



Welcome to Berkshire Archaeology's newsletter for 2019 which gives news of recent archaeological work and discoveries within the five Unitary Authorities in east Berkshire. One particularly interesting project is the restoration and refurbishment of Nos 47, 48 and 49 High Street, Eton, which has revealed a building of 15th-century date at its core. Recording and investigation by Stonebow Heritage Ltd is revealing the fascinating history of these important Grade II\* listed buildings. Read more about it on page 6.

## BERKSHIRE ARCHAEOLOGY

Welcome to our new edition of **Berkshire Archaeology News**



Detail of the roof of 47-49 High Street, Eton © Stonebow Heritage Ltd

This year we have welcomed Helena Costas to our team as she fulfils the role of Finds Liaison Officer for all of Berkshire, including West Berkshire. The post is part-funded by The British Museum and Graham and Joanna Barker. Although only in post for a few months, she has been busy recording the discovery of objects reported to her through the Portable Antiquities Scheme, most frequently by metal detectorists. On this cover are three recent discoveries, two of silver, one of gold, from the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead. It is interesting to note the changing depiction of the face between the Iron Age and Roman coins.

Both are heavily stylised but the image was as much to do with propaganda as accurate depiction. The gold 'touchpiece' dates to the reign of Queen Anne (1702 – 1714). It was used in the ceremony of 'Touching for the King's Evil', a disease of the lymph glands, also known as scrofula, which was popularly believed to be cured if the monarch touched the sufferer. Each sufferer was given a token or 'touchpiece', pierced so that it could be worn on a ribbon round the neck. One of Queen Anne's last 'touchings' was of Samuel Johnson, the great literary figure of the 18th-century.

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Late Iron Age silver coin  
Late Roman silver coin  
Gold 'touchpiece' of  
Queen Anne (1702-1714)  
*reproduced by kind permission  
of the Portable Antiquities Scheme*



## One of England's earliest houses is revealed at Datchet Quarry

We have reported previously on the exciting discovery of a previously unknown Early Neolithic (4,000 – 3,500 BC) causewayed enclosure at Datchet, near Windsor, and the on-going archaeological work by Wessex Archaeology on behalf of CEMEX UK continues to astonish and surprise. Most recently, a Neolithic house has been revealed within the causewayed enclosure, just off centre. At this stage, it is unknown if the house pre-dates or is contemporary with the monument, but it is a further example of Neolithic architecture that has come to light in the Middle Thames and Colne Valleys west of London in recent years.

The Datchet house is rectangular in plan and large in scale, being around 15 metres long and 6 metres wide. The house was equally divided into two large rooms, although there may have been other internal divisions that we now have no evidence for. The trenched foundations would have held timbers to support a superstructure and roof, presumably of timber and thatch. This reconstruction demonstrates the size and scale of the building. It was a remarkable feat of design and engineering for a building constructed nearly 6,000 years ago.

It is a remarkable and rare survival but it is not unique in this part of Berkshire. Just a few years ago, the remains of five such buildings were found by Wessex Archaeology at Kingsmead Quarry, Horton, just a few miles to the south-east. These



discoveries collectively emphasise the density of Neolithic settlement and activity in this part of Wessex. What is most striking is the large scale of these buildings, which raises questions over their purpose and function. Were they simply domestic dwellings or special meeting and gathering places? At Datchet the juxtaposition of such a building alongside a causewayed enclosure will add important new information to the debate.

The remains of an Early Neolithic house at Datchet Quarry  
© Wessex Archaeology

A reconstruction of an Early Neolithic house image by Karen Nichols - © Wessex Archaeology





## The Horlicks Factory – a landmark building in Slough

The Horlicks Factory at Slough is a landmark building in the town and a sign to train passengers from Wales and the west of England that London Paddington is not too far away. The factory was built in 1908 to the design of the company engineer A G Christiansen and was based on the company factory in Rascine, Wisconsin, USA. Horlicks was established in the USA around 1882 by the English immigrants James Horlick and his brother William. The Horlicks recipe combined dried malt and wheat flour with milk to produce a dried powder which could be made into a hot drink. It was hugely successful and the drink was used by Amundsen and Scott during their North and South Pole expeditions.

With its crenellated clock tower and tall chimney, the factory is a substantial, purpose-built, brick factory building facing on to the railway. The large red letters, spelling Horlicks, on the roof of the factory are a Slough landmark. The proximity to the railway enabled the Horlicks Factory to bring malted barley, wheat flour and fresh milk from their suppliers as raw materials for blending and drying on site before being delivered to customers by train or road.

