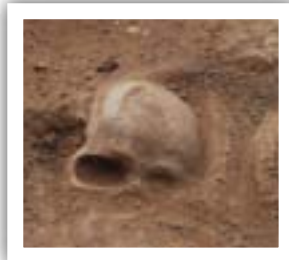
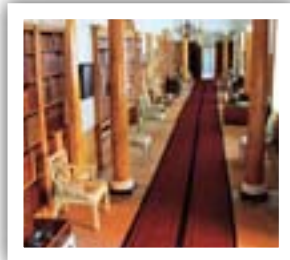


# Worcestershire Archaeology

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## Worcestershire's Past... Get Involved Today!



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## Kempsey Flood Alleviation

This summer the field team were asked by the Environment Agency to evaluate the land next to St Mary's Church, Kempsey ahead of a new flood alleviation scheme. During the evaluation, the team came across eight inhumations leading to an excavation of the area affected by the development.

News of the burials quickly got out and the excavations started surrounded by a whirlwind of local interest and media coverage. The team took it all in their stride, however, and project manager Tom Vaughan revealed his hidden talent providing a number of TV, radio and written interviews in which he eloquently described the findings and their importance.



*Two of Kempsey's older residents*

During the course of the excavation forty-two individuals were lifted and a number of others were recorded but left in place. The assemblage gives us a cross section of the local population with males, females, adults and children all being represented. Samples from four of the individuals were taken and carbon 14 dating gave dates ranging from the 9th through to the 13th century AD. The cemetery was used over a long period of time and the burials were

so closely packed that on many occasions they dug into each other.

The site is known to have been important during the Anglo-Saxon and Medieval periods and acted as a focus for Christian worship for much of what is now southern Worcestershire. There was a medieval Bishop's palace and an Anglo-Saxon minster that sent priests out to the surrounding parishes preaching and converting. Before the modern parish system developed, the dead were brought from a wide area to Kempsey to be buried in consecrated ground. As parishes built their own chapels and cemeteries the large sprawling cemetery at Kempsey contracted, eventually reaching its current size.

Until now, only the excavations of the Chapter House in Worcester have revealed Christian burials of such an early date and the chance to compare urban and rural populations is very exciting. You can hear a full account at the Worcestershire Archaeology Dayschool on 12th November.

*Jon Webster*

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## Autumn Dayschools

Three dayschools are coming up this Autumn which may be of interest to readers.

### Community Archaeology

Worcestershire Historic Environment Record is taking part in a Dayschool organised by the Council for British Archaeology West Midlands. On October 22nd HER staff from all over the region will meet at The Guildhall in Worcester, along with representatives from English Heritage, the CBA and other heritage groups. The purpose of the day is to encourage communities to take a more active role in the recording and management of their heritage.

The aims are to empower local groups; to give them inspiration by providing examples of successful projects; to offer training in skills needed to organise projects such as how to apply for grants and how to use HERs; and to let them know how they can work in partnership with other organisations.

A key part of the day is the discussion session which will lead on from Suzie Thomas' talk about the Community Archaeology Forum. The idea is to start a discussion on how the CBA can help local groups, but also to encourage the use of the CBA's community archaeology email list so that there is at least an ongoing focus for discussion and contact.

Overall the day is about inspiring people to have a go and to provide them with the tools to be able to do so. More information from [www.britarch.ac.uk/cbawm](http://www.britarch.ac.uk/cbawm)

**Worcestershire Castles and Houses Lost and At Risk** is being organised by the Worcestershire Local History Forum (WLHF) at Hartlebury Castle on Saturday 29th October. There will be talks about Hartlebury Castle, The Hurd Library, Horsham Old Court and Hindlip Hall as well as displays and book sales. The day will also include the Annual General Meeting of the WLHF and the announcement of their 2011 awards. See [www.dayschool2011.wlhf.org.uk](http://www.dayschool2011.wlhf.org.uk)

### Worcestershire Archaeology Dayschool

This year's Archaeology Day School is to be held on Saturday 12th November at the University of Worcester and will include talks on recent work in the county, including the recent excavations at Kempsey, the Lowesmoor excavations, Worcester, the archaeology of Victorian medical history, work at Winnall Mill, and Worcester houses and history.

