

South Dorset Ridgeway Heritage Project

Romano-British to Present Day

Archaeology Resource Box



Dorset
AREA OF OUTSTANDING
NATURAL BEAUTY



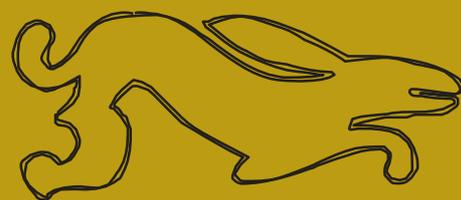
South Dorset Ridgeway
Heritage Project



Heritage

LOTTERY FUNDED

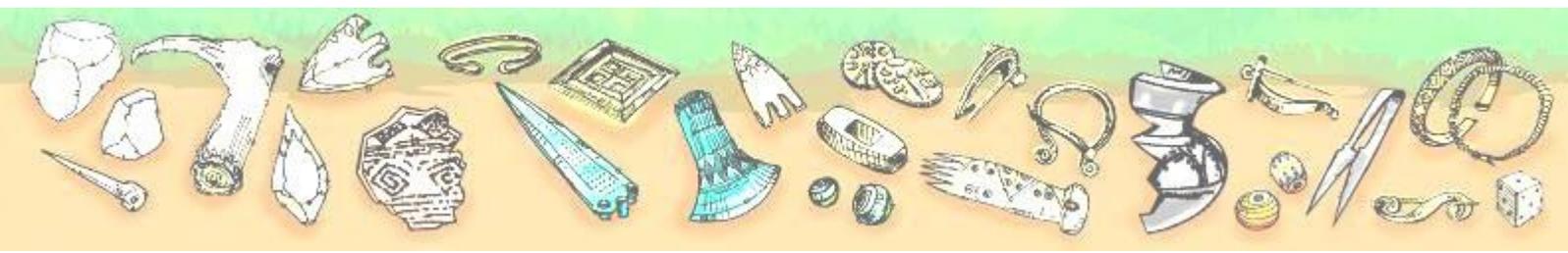
Information for Teachers

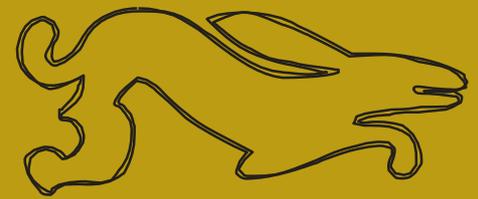


Contents	<i>number of pages</i>
Information for Teachers	11
The Roman Period	11
The Present Day	1
The Suppliers	1

***This Guide is a subset of the Dorset Ridgeway Heritage Project Guide which can be found at:
<http://www.dorsetaonb.org.uk/our-work/south-dorset-ridgeway/learning/165-archaeological-resource-box>***







Introduction

Dorset is rich in decaying remains reflecting the life and death of prehistoric people. The modern landscape of the South Dorset Ridgeway hides an amazing archaeological landscape varying from prehistoric burials to an Iron Age fort and Roman temple. The traces of our distant ancestors can still be seen in fields, on hillsides, and under buildings – though they are fast disappearing. All human activity destroys something of the past.

Nowadays the pace and scale of destruction has accelerated to such an extent that the remaining ancient landscapes must be rigorously protected for once any site is destroyed unique evidence is lost forever. We may know a lot about the lives of our predecessors, however there is much more we ought to know and do not.

Archaeology is the study of peoples' lives in the past based on what they have left behind. In most cases this will be their rubbish— broken pots, discarded tools and ruined buildings. Once a site has been excavated and recorded, all the finds (the pots, tools and such like) have to go somewhere. Museums are buildings dedicated to the collection, conservation, study, exhibition and interpretation of objects that have come from not only prehistoric sites but anything that has a historical, cultural, scientific or artistic value. Museums enable people to explore these collections for inspiration, learning and enjoyment, making objects accessible and holding them in trust for future generations.

This handling collection and related materials have been designed to be as

flexible as possible. It has been designed to encourage exploration of objects to find out about people in the past. This can be managed entirely through discussion work but, like an archaeologist, there is the need to record in some way what they have discovered.

Archaeologists use a number of methods for recording; a sample South Dorset Ridgeway Record Sheet has been devised to aid with information gathering which can be adapted in any way you choose. There are suggestions for the use of this handling collection to meet the various needs of different groups.