As is invariably the case, the factory complex has undergone additions, extensions and modifications over time, although the main factory façade remains largely intact. Two largely subterranean air raid shelters were built to the rear of the building



The Horlicks Factory in Slough  
© Berkshire Archaeology

The Horlicks War memorial  
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during the Second World War for the benefit of the Company's employees and a war memorial, commemorating the fallen of the two World Wars stands outside the entrance to the factory.

The war memorial, now Grade II listed, depicts a tall grieving female figure and was sculpted by Sir William Reid Dick, who was responsible for many war memorials in England and abroad. The Horlicks memorial is particularly notable as it commemorates two members of the Horlick family as being amongst the fallen.

The Horlicks Factory is a building of considerable local interest and part of Slough's industrial heritage. The new owners, Berkeley Homes, intend to retain a substantial portion of the main building, which is locally listed.



## Wargrave's earliest parishioners revealed at St Mary's Church

The very fine, Grade II\* listed, St Mary's Church at Wargrave lies to the west of the High Street and provides an oasis of calm and tranquillity away from the village centre. Wargrave was first documented in the 11th-century and the early settlement was probably centred on the area around the Church. The current Church dates from the 13th-century when the settlement was awarded a market charter and the focus of the settlement was centred on the main road from Reading to Henley. There have been very few

archaeological investigations within the historic settlement of Wargrave. However in 2015 the Trustees of the Church drew up plans to build a new annexe on the north side of St Mary's Church to improve facilities for the congregation and parishioners of Wargrave. Given the historic and archaeological importance of the Church, exploratory archaeological investigations were undertaken to inform decisions about the new annexe.

As a result, detailed archaeological investigations were undertaken

by John Moore Heritage Services in early 2018 in advance of the construction of the new annexe.

Being within the Church's graveyard, a complex sequence of inhumation burials was identified within the footprint of the new annexe. The earliest burials were un-coffined and almost certainly date to the medieval period. Unfortunately the absence of any associated objects does not enable dating of these burials beyond the early 12th- to late 15th-centuries. Later burials were made in coffins with coffin fittings enabling these burials to be dated up to the 19th-century. The burials were almost entirely of adults, suggesting that the burial of the young may have been elsewhere within the graveyard.

Research on the human remains recovered from the site is ongoing and the results will shed light on the lives and deaths of the people and community of Wargrave which have been lost over the ages. Also notable was the recovery from the excavation of pottery sherds of prehistoric date. Although no deposits of these periods were identified, these finds do indicate that the site of the Church has been used for habitation long before the founding of the medieval settlement.



Two of Wargrave's earliest parishioners – medieval burials at St Mary's Church  
© John Moore Heritage Services

St Mary's Church, Wargrave in spring © Berkshire Archaeology





## An important Saxon discovery near Bisham

In March 2018 Arwen Wood of Buckinghamshire's Portable Antiquities Scheme office was informed about the discovery of two copper alloy vessels, found by a metal detectorist near Bisham. With the help of volunteers, including the Sussex Finds Liaison Officer Edwin Wood, a small emergency excavation was carried out. Assistance was provided by Buckinghamshire Archaeological Society, who kindly loaned excavation equipment.



The two copper alloy vessels had been hit by the plough so were extremely fragile and fragmentary, so careful excavation was needed to collect the pieces. The first vessel is a copper alloy flanged bowl decorated with repoussé (raised decoration) in a late Roman style. The second is a hanging bowl or bucket from the Namur region of Belgium. The two vessels were block-lifted with the soil contained within them to allow micro excavation of the vessels in a controlled environment later to check for additional objects or organic material. As the second

Excavation of the Saxon vessels in progress © Arwen Wood 2018

The Saxon vessels and weaponry after conservation © Drakon Heritage, 2018



vessel was excavated two iron spearheads were found tucked behind, and, as it was lifted, a human toe bone was revealed, confirming that the objects were funerary items buried with an inhumation.

The inhumation burial was probably of a male due to the presence of the spear heads but this is not always the case. Only a small part of the burial was excavated in order to lift the vessels that had been compromised by exposure. The inhumation burial was otherwise left in situ. The objects date from around AD 475-550, and strongly suggest the area had links to the European continent. The finds are indicative of either a first or second generation immigrant. The objects are recorded as BUC-A84150, and can be viewed on the Portable Antiquities Scheme database – [www.finds.org.uk](http://www.finds.org.uk)

The objects have been donated to Buckinghamshire County Museum. Due to the condition of the objects it was important to stabilise and conserve them quickly. A grant from the CBA Mick Aston Fund and additional funds from the Friends of Buckinghamshire County Museum allowed for the conservation by Drakon Heritage.

