BACS:** please quote your surname and 'conf', e-mail the booking details below to [dp.ingham@albion-arch.com](mailto:dp.ingham@albion-arch.com) and make your payment to:

Account name: Council for British Archaeology South Midlands (Barclays)

Account number: 00333999

Sort Code: 20-00-87

Please tick if you have any of the following dietary requirements:

Vegetarian ☐

Vegan ☐

Gluten-free ☐

Dairy-free ☐

Please reserve ..... place(s) at the CBA South Midlands 2025 spring conference

Name: .....

Address: .....

E-mail: .....

Affiliated organisation (if applicable): .....

Enquiries should be addressed to David Ingham at the address above, or on 07717 866767 / [dp.ingham@albion-arch.com](mailto:dp.ingham@albion-arch.com)

# HERITAGE FAIR

## NORTHANTS NORTH 2025

**Sunday 27 April 2025**  
**from 10am to 4pm**  
**Chester House Estate**  
**NN8 2DH**

**With a large variety of stalls  
and displays showcasing  
Northamptonshire's history and heritage**

**+ Talks**  
**+ Archaeological Tours**  
**+ Children's Activities**  
**+ and more!**

**Free Entrance ~ Free Parking**

 **Follow us: @heritagefairnorthantsnorth**

**More information will be found at: [www.northants-fhs.org/fairs-events](http://www.northants-fhs.org/fairs-events)**

# UNAS Spring Conference 2025

## The Craft and Manufacture of Goods in Ancient Britain



Sunday, 11th May 2025

Registered Charity No. 286966

Hackleton Village Hall, Chapel Lane, Hackleton, Northampton, NN7 2AH

10:15 Tea, coffee and biscuits

11:00 Welcome

11:05 Jill Evers, Chiltern Archaeology: **Sticks and stones .... a geologist's view of tool-making**

12:05 Buffet lunch

13:20 Adam Sutton, Aurelius Archaeology: **Pottery for the masses: the Romano-British potters of the Upper Nene Valley**

14:10 Caroline Jackson, Sheffield University: **Roman glass**

14:50 Tea and coffee

15:20 Paddy Lambert, Oxford Archaeology East: **Moneta: the coinage of Roman Britain**

16:30 End

Tickets: £25 for (paid-up!) members of the Upper Nene Archaeological Society; £35 for non-members.  
Lunch and refreshments are included in the price. **Booking is essential**

- .....
- Please tick if you have any of the following dietary requirements:

Vegetarian ☐                      Vegan ☐                      Gluten-free ☐                      Dairy-free ☐

- **If paying by BACS**, please quote your **surname** and 'UNASConf'

A/C: Upper Nene Archaeological Society; Sort Code: 05-06-33; A/C No: 41158587

Please also email David Ingham at [dp.ingham@albion-arch.com](mailto:dp.ingham@albion-arch.com) with your details.

- **If paying by cheque**, please send this slip and payment by **6th May 2025** to:

David Ingham, 21 Oak Tree Drive, Bedale, North Yorkshire, DL8 1UL

- Enclosed is a cheque for £.....payable to: **UNAS**
- Acknowledgement of your booking will be by email or SAE.

• Names (all attendees).....

• Address.....

• Email.....Tel.....