The South Dorset Ridgeway—The Hellstone, Neolithic burial chamber © Hazel Dunning

Picture credits:

Original Artwork © Darrell Wakelam Dorset AONB,

Dorset County Museum

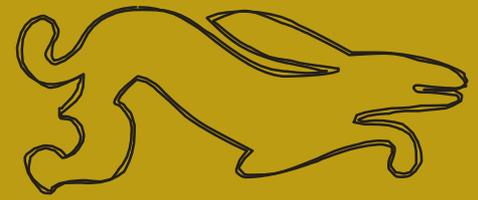
Wessex Archaeology

Matthew Knowles @ Dorset History Centre

Text credits: Pippa Brindley

Wessex Archaeology Dorset AONB





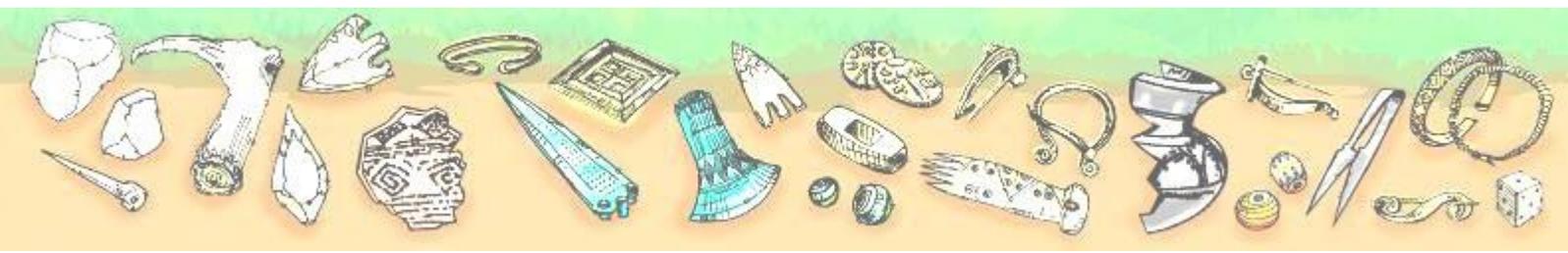
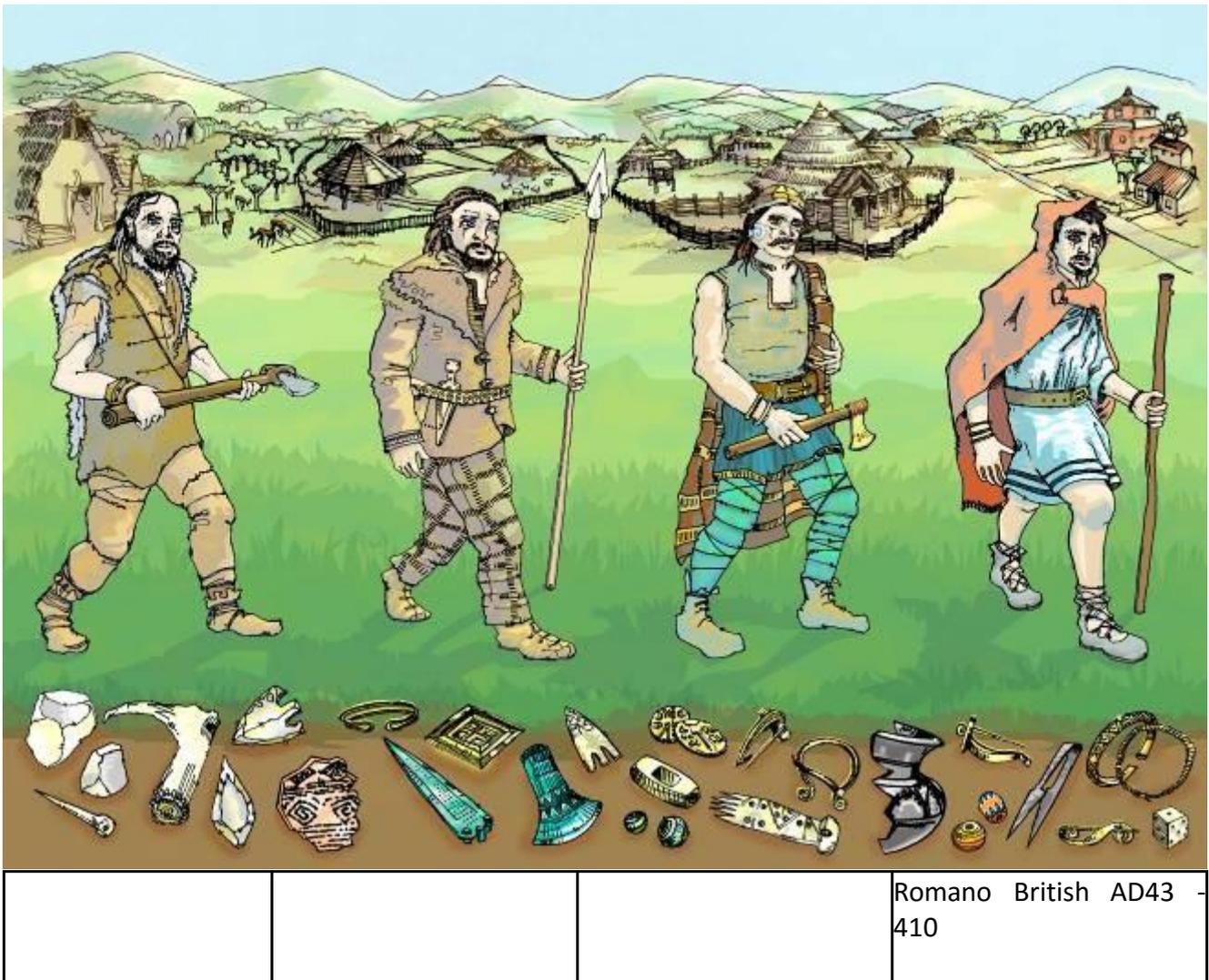
What's in the box