It is hoped that more investigations of this important site near Bisham will be carried out in the future. It is likely that there is a late 5th- or 6th-century cemetery on the site, the study of which will help us to understand the pattern of settlement in this part of the Thames Valley at this interesting period in our history. It is hoped that the objects will be displayed as part of the new permanent galleries of the Buckinghamshire County Museum.



## Work on the M4 SMART Motorway reveals a previously unknown Iron Age village

Shortly after Junction 10 of the M4, travellers towards London will have seen the establishment of a sizeable construction compound on the north side of the motorway, just after the A321 overbridge. The compound was constructed to service the work required to upgrade the M4 west of London to a SMART motorway. Archaeological investigations ahead of construction of the compound by Oxford Archaeology, on behalf of Highways England and Balfour Beatty Vinci JV, revealed the plan of a complete earlier Iron Age village, probably inhabited in the middle of the first millennium BC.

It now seems remarkable that the M4 was originally constructed in the late 1960s and early 1970s with virtually no archaeological investigations either before or

during its construction. Times have since changed and the below ground impacts of the work for the M4 SMART Motorway are subject to archaeological monitoring, investigation and recording by Oxford Archaeology.

The Iron Age village covered an area of no more than one acre and was made up of at least ten round houses, although perhaps no more than five round houses were in existence at any one time. It is clear from the site plan that a number of roundhouses were replaced, either on the same footprint or slightly off their original position. The plan shows they varied in size, presumably reflecting dwellings for the larger round houses, and stores or workshops for the smaller round houses. Many readers will have

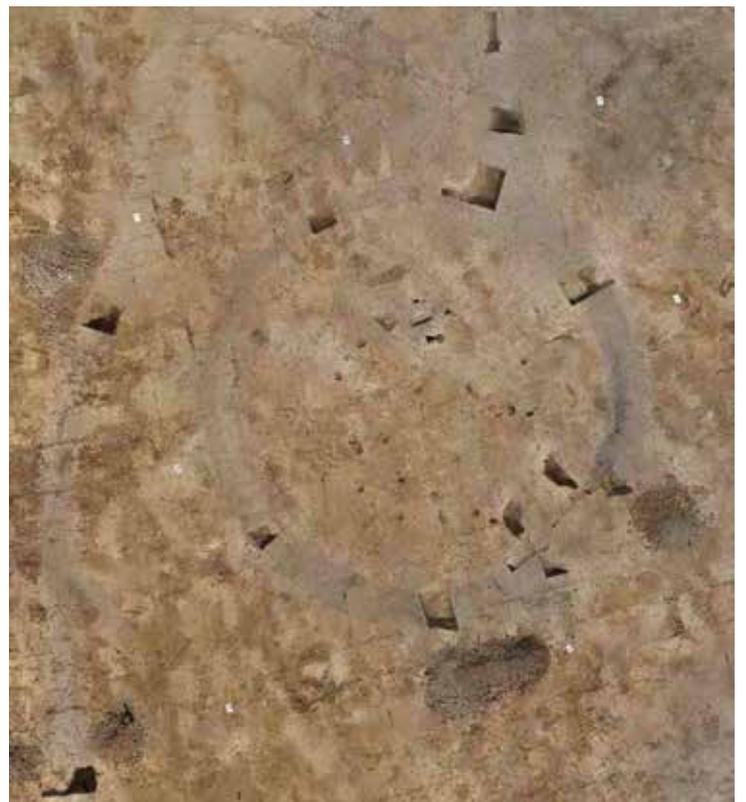
visited reconstructed Iron Age round houses, for example at Butser in Hampshire and Castell Henllys in Pembrokeshire, and will have been impressed by their robustness and functionality but also by the simple beauty of their appearance. Such buildings can survive for decades, with suitable maintenance and re-thatching, and so it is entirely conceivable that this village was occupied for a century or more.

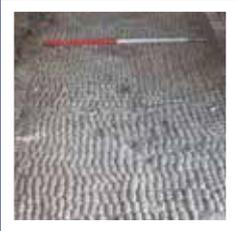
Oxford Archaeology continues to study the artefacts and environmental materials recovered from this Iron Age village and their research should tell us more about the people who lived here, the economic basis of the settlement and the extent of its external contacts.



