

THE ROMAN FAMILIES PROJECT

WEEK ONE

The Roman Families Project is an archaeological community project funded by the Armed Forces Community Project and managed by Herefordshire Council's Archaeology Department. The aim of the project is to involve the local and armed forces community as well as schools and the local sixth form college in the investigation of a little known Roman site within the village of Credenhill, Herefordshire.

We are now at the end of the first week of excavations at the Roman Park Playing Fields, Credenhill and what a start to the excavation we have had.

Before I go into detail about this week's findings however, it is probably worth having a look at why we have decided to excavate where we have. Our attention was first drawn to the playing fields by an aerial photograph taken in 1975 that shows the outline of a ditched enclosure with a stone walled rectangular building within the interior of its southern half. The size, shape and style of the enclosure is similar to Romano-British sites that have been found elsewhere in Britain.

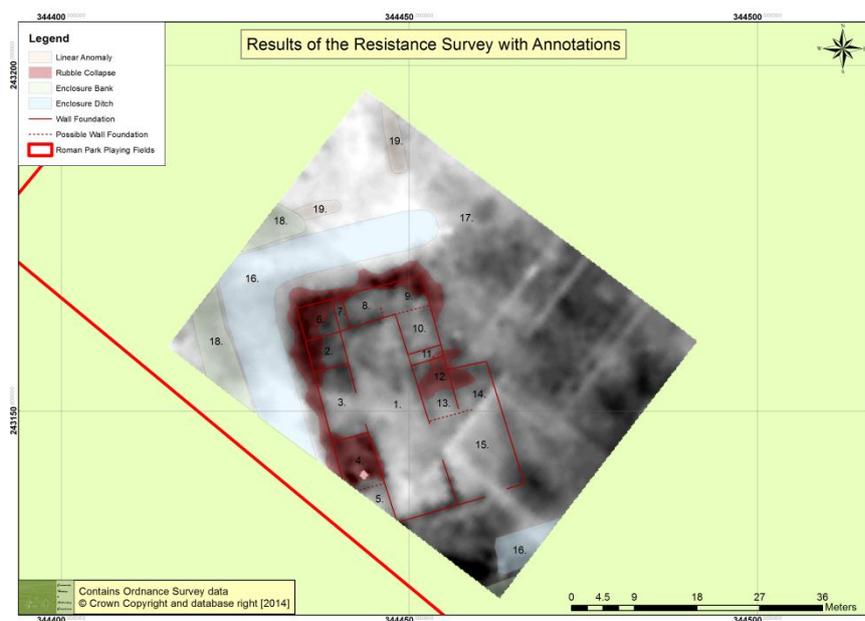


The 1975 aerial photograph with the site of interest circled in red. Copyright Herefordshire Council

It all kicked off in April with a series of events aimed at attracting Primary Schools from across Herefordshire. As part of the events, pupils had the chance to learn about Roman Britain, clean and identify Roman pottery and carry out a geophysical investigation aimed at identifying the buried remains of the site visible on the 1975 aerial photograph.

The results of the school investigation, displayed below, were spectacular, with the buried foundations of the building standing out clearly as a series of dark lines. Not only this, internal rooms can be made out, as well as evidence for the external enclosure ditch. With this evidence in hand, the next stage was to invite the local community, schools and the sixth form college back to carry out an archaeological excavation. The big question to ask; is it Roman?

The Answer? YES!



Geophysical results revealing the outline of the Roman structure.

The trench was located in order to provide a cross-section through the building and enclosure ditch. The rubble remains of the building, including large quantities of Roman pottery lay immediately beneath the turf as it was removed. It is with thanks to the students of Hereford Sixth Form College's Archaeology Department and the pupils of Riverside Primary School that the excavation progressed as well as it has, particularly considering the rather warm weather we've been having (not that we're complaining).





Hereford Sixth Form College students hard at work.

Progress has been gradual for the first week as we search for the walls and hopefully the floors that remain in place beneath the building rubble. Watch this space for further updates and images of the artefacts discovered.

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