Inside the box are replica artefacts, photographs and information from each of the four archaeological periods represented on the South Dorset Ridgeway

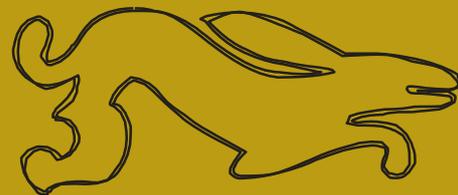
In the Wooden Box

Supporting Information:

- Teacher's Kit, A guide to using the South Dorset Ridgeway
- Archaeological Resource Box Guide
- Time Line. Drawn by Darrell Wakelam, this composite image shows the passage of time from Neolithic to Roman on the South Dorset Ridgeway



Information for Teachers



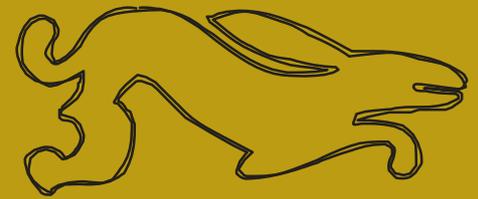
In the Wooden Box continued

The Neolithic, Bronze Age and Iron Age artefacts can be borrowed separately – see the Museum website.

Romano British
AD43 - 410

- Picture of a late Roman burial
- Mortaria
- Oil lamp
- Strigil
- In the Finds Box
 - Brooch
 - Necklace
 - Glass gaming counters
 - Samian Ware





Why Use Artefacts to Aid Learning?

Handling artefacts has a remarkable power to motivate. Finding out from objects requires no reading or writing skills which puts everybody, of whatever age or ability, on the same level. The thinking skills which are developed by working with artefacts are useful life-skills.

Artefacts can be used to develop:

- Speaking and listening skills
- vocabulary about historical times and technical terms
- the skill of sequencing.
- an awareness of human activity in the past and an empathy with the people who made and used the objects.
- handling skills and an awareness of the preservation and conservation of the objects.
- an understanding of how structure, materials and function are related.
- an understanding of chronology, change, continuity and progress.
- an appreciation of fashion and the aesthetic quality of an object in its time, and now.

You may like to use the following questions to help stimulate ideas, research and discussion when looking at artefacts

<p>Physical Features</p> <p>What does it look and feel like?</p> <p>What colour is it?</p> <p>What does it smell like?</p> <p>What does it sound like?</p> <p>What is it made of?</p> <p>Is it made from a natural or man-made material?</p> <p>Is it complete?</p> <p>Has it been altered or adapted?</p> <p>Is it worn?</p>	<p>Construction</p> <p>How was it made?</p> <p>Is it hand-made or machine-made?</p> <p>Was it made in one piece or several pieces?</p> <p>How has it been fixed together?</p>
<p>Design</p> <p>Was it well designed for its use?</p> <p>Were the best materials used? Is it decorated?</p> <p>How was the decoration done?</p> <p>Does the design look good?</p>	<p>Function</p> <p>Why was it made?</p> <p>How was it used?</p> <p>Has it had a change of use?</p>
	<p>Value - What is it worth? To the people who made it?</p> <p>To the people who used it?</p> <p>To the people who keep it?</p> <p>To you?</p> <p>To a bank?</p> <p>To a museum?</p>





South Dorset Ridgeway Record Sheet

Name

Draw your object in this space

Choose some words to help label the drawing of your object:

Wood Stone Shiny Bone Flint Top Decorated Rough

Grey Round Brown Black Handle Broken Hole Lid

Rusty Edge Inside Antler Metal Outside Clay Coin

My object is a:



South Dorset Ridgeway Record Sheet

Name

Chose some words to help with writing about your object in the box below.

Rich Poor Man Woman Field Valuable Table

Cutting Hunting Water Hold Carry Food Trade

Animal Fish Home Clothes Light

Who would use the object?

Where would it be used?

Does it tell you about:

The work that people did?

What their homes may have been like?

People's diet?

This is what my object tells me about the people or how they lived:

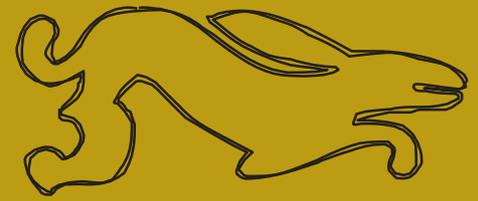


Excavation Activities

Some activities represent the kinds of tasks archaeologists themselves will undertake in the analysis of collected material, others do not.