Plan of the Iron Age village east of Junction 10 of the M4 © Oxford Archaeology

One of the Iron Age round houses from above © Oxford Archaeology





## The 'Cock Pitt', a fine medieval building at Nos 47 – 49 High Street, Eton

'The Cock Pitt', 47-49 High Street, Eton, is a Grade II\* listed building on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register. It was constructed in the 15th-century and has been extended in the 16th-, 18th- and 19th-centuries, creating two ranges to the rear. It is currently undergoing extensive conservation and detailed recording as part of redevelopment that will secure the survival of the building.

Heritage assessment took place in 2015, when consent was granted for a residential development, retaining commercial use on the ground floor of the medieval building. The site was sold in 2017 and the buildings were further assessed, involving the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings and Oxford Dendrochronology Lab. In 2018, revised consent was obtained to change the front range into two 2-storey units using the original medieval party wall. The medieval timber frame and its surviving wattle and daub panels were carefully conserved, and detailed archaeological investigation took place. Development should continue this summer. Further archaeological monitoring and investigation during groundworks behind the building are also planned.

The Cock Pitt was probably built by the Dean and Canons of Windsor as half of a speculative development of town houses with shops. Dendrochronology indicates construction around 1440. The building's first phase comprises two of a row of 'half-



Wealdens': two-bay buildings with an open hall in one bay and a jettied, storeyed second bay, typically built as terraces in towns. Carpentry marks indicate that these were part of a terrace of four (No. 50 to the south is another). Smoke blackening and evidence for louvres survive in the roof of the two bays that were open halls. The second, jettied bays had shops on the ground floor and living quarters above. Mortices at ground-floor ceiling level indicate the locations of top-hung shutters onto the road, the steep original stairs, and stud-walled passages from the front door to a back door; one of which was discovered behind modern plaster.

Ceilings were installed in the open-hall bays, and the whole front elevation jettied, during the 16th- or 17th-centuries. The gabled extension along the north passage was probably added by 1521. Around 1700, a Queen Anne-style two-gabled brick southern rear range was built, in which leaded windows and fireplaces survive. Substantial brick extensions to both ranges were built in the early 19th-century. The building was remodelled in



Nos 47 – 49 High Street, Eton prior to restoration works © Stonebow Heritage

The 'knuckle bone' floor © Stonebow Heritage

the late 19th-century, including installation of shop frontages.

A "knuckle bone" floor in a rear outhouse might have been installed by the second of two butchers living at the terrace, in 1551 and 1660. This floor construction, widespread in southern England during the late 17th-/early 18th-centuries, may be the source of the building's name, although archaeological examples are found in butcheries, leatherworkers and houses but not cock pits. No. 48 was the Adam & Eve Inn from at least 1624 until c.1750, when it moved to No. 51. An association with beer continued, as one of the 'cottages' was occupied by a brewer in 1797. During the late 19th- and 20th-centuries, the building housed a boot-maker, grocer, antique shop, tea rooms, a café, and then an Indian restaurant.



## Medieval settlement and industry in Slough

Slough Cemetery and Crematorium and Arbour Park, the home of Slough Town FC, lie a short distance apart along the Stoke Road. These two important local amenities share one notable aspect: important medieval buried remains have been found at both sites in the last few years.

Prior to the construction of Arbour Park, exploratory archaeological investigation revealed a medieval industrial site. Several very large and deep pits were found from which late 11th- and 12th-century medieval pottery was recovered. Some of the pits

had evidence for in situ burning with reddened clay and charcoal deposits but no other material was recovered that suggested what the purpose of these pits was. Our best suggestion is that they were dug to extract the fine brickearth deposits, which are very suitable for making clay tiles. While there was no direct evidence for the making of tiles on the site, such as kilns or dumps of kiln waste, the evidence for burning suggests some form of manufacture was taking place nearby.

Just a little to the north-west, archaeological investigations prior to a proposed extension to Slough Cemetery revealed further medieval pits. Again the pits were both deep and wide and full of medieval pottery, but here a century or two later than at Arbour Park, dating from the 13th- and 14th-centuries. At Slough Cemetery, however, the amount of medieval pottery, its

excellent preservation and the presence of a number of fine, decorated vessels, suggests that these pits represent the remains of a settlement, perhaps a small farm.