Details are included with this newsletter, or you can contact Mo Uyt den Bogaard at the WHEAS office for further information.

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### An Itch in Time

Alan Clapham, one of our environmental specialists, has recently been working on samples from ancient Egyptian wooden headrests for the Fitzwilliam Museum, University of Cambridge. During his examination, he found a mite (see photo). It closely resembles the scabies mite (*Sarcoptes scabiei*).



Scabies mites can only live away from the human body for a maximum of three days before they die, so this suggests that it fell off the last person who used the headrest. What fun!

### Festival of British Archaeology

For this year's event, WHEAS joined the Museums service and the Worcestershire Archaeology Source Project (WASP) at The Commandery in Worcester for a Time Detective family day out.



*weaving a fish trap*

The theme was a Quest based on three historic Worcester characters researched by the WASP participants. A medieval herbalist, a 14th century water bailiff and Robert Wilde, the wealthy merchant and owner of the Commandery during the Tudor period.

Families explored the stories of each character using the WASP archives and through a variety of activities:- asking the characters questions; making medieval potions; making tiles; weaving a willow fish trap; making a fishing net and collecting clues around The Commandery buildings.

Families also had an opportunity to learn how to be an archaeologist by digging in the mock excavation in The Commandery grounds. The event was well attended and everyone went away knowing more about the history of this fascinating building and how some of Worcester's medieval citizens lived.

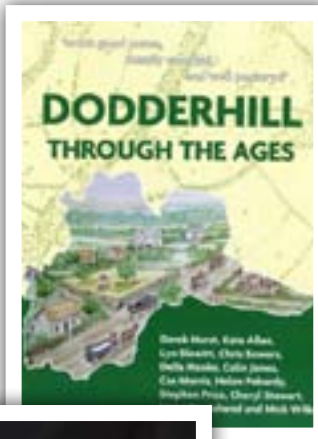
## Dodderhill Through The Ages.

Launched on the 1st September, this new book tells the story of Dodderhill as researched by the Dodderhill Parish Survey Project. Priced at £5.00, the 200 page book is available from Grace Cards and the Tourist Information Centre, Droitwich Spa, Midland News, Wychbold, and Worcester History Centre.

[www.dodderhillhistory.org.uk](http://www.dodderhillhistory.org.uk)

## Midlands ceramic project archive released

The Archaeology Data Service, WHEAS, English Heritage and the Royal Archaeological Institute have released 'The Midlands purple and Cistercian type wares in the west Midlands in the 15th-16th centuries' by Susan M Wright and Derek Hurst. Aimed to develop understanding of this major ceramics industry, the research is available at <http://archaeologydataservice.ac.uk>.



## Join us!

At our base in Worcester, we deal with finds from sites from all over the County ranging from prehistoric to modern. Helping with finds processing is a great way to work with our team of specialists. Training is given, so even if you are completely new to archaeology you will soon learn about all kinds of finds.

We also welcome visits from groups such as Scouts and Guides who recently enjoyed washing finds during a visit to the Archaeology Service.

For more information about volunteering or visits, please contact Deborah Overton at the WHEAS office.

## Worcestershire Historic Environment and Archaeology Service is the main contact point for all information about archaeology in the county.

For information on projects mentioned in the newsletter, or to join in as a volunteer in our activities for all ages and abilities, please contact us - we will send details, or put you in touch with staff who can help.

Unless otherwise stated all photographs and images are ©Worcestershire County Council.

To receive your newsletter by email as a PDF file, please send an email to our address below with the subject 'NEWSLETTER PLEASE'.

Cover photos: Main photo - Kempsey excavation. bottom left to right: Dodderhill new book cover, the Hurd Library, Hartlebury Castle © 2011 Hartlebury Castle Preservation Trust, and a burial from Kempsey.

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