- You may wish to divide the group into smaller sub-groups-archaeologists who will excavate, those who will 'clean' the finds (use a soft paintbrush), the 'recorders' who draw the finds and the investigators who try to work out what the finds are
- You may wish to make a grid to place over the excavation so your students can plot the position of their finds
- Emphasise that archaeology and excavation require patience and care, it is not work that can be hurried
- The students can identify characteristics and place the finds into various types of category; such as material, use, colour, size. The drawing of the people and their homes/lives included in the box and the photographs of further finds in the teachers pack will be useful to help investigate the function of some of the finds
- You may wish to make a burial from two or more of the skeletons –as was discovered on the Ridgeway Hill excavation (see accompanying notes on Bronze Age burial)
- In a 'combined burial' as mentioned above the students could categorise the finds by age
- Use the finds to put together a timeline by laying the burials out on the floor, the students place finds next to the burial to whom they think it belongs
- Play a version of the panel game 'Call My Bluff' in which the students devise three alternative uses for an object (one being the true one) and attempt to persuade their classmates to choose an incorrect description
- Replicate a burial by researching costume of the period on the web and making items of clothing, make papier-mâché burial goods based on the photographs of further artefacts in the teachers pack, devise a burial ceremony and dress a student and lay them out with the finds
- Make a modern burial based on the photograph of a modern student included in the box. What would they choose to have with them?
- Discuss the implications of excavation – what do the students think about burials being excavated? Write for and against arguments
- Using OS maps locate long barrows, round barrows, Maiden Castle and Roman sites in Dorset. Are there similarities/differences in the areas each time period occupies?
- Bury organic and inorganic materials in soil to observe/investigate how materials degrade.





Suggested Activities

- Using the record sheets and the objects pupils describe the objects, compiling class lists of as many appropriate adjectives as possible in one or two minutes. Encourage the children to think about the most appropriate words and select the four or five most apt adjectives from the list.

They can then write descriptions of the objects using the selected words. The descriptions could be displayed with the objects themselves or images of the objects. For example, if the object were the flint axe, the list might include words such as the colour, whether it was old, new, clean, dirty, shiny, rough, smooth etc.

A digital photograph of the axe could be displayed with a first-person description such as 'I am an old, rough, grey, flint axe.'

- Ask the pupils to keep a diary of what they eat at each meal for a school week.

Discuss the kinds of food they eat, what ingredients are needed and how the food is prepared. Compile and display word banks of foods accompanied by pictures. The images could be collected from magazines or by using ICT to carry out an internet search for pictures to download and print. There may be a wide variety of foods in multicultural schools.

Ask the children how we cook food

today – using the oven or microwave; grilling, frying, boiling, etc. – and what kitchen gadgets they have at home. Make sure they realise that food and cooking have always been very important in people's lives.

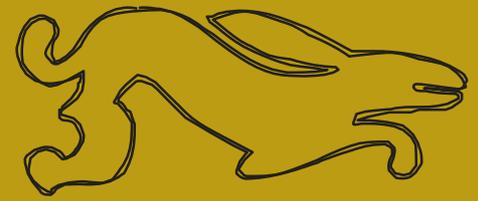
Look at food packaging. Discuss how ingredients, nutritional values, instructions for cooking and other information are presented (using lists, numbering etc.) Compare with the diets and cooking facilities of people in Pre-history.

- Collect advertisements from magazines and newspapers. Talk to the children about advertising slogans, the products they sell and the language used.

Look at how comparatives and superlatives suggest that a particular product is better than other unnamed similar products. Look carefully at how language is used to convey a message and persuade the consumer that the product is worth buying.

Set up a Romano-British market where they have to buy/sell/exchange various items. You might want to give them a job/role and they have to devise a shopping list of items required. A farmer might need storage pots and has wheat to trade/exchange or potter has pots but needs a new cloak pin or brooch. Half the group could be buyers, the others sellers.





Suggested Activities Continued

- Recreate a scene from the life of the people in the past. When a Bronze Age house fell out of use, it is possible a complex 'closing' ceremony took place.

This could form the basis of a drama / role play:

- a) The house was dismantled leaving the hearth intact
- b) Flint was heated in a fire pit. The hot flint was used to roast joints of meat.
- c) The community enjoyed a series of feasts. (Storytelling could be used as entertainment at the feast). The 'best pots' were used at this feast.
- d) The flints were discarded around the central fire pit resulting in a horseshoe shaped 'burnt mound'
- e) After the last feast, a special ceremony took place in which the final act was the placing of two bronze bracelets: one by the hearth of the old house, the other on the base of a pit at the centre of the burnt mound.
- f) Feasting vessels were then thrown on top of the bracelet in the pit