There is no documentary or cartographic evidence for a farm or settlement in the medieval period in this location in the medieval period but it is clear that the area around and under Slough was widely used in the medieval and early modern periods. Traces of many of those small medieval settlements and farms have been lost but archaeological investigations, such as those at Arbour Park and the Cemetery are now revealing them.



Arbour Park, home of Slough Town FC © Berkshire Archaeology

Medieval quarry pit with burnt material from Arbour Park © Thames Valley Archaeological Services



## Early prehistoric monuments and a Saxon village are revealed at Bray Wick, near Maidenhead

In the 18th-century Bray Wick was a small hamlet lying between Maidenhead and Bray, before it was consumed into suburban Maidenhead from the early 20th-century onwards. However the area retains a rural feel with the open spaces of Braywick Sports Centre, Braywick Cemetery and Braywick Nature Centre. The early history of the hamlet was recently revealed in advance of the construction of a new leisure centre on the site of the former golf driving range, immediately north of the Cemetery.



Following an exploratory investigation, Thames Valley Archaeological Services undertook a more detailed excavation which revealed that the earliest inhabitants in this area were active in around 3,000 BC in the later Neolithic period. Three shallow pits, clustered close together, were dug and in to which were placed some fine decorated vessels. These vessels are of a type known as Peterborough Ware, having been found in large quantities in East Anglia, and they are distinctive by their highly impressed decoration.

Little else was deposited with these pots except for a few fragments of animal bone and some hazelnut shells. These remains may be all that survive of a settlement of the later Neolithic period. They are typical of this period locally, evidence for buildings and structures being almost entirely absent. Around a millennium later, a Bronze Age funerary monument was built on the site. Originally a mounded round barrow, all that survived was the circular ditch from which the material to create the mound was excavated. Those buried within or below the mound have long since been lost but the area's role in commemorating the dead continues with the adjacent Braywick Cemetery.

Another entirely unpredicted discovery was the identification of six Saxon houses, spread over a wide area, and representing the remains of a Saxon hamlet. Radiocarbon dating indicates that

these buildings were used within the 5th- to early 7th-centuries AD, after the decline of the major Roman towns and when southern England returned to an almost entirely rural settlement pattern. Finds from the Saxon houses at Bray Wick included locally made pottery, some clay loom weights and just one personal item, an iron brooch. Maidenhead is well known as a medieval settlement. These discoveries have excitingly revealed Maidenhead's Saxon antecedents.

Decorated later Neolithic (c. 3,000 BC) pottery from Bray Wick ©Thames Valley Archaeological Services

The ring ditch from a Bronze Age burial mound adjacent to Braywick Cemetery © Reproduced by kind permission of Wates. Photograph by Brett Van-Sant



## The story of the discovery of Saxon and early medieval settlement in the 1950s at Old Windsor

The village of Old Windsor nestles on the south side of the River Thames between Windsor Castle and Runnymede. The parish church of St Peter and St Andrew lies somewhat divorced from the main settlement at the end of Church Road close to the River Thames. However the historic settlement of Old Windsor was centred on the area around the Church. In 1951 a sewer trench was dug south of Church Road and the observant vicar noticed the large number of fragments of ancient pottery in the spoil from the trench. He contacted the British Museum who recognised the significance of the Saxon and medieval pottery. Excavations followed between 1953 and 1958 under the direction of the late Dr Brian Hope-Taylor, one of Britain's foremost archaeologists at that time.

The excavations revealed a remarkable sequence of Saxon and Early Norman remains from the 7th- to 11th-centuries, including a mid-Saxon settlement, a 9th-century mill leat and watermill, and a series of high quality buildings and finds indicative of a late Saxon and early Norman royal complex. The results of Hope-Taylor's excavations led to the designation of the site as a Scheduled Monument.

Unfortunately the results of Hope-Taylor's excavations have never been analysed and published. Despite a programme of post-excavation work in the 1980s, remarkably little detail of the excavations has been published.

This is compounded by the excavation archive being split between Reading Museum, where the finds were donated in the 1970s, and Historic Environment Scotland in Edinburgh, where the site archive was deposited on Hope-Taylor's death in 2001.

However a recent project, funded by Historic England and undertaken by Berkshire Archaeology and Wessex Archaeology, has undertaken a rapid assessment of the archive to understand better its completeness and coherence. In addition for the first time the finds archive held at Reading Museum has been accurately quantified with the support of members of Berkshire Archaeological Society, Berkshire Archaeological Research Group and the Old Windsor community. We now know, for example, that there are 38,197 sherds of pottery, almost entirely of Saxon or early medieval date, and 40,449 pieces of animal bone. The pottery in particular is an extremely important assemblage for this period in England. It is hoped that the results of this project will lead to further work on this important archive in the future. One unusual discovery amongst the archive during the project was a charming water colour of an archaeologist, undoubtedly drawn by Hope-Taylor who was also a well-known artist.