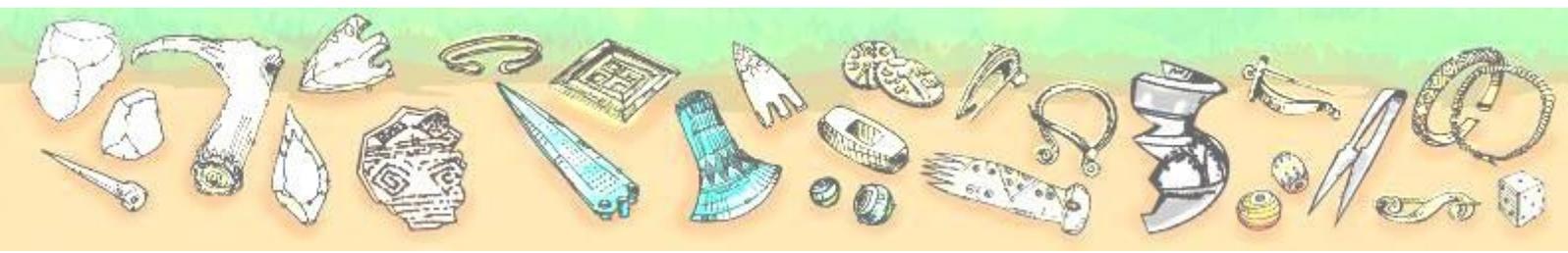
- Discuss with the children objects and materials that create images of status: gold jewelled crowns for royalty, clothing, jewellery, latest technology and cars.

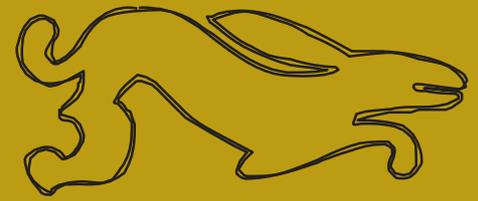
Examine what it is about the materials selected – are they rare, expensive, time-consuming to make? Collect images and models of objects or materials that have 'high status'.

Discuss status objects and materials from the collection and examine what could be considered 'high status' at the time. Look at how people show they are rich, powerful or influential in society. Ask how the children might show their status and make collections of images and materials to create an individual ideas board. These could then be displayed alongside the status collection from the past.

- Pottery. Experiment in creating two-dimensional patterns using a wide range of materials: e.g. card combs through sawdust mixed with paint, mark-making on thin slabs of modelling clay using a range of tools including fingers. It is easier to work with pattern when it is on a flat surface. Try creating patterns by scratching marks onto paper through layers of coloured wax crayons and a top layer of black crayon in the style of scraper boards. Make wax resist patterns using wax crayons with a thin paint wash over the top.

Explore the pots from the point of view of their design – form often follows function. Make thumbnail sketches annotated with the design features: does it have a spout or handle, is it watertight or heatproof, what is it used for?





Suggested Activities Continued

- Re-create 'Time Team' and assign roles to pupils to include excavators, recorders, researchers. Produce a short TV programme/film that can be shown to others in the school. Use interviews, 'live' exciting discoveries and talking about what the object might be/can tell us about the past.
- Stage the burial of someone from the Romano-British period. Research clothing that the person might have worn, gravegoods, food for the 'journey' etc. What ceremony might have taken place?
- Ask pupils to think about what happens to different materials over time and what is likely to survive for an archaeologist to discover. You could bury a small selection of objects – a vegetable, a stone, paper, leather, iron. Decide where to bury it, how long to leave it and try to predict what will happen to each object.

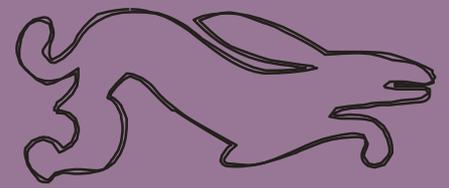
A similar experiment would be to test four iron objects, e.g. nails, under different conditions. Immerse one in water, one in damp soil, one in salt water and one in dry air. Leave them for several weeks. This could lead to a discussion about what an archaeologist is likely to find at different sites.

Quick ideas you've probably already thought of:

- Sorting and classifying according to:
Age
Material Use
- Timeline of objects
- Make a classroom museum, writing labels, display etc.
- Set a grid over buried objects (dry sand is good, so is peat – but not so ethical) as each object is uncovered it has to be plotted on a plan.
- Have a Romano British day at school – including lunch.
- Making copies of the pots
- "A day in the life of ..." to compare with theirs
- The ethics of archaeology and excavating burials



Roman



Romano British Oil Lamp

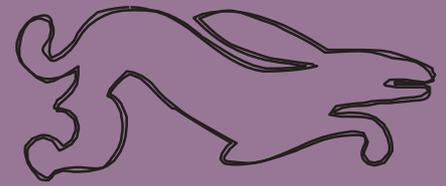
Rooms could be lit by torches, candles or lamps. Most lamps were of pottery and consisted of a small chamber to contain the oil, with a filling hole, a nozzle for the wick and sometimes a handle. They were made in two piece moulds. Lamps could also be made in bronze, lead or iron. Some lamps were made for suspension.



© Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society



Roman



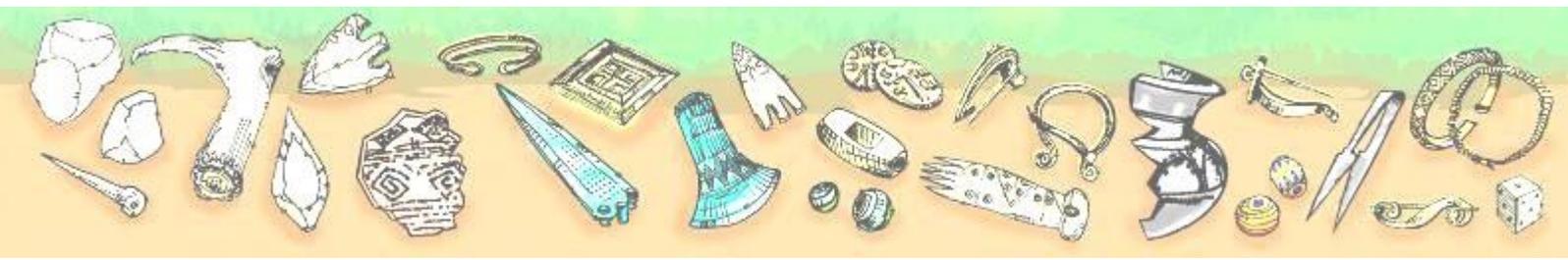
Romano British Pottery Samian Ware

Samian ware is the term applied to a red, glossy pottery produced in Gaul and Germany and imported into Britain during the first to third centuries AD.

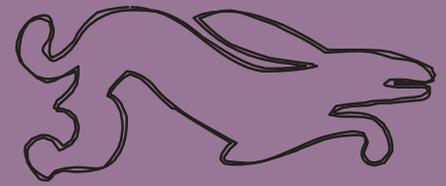
Samian is very smooth with a shiny gloss but where chipped the duller rough texture inside can be seen.

Decorated Samian is usually bowls. The method of decoration was by moulding. A stamp with the decoration was pressed into the interior of a bowl and then fired to become the mould. A wheel made bowl was then pressed into the mould and fired.

Apart from Samian ware, Roman pottery also included other fine wares. Most of these were made in Gaul and Germany too and were called colour ware. These were mainly drinking vessels.



Roman



Romano British Mortaria

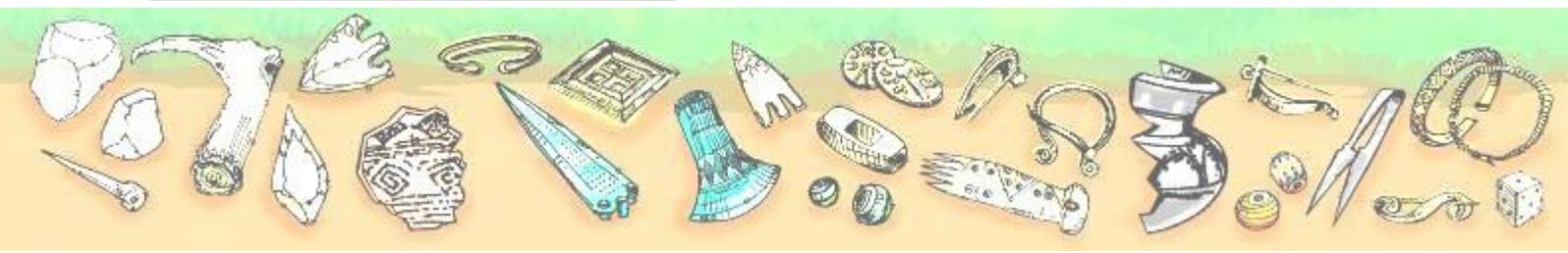
Mortaria are large, thick vessels used for grinding and mixing food. Coarse grit or other toughs tone was embedded on the inside of the mortaria to help grind down foodstuffs.

In the first and second centuries AD the makers mark was stamped on the rim of mortaria made in Britain and these have provided a number of Celtic names that are not known from anywhere else.



Very worn late 1st Century AD
Mortaria, made in Gaul or Britain now at Dorset County
Museum

© Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society



Roman



Gaming counters

Romano British Glass

Glass is known to have been used for vessels, window panes, gemstones, rings, heads of bronze pins, bangles, beads and gaming counters. By the time the Romans came to Britain, glassblowing was common in the Roman world. By the second century AD nearly all glass vessels were blown, some were blown into moulds to increase the variety of shapes they could produce. The Romans were also the first to use glass for windows.

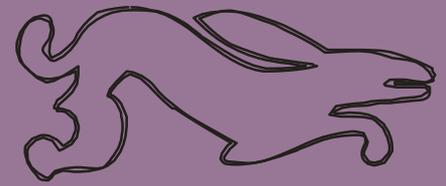
The Roman Town House in Dorchester has a reconstructed Roman window and the original glass itself can be seen in Dorset County Museum. There is also a Roman glass bowl on display with etched dancing figures.

In Roman art children are shown playing traditional games like leap frog and hide and seek. Various toys have been found including dolls made of wood, bone or baked clay. Board games were also played, probably both by children and adults, and gambling and dicing was widespread. Boards divided into squares have been found, as well as counters and bone dice – but the rules of the games have not been recorded.

There have been various rules and games made up by people in the present day, trying to discover what board games the Romans may have played. Several of these can be bought in shops today.



Roman



Romano British brooch, second century AD. Reproduction of one found at Down Farm near Sixpenny Handley

Romano British Brooches

Brooches are quite common finds; they were mass produced, but they are rarely found complete. They were used to fasten clothes and were made of copper alloy and occasionally iron. Silver and gold brooches are rare.

There were many different designs, for example the 'Trumpet' was common in the first and second centuries AD; so called

because the shape of its head is like that of a trumpet.

Other designs took the shape of animals. The running hare depicted on the Romano British brooch found at Poundbury was taken as inspiration by artist John Walker when designing the South Dorset Ridgeway Heritage Project logo.

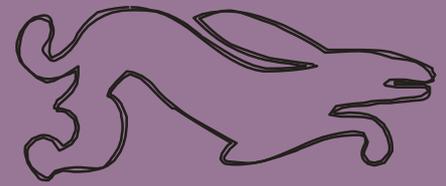


© Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society

South Dorset Ridgeway
Heritage Project



Roman



Romano British Beads and Necklaces

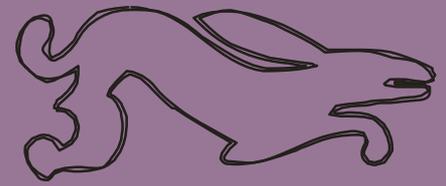
Beads for necklaces were made from glass, coral, marble, bronze, pottery, stone, amber, jet, shale and shell. Necklaces were also made from gold wire or chain. Pendants were also known.

Three broad types of glass bead were in use in the Roman period in Britain; Iron Age types, Roman types and exotic beads from many parts of the Roman Empire.

The Iron Age types were coloured blue, white and yellow but these became less popular as the second century AD progressed and their place was taken by precious and semi-precious stones and small monochrome glass beads.

Late Roman beads are very small and numerous, many were used as votive offerings at religious shrines.





Romano British Burials

A Roman stone coffin, probably dating to the 3rd or 4th centuries AD, was found recently in archaeological excavations at the site of the next development stage of Poundbury, Dorchester. Stone coffins are not common finds, and their manufacture and transport from quarries, often some distance away, would have involved some expense and suggests that the person buried in the Poundbury Farm coffin may have been of some standing.

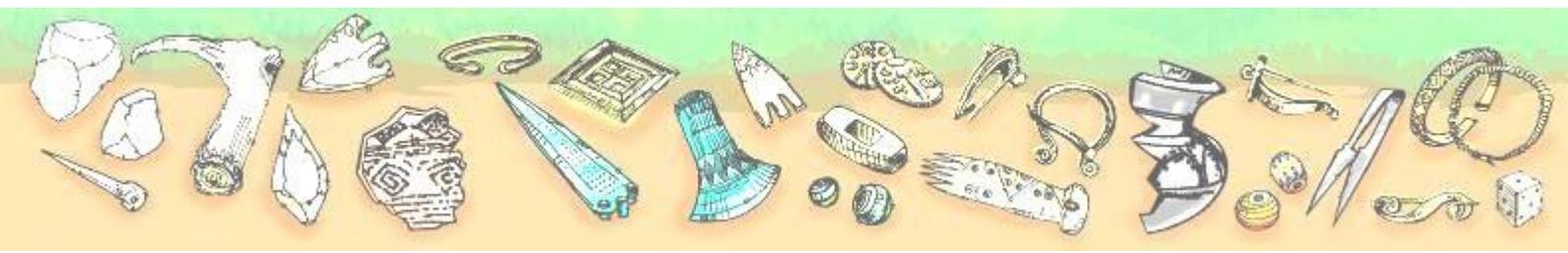
The lid was still on the coffin which contained a poorly preserved skeleton. Until the remains have been examined by an expert it is not possible to give the age and sex of the deceased. The mourners had placed a pair of boots or shoes by the feet of the body, as iron hobnails (from the soles of footwear) were found.

Putting shoes in graves was common in Roman Britain in the third and fourth centuries and it is thought that, like placing a coin in the mouth to pay the ferryman, this was to help the dead make their final journey.