Volunteers at Reading Museum quantifying the Old Windsor finds ©Wessex Archaeology

A watercolour of an archaeologist found in the archive and almost certainly the work of Hope-Taylor. Reproduced courtesy of Reading Museum - © Brian Hope-Taylor, image Reading Museum (Reading Borough Council)



## An Early Roman farm at Newell Green, Bracknell

Fairclough Farm lies north of Bracknell on Watersplash Lane, Newell Green. The Farm has been in existence for a number of centuries with a group of buildings shown here on Rocque's Map of Berkshire, drawn in 1761. Evidence that the land around about has been farmed for millennia has recently come to light with investigations in 2018 and 2019 by Foundations Archaeology and Cotswold Archaeology revealing the remains of a 1st-century AD farm just a few metres south-west of the present Fairclough Farm.

Ditches delimited an enclosed area, within which were shallow pits containing domestic debris and rubbish. This mostly consisted of broken pottery vessels, largely locally made. The design and shape of the vessels suggests they were made in the 1st-century AD but it is difficult to assign them a date either prior to or after Claudius' invasion of Britain in AD 43. There were already close links and trade with the Roman Empire on continental Europe at this time in southern Britain and so these remains can be considered as Roman even if they date to the earliest part of the 1st-century AD.

Unfortunately no building remains were identified. Either the enclosure was used for farming activities only or the remains were too slight and ephemeral to survive. These Roman remains lie just a hundred metres north of the remains of an earlier, Middle Iron Age settlement, identified in 1994 close to the Warfield Roundabout



on Harvest Ride. Here the remains of at least four round houses were identified. The Iron Age farm was probably occupied in the 3rd- and 2nd-centuries AD. These two modest archaeological discoveries demonstrate that the landscape north of Bracknell was being inhabited and farmed throughout the later Iron Age and Roman periods and has continued to do so until the present day.

Excavations in progress of an Early Roman farm at Fairclough Farm, Bracknell  
© Foundations Archaeology

Early Roman pottery from Fairclough Farm, Bracknell  
© Cotswold Archaeology

## Mars, metalworking and monitoring



A fine Romano-British copper alloy statuette of Mars has recently been found in Wokingham. The deity is naked apart from a Corinthian style helmet on the back of his head and he is standing with a crooked and outstretched right arm which ends in a break near the elbow. The left arm is held against the torso and is broken at the wrist. The right hand would originally most likely have held a spear against which the figure would have been leaning. The helmet is finely detailed with crest and eye-holes being visible. The facial details are simply incised and include eyes, nose and mouth; the almond-shaped eyes are suggestive of a Romano-British craftsman. This form of Mars figurine is fairly common with nearly 50 examples known from Britain.

In 2018 small scale excavations in advance of a new all-weather sports pitch at Crosfields School, Reading, revealed a small Bronze Age and Iron Age farmstead. A round house was dated to the early 9th-century BC, while charcoal from a pit was scientifically dated to the 5th- and 6th-centuries BC during the Middle Iron Age. There was also evidence for iron production in the 2nd- to 4th-centuries BC also associated with a single round house. This modest excavation has nonetheless produced interesting results, especially another Middle Iron Age site with evidence for iron production. The modest structural evidence may suggest that this was the site's main purpose and the houses where the metalworkers lived were elsewhere.

One of the youngest archaeological monuments in our region was recently recorded near Arborfield Cross by Wessex Archaeology. A subterranean Royal Observer Corps Underground Monitoring Station was re-identified and recorded. Built in 1961, the Underground Monitoring Post

Excavations in progress at Crosfields School, Reading  
© Thames Valley  
Archaeological Services

The top of the underground Cold War Monitoring Station at Arborfield Cross  
© Berkshire Archaeology

Roman copper alloy figurine of Mars reproduced by kind permission of the Portable Antiquities Scheme

replaced an above-ground monitoring post and comprised a watertight concrete box, buried underground but with an access point and monitoring equipment protruding above ground. The Monitoring Station at Arborfield Cross was only in use for less than a decade and was closed in 1968. The access point was closed off and the above ground elements removed but the below-ground station remained largely intact.