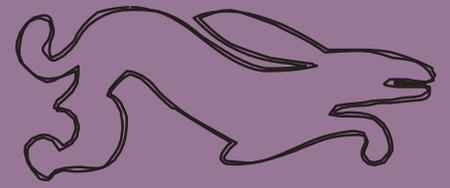
There are possibly other burials nearby and these seem to either lie in or be close to, the paddocks and parts of a Roman farm. This pattern is typical for burials associated with late Roman farms. It is in contrast to the large, well organised urban cemetery not far to the east, at Poundbury Camp. 1,400 burials have been excavated from Poundbury Camp

since 1966. Most have few or no grave goods and are laid out with their heads to the west, suggesting that this was a Christian burial ground. The skeletons from the cemetery give us a good sample of the people of Roman Dorchester, showing that adult males were mostly 5ft. 4 in to 5ft. 8 in and females 5ft. 2 in to 5ft. 5 in. The tallest man was 6ft. 1 in. The average life expectancy was 30 years, but this figure masks a great range of ages. If people survived until they were twenty, they had a one-in-three chance of living to over 45. A few people in the cemetery were into their 80's. Many children died, especially under two years old.

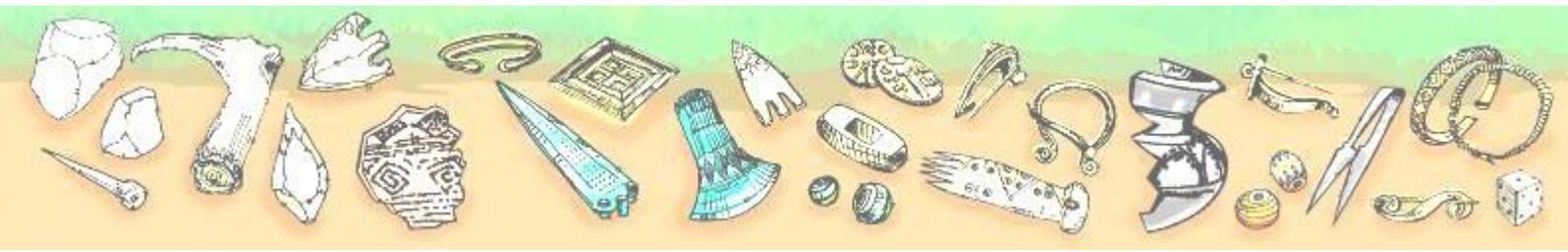
Some Roman burials were inserted into old Bronze Age barrows such as the one on Ridgeway Hill going down to Weymouth. Round barrows often act as a focus for later burials and a number of later burials were found in the one on the Ridgeway (mentioned earlier in the Bronze Age section). These were on east west alignment rather than crouched. The evidence of nails, and possibly hob nails, and pottery fragments means these skeletons date from the Roman period. The Roman road follows the line of the current A354, passing close to the site so it is not surprising to find Roman activity.



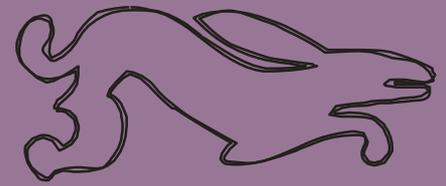
Roman



Late Roman burial. The Small beaker was probably for wine to accompany the deceased on the journey to the underworld. © Wessex Archaeology



Roman



In The Image Bank (www.dorsetaonb.org.uk)



Museum—
RB Samian Ware



Museum—
RB Gaming Counter



Museum -
RB Mortaria



Museum—RB Jewellery I



Museum—RB Jewellery II



Museum—RB Brooches

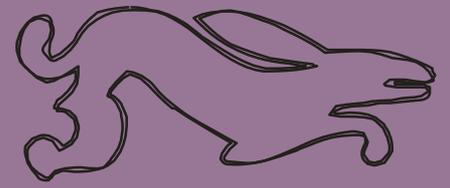


Museum—RBoil lamps

© Dorset Natural History and Archaeological Society



Roman



And the final mystery object ...

Clue: it is Roman, but If you don't know please ring Dorset County Museum and they'll 'come clean' about its purpose.



Present Day



The Suppliers

Box	Dan Williams, Bridport
Roman oil Lamp	Russel Sydenham, New Barn Pottery, Bradford Peverell
Roman Glass Gaming counters	www.romanglassmakers.co.uk , Andover
Samianware	www.pottedhistory.co.uk , Rothbury, Northumberland
Roman Mortaria	Trinity Court Potteries, Retford, Notts
Roman Necklace	Moonflower Jewellery, Child Okeford, Blandford
Roman Strigil,	Steve Wagstaff, Rushden, Northants
Roman-British Brooches	Antiquity Reproductions, Ilford, Essex

What Next?

- Visit some of the archaeological sites on the South Dorset Ridgeway. Please refer to the Teacher's Kit for more information.
- Visit Dorset County Museum (01305 262735 www.dorsetcountymuseum.org) to see some real artefacts, the Whitcombe Warrior. Education Service available
- Visit The Ancient Technology Centre at Cranborne for more hands on experience of pre-history

